

The Burrow family, talented folk

Thomas Dixon Burrow was the son of William Burrow and his wife Isabella Dixon who ran Bull Bank farm at Melling/Wennington, west of Bentham. In 1821 Thomas became a member of both the Royal Society of Surgeons and a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries. This was in the days before medical training was regulated, of course, and there was significant overlap between these roles. In 1823 Thomas married Mary Ann Holme of Bentham and they had a daughter and a son there. Local diarist **William Lodge Paley** [WLP] reports that 'the new Dr Burrows' were in Settle by January 1827. He was referring to Thomas and his older brother Robert Burrow who were in partnership together.

However, in 1833 their partnership of 'surgeons, apothecaries and man midwives' was dissolved[4] and this may have resulted in Robert spending time in a debtor's prison in Lancaster soon afterwards. After this it seems Robert returned to a life of farming near Gressingham until his death in 1852. Thomas decided to go it alone as a surgeon in Settle and made an absolute success of it.

Jan. 13.—J. Clapham came in with the new Dr. Burrows, and was finding fault with Dr. Robinson who came in when they were gone. Clapham came again soon

PARTNERSHIPS DISSOLVED.
John Smith and William Rhodes, of Birstal, Yorkshire, curriers and leather-cutters.
Thomas Dixon **Burrow** and Robert **Burrow** of **Settle** Yorkshire, surgeons, apothecaries, and man-midwives.

Thomas ran his surgery and lived with the family at the corner of Duke Street and Cheapside, taking over from Abraham and William Sutcliffe. Dr Burrow, as the surgeon was called by courtesy, occupied an old house at the corner of the Market-place, abutting on the main road, and known as Sutcliffe's corner, from the name of his predecessor in doctoring and dwelling, and Lazy Corner from the fact that there loungers and idlers 'most did congregate' to the annoyance of the peaceful inmates. He was a man of middle stature, always dressed in professional black, had a frilled shirt and neat neckcloth, trousers and short-waisted swallow-tailed coat, had dark brown hair and whiskers, and a capital face for a doctor, a round, pleasant, cheery-looking face, with bright, dark eyes; a face to inspire confidence in a patient, for the underlip of his rather straight wide mouth closed over the upper lip as if in assurance that he could keep a patient's secret — and his own. A needful qualification for this country doctor, for him especially so, as he was the confidential adviser of more than half the parish; and had he not kept his lips closed what pulling of caps and ears might there not have been [3].



Soon after his arrival, Thomas had to 'treat' poor Mr Bleazard of Wray whose horse struck him, broke a rib and ruptured a blood vessel. The treatment? 'Dr Burrows blooded him. He was put to bed spitting blood!' [WLP] Together with fellow surgeon Dr Thomas Robinson, Thomas Dixon Burrow was a registrar of marriages alongside fellow surgeon Dr Thomas Robinson who was the registrar of

him over the side, breaking in a rib and it ruptured a blood vessel. He was bro't back in a chair and Dr. Burrows blooded him. He was put to bed spitting blood.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.
Settle,—Mr. Burrow, Surgeon, Registrar of Marriages;
" Mr. Robinson, Surgeon, ditto Births and Deaths.

births and deaths [WSA]. In addition to his income as a doctor and registrar, Thomas made a substantial income from his position as a director of the 'Staffordshire Potteries and the Liverpool and Manchester Direct Railway' (one company) and had shares in other railways including the Cheltenham, Oxford and London Junction Railway. After the success of the canals in the 18th century, the railways became the next 'must have' investment for the wealthy. 'Railway Mania' was a speculative frenzy and between 1844 and 1846 investments resulted in 6,220 miles of railway line — more than half of the modern railway network. However, there were winners and losers; around a third of the railways authorised were never built as the companies went bust and Settle's John Cowburn was one of the unlucky investors. The smarter

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investors, such as Thomas Dixon Burrow, bought shares in several companies just in case. Thomas' success provided funds for the children to enjoy the finer side of life.

