

## Bollands and Perfects, perfectly aristocratic

The 'gentlemen', businessmen and clergy ran Victorian Settle, making a good living from their inheritance, investments, foreign trade and property. They employed workers, were the workers' landlords and held all the positions of responsibility. Without local authorities, the wealthy were responsible for the collection of taxes to spend on drainage, lighting, education, a justice system of sorts and some provision for the poor. The wealthy were also generous benefactors to the town.

Upper class women filled their time with leisure and a variety of philanthropic societies often linked to the church, fulfilling their self-appointed duty to teach the less fortunate about Christian morality. Whilst it is easy to criticise their actions, these women had a real impact supporting the poor and reducing cruelty to women, children and animals.

Many of the wealthy were Settle born and bred, often with several additional residences around the country. Many had family tombs at St Alkelda's Church in Giggleswick. In our Ancient graveyard, many of the wealthy were buried behind the south east corner of the church behind the altar, believed to be the best place for a good resurrection. The Bollands and Perfect were two such families.



the black cloth covered coffin, age 77. Seven or more large candles burning. They took up before 4 o'clock. Bearers were male servants in their families. Most ladies had silk handkerchiefs and scarves and think all had gloves. Few children in the church and all quiet. Mr. Ingram read genl. confession before funeral service and our dear friend's remains were deposited in a very deep grave near little door of church where her husband was laid 52 years before. Mrs. and Miss

The Bollands were originally from Kettlewell, but had bought the old Townhead farmhouse in Settle by 1763. This was a fantastic residence [ph1], now the site of Town Head medical centre and housing.

Anthony Bolland married Elizabeth Dawson in 1771 but died in 1777. When widow Elizabeth died in 1826, diarist William Lodge Paley described the funeral at St Alkelda's in Giggleswick. After her death, the first of many structural changes took place, with more in the 1870s. Anthony's son, William Bolland, had five daughters: Margaret, Elizabeth, Mary, (who died, unmarried, aged 27) Jane and Susanna.

days. They are making sad work at Mrs. Bolland's house, building two sets of rooms before old front, breaking a front door east end, cutting up the parlour for lobby and breaking windows out. Mr.

### Margaret Bolland

In 1837 Townhead was inherited by Margaret Bolland, born in 1805. There are numerous articles describing Margaret's generosity. She contributed to events for the workhouse and smallpox vaccinations. She provided the grounds of Townhead for the annual celebrations of the Band of Hope (Junior Temperance Society) and Christmas festivities at the workhouse in 1867 [both 1].

favour of the principles of their society. After tea, an adjournment was made to Miss Bolland's field, behind Castlebergh, which was also thrown open to the public. Games of various descriptions were carried on and it would be a difficult task to say who enjoyed themselves most, as both old and young ran and played with unflagging energy until dusk. Coloured fires were burnt before the members left the field, but it was not sufficiently dark to show them off to the best advantage. On leaving, the members stopped in front of Miss Bolland's house and sang a melody. They also gave three cheers for the use of her capital field, so generously placed at their disposal year after year. Thus closed another demonstration that will be long remembered with the most pleasing recollections. We

Margaret was perhaps a little eccentric, once described as *'a wealthy old woman who lived in a nice house on Constitution Hill, who collected peacock feathers diligently. She stitched them in rows on a long cloak she wore down to her heels and as she trotted around in the summer sunshine she was quite a gorgeous spectacle'* [Mabel Horner, Dalesman 1951].

When Margaret died aged 73, her estate was worth the equivalent of £2 million today. Margaret didn't marry, but had a lifetime gardener at Townhead, *Henry Todd*, of whom she was thought to be very fond and he is buried nearby. Margaret is buried with her sister Elizabeth (Perfect) and niece.

