

## 38 Harrisons

There are 38 people with the surname Harrison buried in Settle graveyard with three gravestones commemorating (unrelated) Harrison families in the Ancient Graveyard. Many Harrisons are buried without gravestones.

We pay tribute to **Henry Harrison**, a stonemason and his wife **Mary Parkinson**. They had six daughters and two sons born during the nine years between their marriage in 1828 and Mary's death in 1837. That's an incredible achievement for Mary and may have contributed to her death. Of these eight children, six died in infancy and a daughter died aged ten and all are buried in Giggleswick graveyard as they died before Settle graveyard had opened. Henry died in 1851, aged 47, with just one daughter, Ellen, to survive him. Ellen married **Leonard Parker** but died in 1872, aged 40, upon the birth of her third son, **Stephen**. She is buried in the Ancient graveyard with her husband and infant son Stephen.

## Edward Harrison, surgeon

During the early 19th century the medical profession was unregulated. There were at least 19 licensing bodies. It wasn't until 1886 that reform in Parliament regulated the profession. 'Physicians' trained at university, with Edinburgh having the reputation for the best training at the time. This cost £600 plus living costs, so was only an option for the wealthy. 'Surgeons' and 'Apothecaries' learnt their trade through an apprenticeship which still cost £500 but they lived in with the resident master and learnt 'on the job'. Apothecaries prepared drugs. Surgeons performed the actual surgery, in all its barbaric forms. The work of these medics overlapped and several medics qualified in more than one of these disciplines. All medics were men of course – **Elizabeth Garrett Anderson** was the first woman to qualify in 1862.

All medical care had to be paid for, so medics were under pressure to provide their clients with whatever they requested, whether or not it was beneficial. There were many superstitious beliefs and so leeching (blood letting), purgation (laxatives), liquid diets and dousing with water were all common. As the century progress, cocaine, heroine, arsenic and strychnine were also used as therapies.

**Edward Harrison** was a surgeon so will have served an apprenticeship, perhaps with a medic in Settle. He was born in 1801 in Lowfield, near Kirkby Lonsdale, one of many children of **James Harrison**, a wealthy farmer and **Elizabeth Blewett**. Edward commenced his practice in Settle in January 1827 and worked as a surgeon until he retired in 1863. He never married and so resided

Edward Harrison announces (January, 1827) that he has commenced to practise as a surgeon at Settle. Good old Dr. Harrison, many are the people who retain kindly memories of you.

as a lodger in Margaret and Mary Wilman's upper class residence at the bottom of Constitution Hill, now 'Jessamine Cottage'. A photograph of Edward held by the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust reveals a confident and serious looking man with a wide brimmed fedora type black hat.

Mary and Margaret were spinster daughters of **William Wilman** who had run the Joiner's Arms. Miss Mary Wilman was described as 'gentry' in the 1828 Trade Directory. She had an illegitimate daughter Betsy who married next door neighbour **John Turner**, a hatter. A fellow lodger was **George Dudgeon**, a Scottish solicitor who married the orphaned **Mary Hartley** at Whitefriars and had to change his surname to Hartley 'to preserve the family arms' as part of the deal.

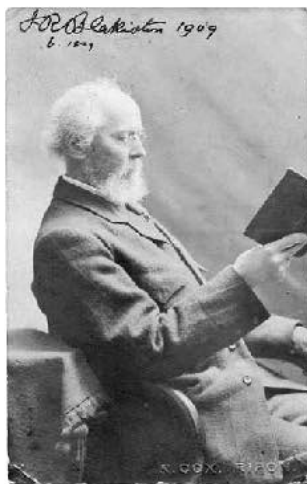
## Settle Graveyard Project

In 1847, Edward performed an operation on 42 year old **Esther Robinson** to remove a 3.5lb tumour on her thigh. Esther was a widow from Ingleton who had been living in Giggleswick workhouse [ph1]. The benefits of chloroform as an anaesthetic were not discovered until 1847 by a Scottish medic, **James Young Simpson** (after using himself as a guinea pig) and so it's unlikely Esther will have had this luxury.

Incredibly she survived this operation and lived for another 20 years. Up to this point more than half of surgery patients died of shock or sepsis, even if the operation itself was a 'success'. An entertaining murder mystery novel 'The Way of all Flesh' gives an excellent background to this work.

In those days it was quite acceptable for surgeons to 'experiment' on workhouse inmates, often in front of a crowd as a fundraising entertainment. Surgeons didn't wear scrubs, nor use standard hygienic procedures. They didn't 'examine' patents, especially ladies, so performed surgery on the basis of what they were told in discussion. It wasn't until the Anatomy Act of 1832 that bodies from workhouses became legally available for dissection from workhouses which stopped the lucrative trade of 'body snatchers'.

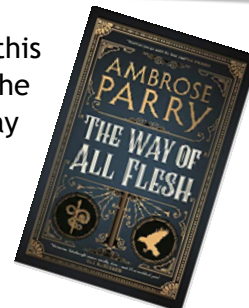
In June 1861 Edward was a witness in a hearing of a case of alleged cruelty to a Giggleswick schoolboy, **James Edward Wright**, by the Headmaster **Reverend John Richard Blakiston** [ph2].