In 1844 the Burrows family had a bit of a clear out and a sale [WLP]. In 1848 Thomas agreed to become the executor of the will of his good friend **Robert Harger** who died soon afterwards.

Jan. 30.—Dr. Burrow's sale. I hot' Gazeteer of England but it was incomplete. Found a book I had ho't belonged to J. Brown, so took it to Miss Burrows, being ready to restore it for 4d. I could not get it till I saw F. Ellis after sale, and was sorry at night as I would rather have kept it.

Thomas died on 14 March 1850, aged 53, of '*chronic rheumatism*' and '*valvular disease of the heart*' from which he had been suffering for four months. His death was attended by **William Clough** who was a watchmaker who lived nearby on Duke Street. The registrar was, of course, Thomas Robinson who died just a couple of years later.

Fourteenth March 1850 Settle	Thomas Dixon Burrow	Male	53 years	Surgeon	Valvular Disease of Heart 4 months Chronic Rheumatism Certified	William Clough an Attendant Settle	Seventeenth March 1850	Thomas Robinson Registrar
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After Thomas' death Mary Ann and the children moved out of the Duke Street/Cheapside property which became the home of Thomas Joseph Sudell, the vet.

Thomas and Mary Ann's eldest son, **William Thomas Holme Burrow**, qualified in 1848 and picked up where Thomas left off. In 1854 William attended to poor **John Steele** who died after a broken thigh from being thrown from his horse and fly on the way back from St Oswald's Catholic Chapel in Lawkland [SC]. **Roger Ruebottom** of the Golden Lion was a witness to the accident. In 1857 William was required to attend to **Hannah Rakestraw**, '*an aged woman*' (aged 58!) who collapsed while taking her brother's breakfast to 'the Snuff Mill' (Kings Mill) '*but life was quite extinct*' [1].

INQUEST.—On Friday at 4 o'clock in the Afternoon, an Inquest was held by Thomas Brown, Esq., the Coroner, and a Jury, on the body of Mr. John Steel, at the Joiners Arms' Settle; R. Ruebottom was examined as touching the accident, and William Thomas Holme Burrow, Esq., as to the cause of death, and a verdict was brought in that he had died in consequence of the accident, by the oversetting of the carriage.

SUDDEN DEATH.—One morning last week, an aged woman, named Hannah Rakestraw, residing at Settle, was carrying her brother's breakfast to "the Snuff Mill" (a cotton factory), and suddenly fell down in the street, and expired immediately. Mr. Burrow, and his assistant Mr. Bentham, were soon on the spot, but life was quite extinct.—An inquest has since been held at

William was appointed Medical Officer to the Poor Law Union after winning a vote, 22 to 11, over **Mr Christopher Leech** of Blackburn. He took over from the late **Dr Thomas Robinson** in 1852. William subscribed to the new Settle Mechanic's Institute, which educated men in literacy, numeracy and work skills, and was a proprietor of Settle water works. Outside work William won prizes for his horses at the agricultural shows and was a keen photographer. The proceeds of the sale of some of his photos were donated, posthumously, to Holy Ascension church for alterations in 1865.

Tragically, William died of tuberculosis '*a long illness which he bore with exemplary patience and resignation*', aged just 34, in the Isle of Wight, which he probably visited for health reasons, in 1860 [2]. '*He was much beloved for his kindness of disposition and other excellent qualities*' William left bequests including £15 to provide for his old and infirm patents in Upper Settle and £2 for those in Giggleswick workhouse.

On the 8th inst., at Ventnor, Isle of Wight, aged 34 years, William Thomas Holme Burrow, Esq., surgeon, of Settle, after a long illness, which he bore with exemplary patience and resignation. He was much beloved for his kindness of disposition and other excellent qualities.