## Meet the Perfect brothers

Brothers **John Crowder Perfect** and **William Mosley Perfect** were sons of John Perfect, the principal of the 'Perfect John and William Banking Co' in Pontefract. Their mum Elizabeth Crowder descended from a Mayor of Pontefract. Very eligible! They made a fortune from banking and land investments and took quite a fancy to the Bolland girls. In 1834 John Crowder Perfect married **Maria Bolland** from Leeds, a third cousin to Margaret Bolland, but Maria died in 1836. John sold up, even selling paintings and his *'fifty dozen of choice old port'* collection, [2] and then married Settle's **Elizabeth Bolland** in 1838. They had two sons, both of whom died in infancy, and a daughter. John died when he was just 34 and is buried at Giggleswick, close to the church door, together with their second son and Elizabeth's father. (Their first son was buried with Elizabeth's mother in another Bolland family grave at Giggleswick.) Elizabeth spent the rest of her life living with sister Margaret at Townhead. Margaret, Elizabeth and daughter Elizabeth, aged just 17, are buried together.

**E16 Elizabeth Margaret Perfect, daughter of John Crowder Perfect Born 10 November 1841, died 17 August 1858. Elizabeth Perfect, widow of John Crowder Perfect, born 10 July 1807, died 12 January 1878. Margaret Bolland of Townhead, Settle born 28 August 1805, died 29 September 1878**

In 1845 John's brother **William Mosley Perfect**, a solicitor, received an irresistible offer from Dixon Robinson of Clitheroe Castle (the brother of *Susanna Constantine Robinson, buried nearby*) to move to Blackburn. He worked *'obtaining the acts of Parliament for the construction of the railways from Blackburn to Bolton and Clitheroe'* [3], and was a partner of Dixon Robinson in the firm of Robinson, Perfect and Robinson Solicitors.

### SETTLE.

**FESTIVITIES AT THE WORKHOUSE.**—The inmates of this establishment were treated, by the Guardians, to their usual feast of roast beef and plum pudding on Christmas Day. Presents of workboxes, and other suitable articles, were made to each of the children by Mr. and Mrs. Charlesworth on Christmas Eve, and we need not say the recipients were highly delighted with the gifts of their liberal donors. Through the kindness and well-timed liberality of Miss Bolland, the whole of the inmates sat down, on New Year's Day, to a dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, presided over by the Rev. T. Mc Intire, and on the same day, coffee and buns were generously supplied to the inmates by Mr. Perfect. There was also an abundant supply of spices, nuts, &c., distributed amongst the children, while the old people were treated with tobacco, sugar, tea, &c., the gift of Mr. George Hartley. In the evening the whole of the inmates were congregated in the large dining-room, which had been very tastefully decorated with evergreens, and suitable devices, mottoes, &c., where, in the presence of Wm. Robinson, Esq., Miss Bolland, Mrs. Perfect and party, readings, recitations, glees, and instrumental music were gratuitously rendered by the Rev. A. S. Porter and a few other kind friends, to the evident delight and amusement of all present. At the conclusion a vote of thanks to the

### Important Sale at Pontefract,

OF SPLENDID FURNITURE, OIL PAINTINGS, WINES, GLASS CHINA, &c.

**TO** be SOLD by AUCTION, without Reserve, by Mr. W. DICKINSON, on Monday the 27th of March, and following Days, at the Residence of John Crowder Perfect, Esq., Pontefract, (who is changing his abode,) the whole of the Valuable and Modern HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, comprising Mahogany, Rosewood and other Tables, Chairs, Couches, Cheffoniers, Bedsteads, Capital Feather Beds and Bedding, Brussels and Kidderminster Carpets, Stair and Bedside Carpeting, Antique China, Rich Cut Glass, Pier and Swing Glasses, Mirrors, Lustres, Chimney Ornaments, Eight Day Clock, Fenders, Fire Irons, and Kitchen Requisites, &c. A Number of carefully selected OIL PAINTINGS, by celebrated Masters; about FIFTY DOZEN of choice OLD PORT, and also other WINES.



