

David Hall Dale, the farmer taking on the railways

Skipton born **David Hall Dale** married **Isabella Green** of Clapham in 1830 and they began their family of eight sons, who would produce many more David Dales (Dales over time) and three daughters. Well, actually eldest child, **Margaret Dale**, was already a three months old foetus when they married. The Greens farmed at Dry Gill, otherwise known as Trow Gill behind Clapham, near the Gaping Gill cave system on the foothills of Ingleborough. The Greens had several links with Settle/Giggleswick – Isabella's mother, **Isabella (Hargreaves) Green** came from Giggleswick and so she and husband **Stephen Green** were buried in Giggleswick churchyard. Several of Isabella's siblings found work in and around Settle, farming or labouring and a brother, **Thomas Green**, was apprenticed to **Robert Harger**, our successful furniture maker in 1806. This wasn't to last though, as Thomas returned to work the family farm after his father died.

David and Isabella Dale farmed at Paley Green until 1842 and then moved to Cleatop Farm just outside Settle. This was a large farm of 370 acres, all rented from **Reverend Hogarth Swale** the first vicar of Settle church. David won numerous awards across a variety of livestock categories at Agricultural Shows so was definitely a successful farmer.

The Leeds to Lancaster railway line, constructed 1849/50 and, in the early 1870s, the very start of the Settle to Carlisle line ran through David's farm. Reverend Swale may have invested in these railways and would have received compensation for the use of his land. David may not have been quite as enthusiastic – the building of the railway would have been incredibly disruptive to his farming practice. Obviously, in the longer term, the stations would assist in taking livestock and produce to and from the markets.

In 1848, David took action against the North Western Railway who were building the Leeds to Lancaster line. He claimed the fence they used was insufficient to contain his sheep and cows, with vertical posts being three yards apart. *'The horizontal wires were eight inches apart and very elastic'* so both sheep and cows could easily escape. *'After a lengthy deliberation the magistrates decided it was not a sufficient fence'* and ordered that the railway build a new fence of 4 feet 6 inches high and five bars 6 inches apart within a month! – a very expensive case for the railway, expected to cost *'not less than eight or ten thousand pounds'* [2]. Ouch!

hundred landowners in Scotland have this fence. After a lengthy deliberation the magistrates decided that it was not a sufficient fence; and the order of the court was, *that a wood fence of 4 feet 6 in. high, and five bars 6 in. apart, be erected by the company, and completed within a month. This decision will be seriously felt by the railway company, as it is understood they have provided material for fencing the whole of their line. It is estimated that their loss in consequence will not be less than eight or ten thousand pounds.—Lancaster Guardian.*

It's no surprise that David was well respected by fellow farmers. In 1866, he was appointed as the chair of a ratepayers' meeting to select a ratepayer to serve as a cattle valuer through the Cattle Plague which eventually killed 260 cattle in the area [3]. **John Parker** was the man selected to do this difficult but important job. Just as now, the strategy to eliminate Cattle Plague was to kill all the animals in infected areas, whether they were infected or not, for which farmers received some compensation. Unsurprisingly, there were numerous court cases against farmers flouting the rules.

SETTLE.—At a meeting of ratepayers held at Settle, on Friday, Mr. David Hall Dale in the chair, to select a resident ratepayer to be recommended to the Court of Quarter Sessions for appointment as cattle valuer for the township, Mr. John Parker, of Upper Settle, was unanimously agreed upon.

In 1871 David was a manager of the Craven Savings Bank in the 1871 along with several other worthy men of Settle who are buried nearby [1].

Soon after this, on Christmas Eve 1871 at Cleatop, David passed away of *'congestion of the lungs'*

The rate of interest allowed to depositors in this bank is 3 per cent. The following are the Trustees, managers and officers of the bank. Trustees: Josias Atkinson, John Birbeck, Rev. W. T. Pierson, William Robinson, Thomas Stackhouse, and Rev. H. J. Swale. Managers: Joseph Birbeck, John Cowgill, D. H. Dale, William Hartley, James Hartley, Edward Hartley, John Jackson, Joseph Jackson, T. G. Metcalfe, William Procter, John Preston, Mearbeck House, and John Tatham. Actuary: Joseph Tatham, Treasurer: Ellwood Brockbank. Auditor, John Lister.

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(excess fluid in the lungs), aged 69. David's intricately carved gravestone was the work of **John Hartley Tillotson** of Kildwick. The grave is positioned in a prime spot in the churchyard, on the other side of the wall behind the altar.



