

Leonard Atkin (1885 – 1938)

Leonard Atkin was born in 1885 in Barlborough, Derbyshire. His parents were Luke Atkin (1829 – 1901) and Johannah Bracken (1844 - 1928). Leonard was the sixth and last child. On the 1891 Census, Leonard is six years old and living on Park Street in the village of Barlborough, with his parents and three older brothers. In 1901 the Census showed that Leonard at the age of sixteen is already working underground as a pony driver. He was living with the rest of his family at Staley House in Barlborough.

On 14 October 1907 at the age of 22, he married May Clarke(1886 - 1942) in Barlborough.

On the 1911 Census they were living on the High Street in Barlborough, with two children (Lionel Horatio and Florence Esme) and a servant, Ella Clarke, who was a younger sister of May. Leonard was 26 and working as a hewer.

Leonard and May had six children

Lionel Horatio Atkin	(1908 - 2002)
Florence Esme Atkin	(1910 -)
Agnes Atkin	(1913 -)
Blanche Edna Atkin	(1921 -)
Cyril John Atkin	(1923 - 1996)
George W Atkin	(1926 -)

Lionel was 53 years old at the time of the disaster and was living on the High Street in Barlborough. He was employed at Markham Colliery as a contractor.

The funeral of Lionel took place in Barlborough on 14 May 1938. Leonard was buried in one large grave with nine other miners. The service for Leonard was conducted by Fr. Gregson, since Leonard was the only Roman Catholic.

Leonard had obviously been a regular reader of the 'Daily Independent' newspaper. By being a registered reader, this provided a certain level insurance cover, which the newspaper paid out to his widow and family. In total, nine of the 79 miners killed were insured by being a registered reader of the newspaper.

A year after the disaster, the relatives of Leonard placed an 'In Memoriam' notice in the 'Derbyshire Times & Chesterfield Herald' newspaper:

Treasured memories of a dear husband and father, Leonard Atkin, who lost his life in the Markham Disaster May 10th 1938.

*"A loving father, true and kind,
He was to us in heart and mind,
A careful father, too, as well
When he on earth with us did dwell,
A sudden change in a moment fell,
I had not time to bid my friends farewell"*

-From loving Wife, Children and Baden

Parents

Father – Luke Atkin (1829 – 1901)

The father of Leonard was Luke Atkin, who was born in Chesterfield in 1829. On the 1841 Census he is living in the Worksop workhouse with no other family members. His parents were Isreal Atkin and Mary Longden.

Worksop Workhouse



On the 1851 Census Luke was a farm labourer to the Baumforth family in North Anston, which is in South Yorkshire, but only six miles from Worksop. In 1854 he married Sarah White (1833 – 1868) in Sheffield. They had five children between 1854 and 1864.

In June 1859 Luke had two 'fowls' stolen. This was reported in the Derbyshire Times and Chesterfield Herald.

On the 1861 Census Luke, Sarah and four children are living in the village of Barlborough. Luke was working as a colliery labourer.

Sarah died in 1868 and on the 1871 Census Luke was shown as a widower and working as a farm labourer. In October 1871 Luke married Johanna Bracken. Luke and Johanna have six children between 1874 and 1885. Leonard was the last child to be born in 1885.

On the 1881 Census Luke and his family were still living in Barlborough on Park Street. He was working as a horse keeper in a local colliery. His two oldest sons were George and Herbert, who were also working as miners.

On the 1891 Census, Luke and his family were still living on Park Street in the village of Barlborough and Leonard is six years old. Ten years later in 1901, Luke at the age of 71, is living in Staley House in Barlborough and was earning a living as a coal carter. His knowledge of horses was obviously very beneficial. With Luke still earning a living and with four sons living at home and working in mining, the family could afford a servant, Kate Gallagher, who was 13 years old. Leonard, at the age of sixteen, was working as a underground pony driver.

Luke died in the last quarter of 1901 at the age of 71

Mother – Johannah Bracken (1844 - 1928)

Johanna Bracken was born in Barlborough in 1844. Her parents were John Bracken (1817 – 1890) and Hannah Buxton (1821 – 1897). Her parents, clearly combined their christian names to get to Johannah. Her father had been born in Ireland, while Hannah Buxton came from Staveley.

On the 1851 Census, Johannah is seven years old, and was living with her parents and two younger siblings in the village of Barlborough. Her father was employed as a labourer in a lime quarry.

On the 1861 Census Johannah at the age of seventeen was working as a servant for a family called Haynes. The head of the household was Thomas Haynes, a widower and a farmer of 88 acres. There was also a second servant who was employed as a carter. His name was John Hayes. John was 23 and came from Anston in Yorkshire.

On 3 April 1862 Johannah married John Hayes. Unfortunately, John died in 1870, at the age of 33. There were no children. On the 1871 Census, Johannah was working as a servant at Westfield House in Barlborough. The head of the household is John Gosling, who was related to the Haynes family that Johannah had previously worked for.

In October 1871, Johannah the widow, married Luke Atkin the widower. They had six children, including Leonard, the youngest. After Luke died in 1901, Johannah continued to live in Barlborough. On the 1911 Census, she was in Hulme, near Manchester visiting her only daughter, Agnes. Agnes had married Thomas Gormley.

Johannah died in 1928 at the grand age of 84.

Wife – May Clarke (1886 – 1942)

May Clarke was born in Barlborough on 4 April 1886. Her parents were Lionel Horatio Clarke (1852 – 1892) and Mary Widdowson (1860 – 1932). On the 1891 Census, May is living with her parents and siblings at California in Barlborough. Her father was employed as a coal miner. In 1892 her father died and her widowed mother married George William Fuller in 1896. On the 1901 Census, May at the age of fifteen was shown as the stepdaughter of George William. In 1907, at the age of 21, May married Leonard.

After the 1938 disaster, May continued to live on the High Street in Barlborough. May was distantly related to two other miners who were injured in the 1938 disaster, Alex and Oliver Clarke.

May died in Barlborough in 1942 at the age of 56.