### BLACKBURN.

**DEATH OF WILLIAM MOSLEY PERFECT, ESQ.**—In our obituary of this day will be found recorded the death of William Mosley Perfect, Esq., of this town. The circumstances attending his decease offer to us another most startling instance of the uncertainty of life. Painfully and awfully sudden, indeed, was his end. We saw him pass in the morning of Saturday, in the prime of life, apparently in good health, in excellent spirits, and with all the appearances of a man who was destined to attain a ripe old age; and in the afternoon, about four o'clock, within a few fields of the Ribchester station, on the Blackburn and Clitheroe Railway, at a distance of about three miles from his own house in Blackburn, he dropped down a corpse. Accompanied by his eldest son, Henry Hoyle, Esq.,

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William's first wife had died after the birth of a son, and then he married **Jane Bolland**, one of the Settle Bolland sisters. The vicar presiding over the wedding was Rev'd William Clayton who was the husband of youngest sister **Susannah Bolland**. William Mosley Perfect and Jane had a further four daughters and a son. Their daughter Mary married George Robinson, the son of Dixon Robinson, so family links remained strong. William suddenly dropped down dead in 1865 aged just 42 and Jane spent the rest of her life living either in Langcliffe Hall or Devon. Daughters Margaret and Katherine are buried in the same grave as their parents. Daughter Susanna Frances was just 19 when she died on Christmas Day at Langcliffe Hall, and has her own grave.

of 1845, since which time he has resided here, and assisted in carrying into effect many measures important to the town, particularly in obtaining the acts of parliament for the construction of the railways from Blackburn to Bolton and Clitheroe respectively. He was one of the first chosen aldermen of Blackburn, and retired about two years since from the corporation.—

**E17 William Mosley Perfect died 26 January 1856, aged 42 years. Jane his wife died 13 November 1885 aged 74 years. Margaret Jane Dawson of Langcliffe Hall died 5 January 1917 and Katherine Elizabeth Perfect of Langcliffe Hall died 2 May 1934.**



**E21 Susanna Frances Perfect died Christmas Day 1870 aged 19 years.**

On the gravestone, Margaret Jane's name has become 'Dawson' instead of 'Perfect', even though she was unmarried. Why is this? In 1879 Queen Victoria decided that the Perfect name could change to Dawson to uphold the

ancestry of Langcliffe Hall, [4]. Perfect! The Dawsons had been at Langcliffe Hall almost continuously since 1645 and Elizabeth Dawson had married Anthony Bolland in 1771. The William Mosley Perfect (Junior) mentioned in this article tragically died at sea.

**CHANGE OF NAME.—The Queen has granted to Mr William Mosley Perfect, of Langcliffe Hall, Giggleswick, in the West Riding, her royal license that he and his issue may use the name of Dawson in lieu of that of Perfect, and bear the arms of Dawson only.**

Castleberg, the rock which overlooks Settle, lost its flagpole in a storm four years ago. A new pole has now been provided by Mr. Geoffrey Dawson, of Langcliffe Hall, the owner of the rock, and it was brought into use on Saturday, when the Union Jack was hoisted in commemoration of Empire Day.

William and Jane's grandson Geoffrey Robinson (now Dawson of course) also lived at Langcliffe Hall - this article [1] was written in 1930. Geoffrey was the editor of The Times from 1910 to 1942, and was a West Riding Magistrate.

Widowed Bolland sister Susanna Clayton lived at Townhead after Margaret Bolland died, followed by Susanna's widowed daughter *Susanna Isabella Edgar* who is buried in *Old grave E54*. After the death of the last of this line in 1947, Townhead was taken over by Tot Lord.



## Settle Graveyard Project



*This account has been compiled as part of the Settle Graveyard Project. The project has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. The 'Old Settle' family tree on [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) includes all the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing, and always welcomes queries, information and family knowledge on [setterresearch@gmail.com](mailto:setterresearch@gmail.com). Latest news and events are on the Facebook page [Settle Graveyard Project](#).*

*Newspaper cuttings by kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Leeds Intelligencer, 3 – Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 4 – Edinburgh Evening News*

*ph1 – photo kind permission of Tom Lord*