In loving remembrance of David Hall Dale of Cleatop born at Skipton Sep 9th 1802 died Dec 24th 1871. Isabella Dale widow of the above born March 2nd 1805 died January 11th 1876. Charles Dale MB their son born March 1st 1845 died at Keighley Dec 4th 1869, Anc 22

David left a very generous estate of £5,000 which would be worth well over £1 million today's value, with fourth son, **Thomas Dale**, being an executor. Thomas farmed over 900 acres at Ormsgill Green, Airton [ph1]. Unfortunately Thomas died just two years later leaving his wife **Jane (Dunlop) Dale** with six children, including a three month old baby to care for. He was buried in Long Preston churchyard with an impressive memorial stone [ph2]. He was buried with an infant daughter, **Isabella Dale**, who had died six months before.



Thomas Dale of Ormsgill Green, born December 15th 1837 died November 25th 1873. Also of Isabella his daughter born August 2nd 1868, died March 18th 1873.

So, what happened to poor widow Jane? Two years after Thomas' death, Jane was scooped up by his youngest brother, **Edwin Dale**, and they married in Bradford. Technically it was illegal to marry your brother's widow until 1907 but we have many examples in this project. It would have been a great source of scandal and gossip in the neighbourhood and so, while Jane had two more children Edwin found a post as a bookkeeper in Burnley and that's where the whole family settled.

David and Isabella's seventh son, **Charles Dale**, was buried with them. He had just qualified as a surgeon and obtained his first post in Keighley when he was killed by 'a fever prevailing in that town' but was brought back to Settle for burial. He was just 24 [1]. Medical qualifications didn't help in this case.

Keighley.—On the 4th inst., deeply and sincerely regretted, Charles Dale, Esq., M.B.C.M. He had just commenced practice as surgeon, in Keighley when he was seized with a fever prevailing in that town, and at the early of 24 was called to his rest.

After Isabella's death in 1875, it fell to sixth son, **John Henry Dale**, a coal merchant, to sell all of David's stock by action, run by **John Cowburn**. It seems none of the sons were interested/able to take over the lease[CH]. David and Isabella had had numerous cattle and sheep, a two year old chestnut pony, fathered by 'Lord Hastings', a flock of geese and '1000 yards of excellent hay'.

CLEATOP, SETTLE.
Mr. John Cowburn
Has received instructions from Mr. J. H. Dale, to
SELL BY AUCTION, on the premises as above,
on Thursday, 26th October inst.,
THE whole of his Valuable Stock of **CATTLE**
and **SHEEP**, consisting of 22 fat cows and
heifers, one fat Scot, 2 three-year-old bullocks, 11
heifers, 1½, 2, and 3-years-old, eight Scots, seven
gilt cows full of milk, four one-year-old calves,
three calving heifers, 64 fat wethers, 16 fat lambs,
nine half-bred ewes, 46 ewes, two and three shears;
two excellent rams, one thorough-bred gimmer
lamb, one 2-year-old filly by "Lord Hastings,"
one chestnut pony, two-year-old; one flock of
geese, and the winter estate of the whole farm
until the 26th day of April, 1877: also about 1000
yards of excellent hay to be eaten on the premises.
Luncheon on the Tables at 10 a.m.
Sale to commence at Eleven a.m.
Cleatop is distant from Settle Junction Station
about half a mile, Long Preston Station two miles,
and Settle two miles, all on the Midland line.
Auctioneer's Office, New-street, Settle, 12th
October, 1876.

What happened to the rest of David and Isabella's children? They had a son, **Stephen Dale**, and a daughter, **Ann Dale**, who both died as infants and were buried in unmarked graves in Giggleswick churchyard as this was before Settle church had been built. As well as their son Edwin, David and Isabella also had a son named **Edward Dale** which could have been confusing. Edward emigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina where, at the age of 36, he married, and that's the last record we can find for him.

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Two of David and Isabella's other sons, **David Dale** and **William Dale**, had slightly underwhelming careers as travelling drapers. Daughter **Isabella Dale** remained single and moved to live with cousins in Durham and Margaret married Leonard Horner, a lead merchant from Skipton, employing up to 15 men. When the bottom fell out of the lead market Leonard and Margaret retired to Bedfordshire and earned an income as tobacconists.



This account has been compiled as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. Life stories can be found on 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'.

The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Blackburn Standard, 3 – Leeds Mercury

ph1 – with thanks to Malhamdale Local History Group via the Dales Community Archives website, ph2 – photo and inscription with thanks to Long Preston Local History Group.

CH - with the kind permission of the Craven Herald and Pioneer