Thomas and Mary Ann's youngest son **John Holme Burrow** went from Giggleswick School to Cambridge and, from then on, described his occupation as '*BA Cantab*'. Back in Settle he was the secretary to the new rejuvenated chess club in 1866 [SC]. The club had taken over the old news room in the Town Hall and had a variety of newspapers and board games to entertain

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members. It had a maximum of 40 members who had to be proposed by an existing member. The subscription was one guinea with a

is no vacancy. The subscription is one guinea, and the entrance fee half-a-guinea. The room is a large and commodious one, being the old news-room, in the Town Hall, Settle. A chess tournament is held every year to decide by play who are to be President and Vice-President of the Club. The members have the privilege of introducing strangers and ladies. Hon. Secretary, J. H. Burrow, Esq.

further entrance fee of half a guinea – not for the working classes then! The article mentioned that almost all the ‘gentlemen’ (ie those not having to work for a living) in the vicinity were already members. A chess tournament was held every year to decide who was worthy of being President and Vice President. ‘*The members have the privilege of introducing strangers and ladies!*’ John was a good chess player, surviving for 5 rounds before being beaten by **John Birkbeck** in the final of 1858. This was probably a good outcome, politically!

John was involved with local theatricals and was a fine marksman with the North Craven Rifle Corps. He was a geologist and worked closely with **Joseph Jackson** to explore and promote the Victoria Caves. He had a collection of 4,000 fossils which he sold to the Woodwardian Museum in Cambridge before he died. In 1863 John led the proceedings at the inauguration of the bust of the late Dr Birkbeck at the Mechanics Institute.

George Birkbeck had been the founder of the Mechanics Institute movement. In the same year John also helped with Settle’s preparations for the celebration of the Royal Wedding between Prince Albert and Princess Alexandria of Denmark. John was an influential voice in negotiations regarding Giggleswick School’s running, one of the main bones of contention being the number of free places for local boys of poorer backgrounds and their treatment as equals, which John supported vociferously [SC].

on the following points:
1 We desired that the area from which the proposed ‘Local Governors’ are to be chosen, should be the West Riding of York.
2 That the Head Master should have the appointment and dismissal of the Under Master and all Assistant Masters without any interference on the part of the Governors.
3 With regard to the capitation fees, we agreed with the rest of the meeting that at least sixty boys, should be admitted free, without distinction between rich and poor; but over and above the first sixty, we thought it advisable that any number should be admitted on payment of such capitation fees as your honourable board may determine.
4 We think that the head master should be in all things responsible to the Governors; but in matters of school discipline, his power should be as little fettered as possible.
5 Although as to a few other points, some of our names

John was a prolific writer and spent time in London to get his work published. Some of John’s work was illustrated by **John Dawson Watson**, the brother-in-law of **Christopher Edmondson** who had the dubious honour of being the first burial in Settle graveyard. These families were good friends. During the 1850s John Holme Burrow had provided an apprenticeship for **William Watson**, John Dawson Watson’s younger brother and in 1866 John Holme Burrow and his sister Agnes were guests at the lavish wedding of **Sarah Edmondson**, Christopher’s daughter, and her husband **John Postle Heseltine**.

John Holme Burrow wrote poetry under the name of **Bryan Yorke**, including one referring to Rev **John Richard Blakiston** ‘as a token of sympathy with him in his controversy with the governors’[LSA]. Rev Blakiston had been taken to court accused of beating a student unnecessarily harshly and the papers published numerous letters, both for and against Rev Blakiston in the following months. Surgeon **Edward Harrison** had to assess the boy’s injuries and his account provides all the details of the story. With today’s values, sympathies would not be on the side of Rev Blakiston! John Holme Burrow’s book, *Jabez Oliphant* was allegedly based

John Holme Burrow, who practised as a surgeon in Settle, wrote a considerable quantity of verse which he published under the non-de-plume of “Bryan Yorke.” He is perhaps best known as the author of “Jabez Oliphant,” a novel in which local characters are freely introduced.

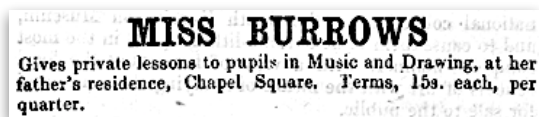
The following is a parody on “The Charge of the Light Brigade” and refers to a gift of £500 from a London gentleman to Mr. Blakiston, then Head Master of Giggleswick School, as a token of sympathy with him in his controversy with the Governors.

