

## The Spooner Family

The Spooners were local farmers and landowners with large land holdings in Ecclesall, Crookes, Nether Hallam and Bradfield, many of which came into the family through marriage. Spooner Road is named after the family.

William Spooner was born 1719 in close to Crookes. He was the second of six children and as the oldest male heir inherited his mother's marriage settlement after her death. The family was very well off and owned both property and river rights on Rivelin. In 1760 William married a cousin and built himself a new farm house at Hallam Gate. They had three children: Joshua born 1761, Elizabeth and William. Elizabeth died young. The youngest child, also William, was brought up by his childless uncle Joshua at Machon Bank. This uncle Joshua died in 1790 and left his property to his nephews Joshua and William. When William (senior) died he left his property to his sons.

Therefore Joshua Spooner, of Hallam Gate, was a man of considerable fortune, having inherited both his uncle's and his father's valuable estates, including his grandmother's settled property, his sister Elizabeth's property and the estate of his brother William who died unmarried and intestate in 1831. He expanded the family land holdings by purchasing large tracts of land in Broomhill and Tapton Hill at auction in 1815.

In 1802 Joshua had married Sarah Cadman, a wealthy heiress who is said to have brought in £10,000. Despite their combined wealth, both Joshua and Sarah were reputed to be eccentric and miserly. Their two children, William (b.1804) and Peter (b.1807), were poorly educated because of the miserly nature of their parents. Sarah died in 1825 and Joshua in 1848, leaving 9/10 of the estate to William and only 1/10 to Peter, who was both physically and mentally weak. William proceeded to sell tracts of land for development from 1850 onwards, and was also involved in other successful business ventures such as the Sheffield Waterworks Company.

Peter was under the domineering influence of William during the latter's lifetime and was at times treated cruelly. In 1850 Peter married and lived with his wife in Rotherham for several years, after which they moved back to Sheffield, living in 15 Westbourne Road, though having no children. William never married and died in 1874, leaving £140,000 and considerable real estate. He left the interest on his estate to his brother Peter during his lifetime, but stipulated exactly how the principal was to be divided amongst descendants of his paternal great grandfather William and descendants of his maternal uncle, Peter Cadman. Hence when Peter Spooner himself died in 1876 his widow inherited only household goods and furniture.

Under William Spooner's will, Hallamgate Farm passed to a cousin called James Spooner, a butcher, who lived there with his wife Sarah and six children. James died in 1886 and census records showed Sarah still in residence with the younger children in 1891. The farmhouse was finally demolished around 1900 and the 1901 census shows the remaining family members living in Whitham Road.