

## The Walgate Cricket Team 1884

Yorkshire once boasted a cricket team of 11 brothers! Through his interest in family history, Richard Walgate discovered his grandfather was one of them. BBC Radio York's Andrew Barton went to meet the owner of a very old cricket ball...

From his home in Scarborough Richard Walgate's interest in family history sent him on a journey back a hundred and twenty two years, to a time when Queen Victoria ruled over a quarter of the world's population.

In 1884 the United Kingdom had progressed from Napoleon's 'nation of shopkeepers' into 'the workshop of the world,' and in Yorkshire, on the August bank holiday of that year, a cricket match took place in which one of the teams was made up entirely of brothers from the same family – the eleven Walgate brothers from Aldbrough. Richard discovered his grandfather was one of them

Richard says his interest in the story began about thirty years ago on the streets of London

"I was working in Whitehall in the early 1970's and, because I was a commuter, I used to make sure I had a walk every lunch-time and I used to walk central London. One day I got caught in a shower and I sheltered from the rain in the entrance to Somerset House and I discovered that was where they kept all the records of births, marriages and deaths – so I went back each lunch-time for several weeks and I recorded all the Walgate entries from 1837, when it began."

Richard found out the making of the all brother cricket team – quite probably a world record - began with his Great Grandfather, who had 15 children, including 12 sons.

"I knew vaguely there'd been a cricket match that involved the brothers, but my Grandfather Walgate died before I was born, so I never spoke to him. My father told me his father never spoke to him about his family and his mother told him the Walgates knew nothing about themselves - she hinted darkly that they might even be foreign! I also made a fatal mistake for a family historian – I failed to talk to my elderly relatives. I only became interested after they'd all gone."

But persistence paid off and eventually Richard found himself in possession of numerous facts and memorabilia.

"Over the years people have been so kind and I've gathered together original pictures of the cricket match and now have the cricket ball they used, which was given to my father's uncle, who was man of the match. It's a brown leather cricket ball with a silver mounting, presented to J G Walgate by his brothers, in recognition of his services in the match played at Rise Park, near Hull, 4th of August 1884 – the Walgates won by three wickets, they had to get that in!"

Finally, in possession of photographs, newspaper cuttings, documents and an ancient cricket ball, Richard set off to find the graves of the brothers - but found much more than he expected.

"There was an elderly gentleman in the church yard – he looked almost as old as the church itself. I asked him if he knew where the cricket pitch was in the village. 'Oh yes' he said, 'go down the road opposite the church.' Then I told him we wanted to look at it because of a cricket match played in 1884. 'Oh no!' he says, 'that's not where you want to be - you want to be in completely the other

direction, in the grounds of Rise Park.' So he gave us directions and we found the field, which clearly matched what he described.

"It gave me a lump in the throat to discover and photograph it. It was a very emotional experience. To know that's where they'd been on that day. That's one of the things about family history, it does give you these moments – they're a life enhancing experience."

The parents were William G b 1822 and Ann b 1828

The sons:

Richard - b 1851

John G - b 1853 ( J G in the text above)

William – b 1854

Edmond – b 1856

Collis – b 1857

George H – b 1858

Septimus – b 1859

James O – b 1861

Charles R – b 1862

William – b 1864

Elgey – b 1865

Below are census entries for 1861 and 1871 when the family lived at Westhill on the border of Aldbrough and Withernwick

### 1861 Westhill

|                    |                   |   |         |      |                                  |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|---------|------|----------------------------------|
| WALGATE, William G | Head Married      | M | 39      | 1822 | Farmer 280 Employing 5 Man 1 Boy |
| WALGATE, Ann Wife  | Married           | F | 33      | 1828 |                                  |
| WALGATE, Richard   | Son               | M | 10      | 1851 | Scholar Aldbrough                |
| WALGATE, John G    | Son               | M | 8       | 1853 | Scholar Aldbrough                |
| WALGATE, Collis    | Son               | M | 4       | 1857 | Aldbrough                        |
| WALGATE, George H  | Son               | M | 3       | 1858 | Aldbrough                        |
| WALGATE, Septimus  | Son               | M | 2       | 1859 | Aldbrough                        |
| WALGATE, James     | Son               | M | 0 (11M) | 1861 | Aldbrough                        |
| WALL, Mary         | Visitor Unmarried | F | 18      | 1843 | Farmers Daughter Humbleton       |

(1871 below)

**1871 Westhill (there do seem to be at least 11 sons but apart from Richard, he seems to have a different set of sons to 1861))**

|                    |          |   |    |      |
|--------------------|----------|---|----|------|
| WALGATE, William G | Head     | M | 49 | 1822 |
| WALGATE, Ann       | Wife     | F | 43 | 1828 |
| WALGATE, Mary E    | Daughter | F | 24 | 1847 |
| WALGATE, Richard   | Son      | M | 20 | 1851 |
| WALGATE, Edmond    | Son      | M | 15 | 1856 |
| WALGATE, Charles R | Son      | M | 9  | 1862 |
| WALGATE, Elgey     | Son      | M | 6  | 1865 |
| WALGATE, Arthur    | Son      | M | 3  | 1868 |
| WALGATE, Ethel     | Daughter | F | 0  | 1871 |
| WALGATE, William   | Son      | M | 17 | 1854 |