Two hundred and forty miles!
All the way from London!
Now there comes 500 pounds,
That Settle may be undone,
“Fight,” is Sir Medlar’s eager song,
“No matter whether right or wrong,
Into the gap we’ll rush headlong—
We have the 500.”

STORIES FOR WEEK-DAYS AND SUNDAYS BY JOHN HOLME BURROW.—We are happy to introduce this little book by a late towns-man to the notice of our readers. The title of the book sufficiently explains its character; and from the hasty glance which we have been able to give to it we think it is likely to become a favourite with the class of readers for which it is intended. The style is agreeable, the incidents are interesting, and, without being too prosy, a decided moral lesson is impressed upon the minds of the youthful readers. A few neat engravings (indispensable in a book to please the young) embellish the volume. From the small size and price (one shilling) of the book it is well suited for a prize book for National and Sunday Schools.

on characters in Settle [SC, LSA]. It probably wouldn't make the current best sellers list but was popular in his day and is a gift to historians. Like his brother, John died in London of tuberculosis, aged 43. Thomas' wife Mary Ann died four years later, also in London, and her body was brought back to Settle for burial.

Thomas and Mary Ann's daughter **Agnes Eliza Burrow** was a talented artist who gave music and drawing lessons in Settle during the 1860s [SC]. She exhibited work at



London events run by the Society of Lady Artists. This ground breaking organisation had been founded by Settle's **Ann (Robinson) Atherton** and her partner **Kate Thornbury**.

The engraving of Warrendale Knotts near Settle [ph1] was taken from one of Agnes' oil paintings. Agnes was in London when she died, aged 66, and was buried with her brother.

Sacred to the memory of Thomas Dixon Burrow, surgeon of Settle, who died March 14th 1850, age 53. Also of his much lamented son William Thomas Dixon Burrow, surgeon who died at Ventnor, Oct 8th 1860 aged 34 and is interred at the Old Church of Bonchurch, Isle of Wight. Mary Ann, wife of the above who died in London April 18th 1870 aged 65 years. 'Dear mother on thy Saviour's breast, thy gentle spirit now hath rest, but well I know such love as thine will still look down and answer mine. JHB.' D11



In dear memory of John Holme Burrow who died in London June 20th 1876 aged 43 years and is buried in Brompton cemetery. Also of Agnes Eliza Burrow who died 23rd Feb 1891 aged 66 and was buried beside her brother. 'For whither thou goest I will go and where thy diest there will I be buried.' D12

Both gravestones were engraved by **Lawrence Hodgson**. Thomas Dixon Burrow went to the expense of purchasing two grave plots but, as it transpired, only he and his wife were actually buried here. Plot D12 with its fine stone is empty or, considering the shortage of space in later years, could be occupied by unrelated people! Giggleswick School records also list a Henry Burrow, son of Thomas Dixon Burrow but no other records of him can be found – it could have been a typo!



This account has been compiled by Sarah Lister as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. It has been written in good faith with no offence intended. If I have inadvertently included errors or breached any copyright I apologise and would welcome corrections.

The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project and can be found on [dalescommunityarchives.org.uk/settle graveyard project](http://dalescommunityarchives.org.uk/settle-graveyard-project). The 'Old Settle' family tree on Ancestry.co.uk includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on settleresearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.

A thorough and excellent account of this family is found in 'Burrow – The History behind the Headstones' by Mary Slater and 'Surgeons, Apothecaries and Man-midwives' by Mike and Mary Slater on the North Craven Heritage Trust website.

Sketch kindly provided by Teresa Gordon

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Newspaper cuttings with kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Guardian, 2 – Yorkshire Gazette, 3 – ‘Genial Dr Burrow’ by Mrs George Linnaeus Banks, Nottingham Evening Post, 4 – Sheffield Independent

WSA, LSA, SC, WLP – Wildman’s and Lambert’s Settle Almanac, Settle Chronicle, the diaries of William Lodge Paley with kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life

ph1 – photo with kind permission of Tom Lord

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