The magistrates included *George Stansfeld*, *William Robinson* and *John Birkbeck*. The prosecution was led by *Henry Robinson* [3]. James, a solicitor's son from Wakefield, aged 13, lived with the second master of Giggleswick School **Mr Matthew Wood** (who later married into the Birkbeck family). James, who was rather small for his years, was severely whipped and beaten by the Headmaster on the suspicion of cheating in his Greek Delectus examination. Edward Harrison described that his left arm was one mass of bruises and James said he was '*lame from the effects of the beating*'. The court did not consider whether the boy deserved punishment – that was a matter solely for the headmaster, but whether it was '*common assault, severe, savage and cruel flogging without any adequate cause*'. The session lasted three hours and the court was crowded. '*After long consideration of the painful case*' the bench decided to dismiss the case. The reasons given

### Dr Edward Harrison, 1801-1869

Dr Harrison, a Licensed Apothecary and Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, had his practice on High Street. It is recorded that in 1847, together with his colleague Dr Thomas Robinson, he performed an operation on Esther Robinson, an inmate of Giggleswick workhouse, to remove a three and a half pound tumour from her thigh. We do not know whether Esther benefited from the newly-introduced methods of anaesthesia, but we do know that she survived.



### SETTLE. GIGGLESWICK ROYAL FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

#### HEAD MASTER CHARGED WITH FLOGGING A BOY.

On Tuesday last, the Rev. J. H. Blakiston, M.A., head master of the above school, was charged before the Settle Bench of magistrates, with assaulting Master J. E. Wright, son of E. W. Wright Esq., of Bacup, and a scholar at Giggleswick School. The magistrates on the Bench, were George Stansfield (chairman), William Robinson, John Birkbeck and Walter Morrison, Esqrs. The hearing of the case occupied about three hours, and the court was crowded during the whole time.

Mr. Henry Robinson, of Settle, appeared for the complainant, and Mr J. Sharp, of Lancaster, for the defendant. Mr Robinson opened the case by stating

The complainant, James Edward Wright, who appeared intelligent, rather small for his years, and was of slight make. He said: I was thirteen years of age last April. Came to Giggleswick School last midsummer. I live at Mr Wood's house. Mr Blakiston whipped me on the 13th May. He flogged me a week before that. I was looking in a Greek Delectus for a sentence. We were being examined. I looked in the end of my book. I had a book there with the sentences written down as we have them for Mr Wood. I had done the Greek sentences with Mr Wood on the Wednesday before. Mr Blakiston said it was a nasty trick and he would not have my nasty tricks there, and said, "Go for the cane." I fetched it; he said "stand out," and then caned me very hard. I had marks on my back and legs; I had one on the arm, and one across the shoulder. The one on the elbow was the worst; it made my arm without feeling. I went to my seat. I was lame from the effects of the beating.

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Edward Harrison, surgeon, Settle, examined: I saw complainant on Tuesday night, the 14th May. I stripped him. I found a mark on his chest like a star; one on the lower part of the shoulder blade, and a lump as large as his little finger. His right elbow was swelled, but not discoloured. His left arm from wrist to shoulder, was one mass of bruises. I did not examine his legs.

The Bench retired to consider, and after remaining absent about half an hour, returned into court, and the Chairman said: After a long consideration of this painful case, we have come to the conclusion that there should be no conviction, and we make no order as to costs.

for this decision included the fact that Mr Wood, the second master who provided James' accommodation, did not give evidence.

This incident represented the tip of the iceberg in hostilities between Rev Blakiston, his assistant Mr Wood and the governors (several of whom would become Mr Woods in-laws). Mr Wood had sought medical attention and informed the boy's father without the knowledge of Rev Blakiston. Debates about the case and Rev Blakiston's management style were aired in the correspondence pages of newspapers until November 1863 when Mr Wood married Sarah Mary Birkbeck and became the curate at Settle church. Contributors included staff, governors, ex-pupils and local surgeon *John Holme Burrow* who wrote a poem 'as a token of sympathy with him in his controversy with the governors'. One asked 'why the school has fallen from such a height to such a depth' [3].

At around the same time *'the School was broken into, the masters' gowns torn up, the registers stolen, the canes broken and other damage done. Detectives came from Leeds but nothing was ever made out. The school suffered in consequence of these troubles and the number of scholars fell to about thirty'* unsurprisingly! [ph3]

The incident didn't do much harm to Rev Blakiston's career. John left Giggleswick in 1866 with his wife and the first five of his many children to become a school inspector for Leicestershire and then for the whole of the north west of England. Eventually he became her (Victoria) and then his (Edward) Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. John was also a prolific writer and wrote several books about teaching. He won considerable acclaim for his book 'Glimpses of the Globe' considering the cultural basis of civilisation. John died in 1917, aged 87. His obituaries made no mention of his time at Giggleswick School. As for little James Edward Wright? James followed his father and became a solicitor. He didn't marry and died, aged 40, in 1888.

Edward Harrison died in 1869, aged 68, two years after his patient Esther Robinson.

*Erected to the memory of Edward Harrison of Settle born Westmorland, died. . (26 February 1869 aged 68 . . . Anc E7*

**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."

### GIGGLESWICK SCHOOL.

To the Editor of the Lancaster Guardian.

Sir,—In a late number of the *Settle Chronicle*, there appeared a letter from an "Old Scholar," showing the flourishing state of the Royal Free Grammar School at Giggleswick, in 1852, and its now almost ruined condition; and asking why the school has fallen from such a height to such a depth.

Talking of the School reminds me of the feud between the Head Master (Rev. J. R. Blakiston) and his Usher (Rev. M. Wood), on account of the former thrashing a boarder of the latter too severely, and this ended in a lawsuit. About this time the School was broken into, the masters' gowns torn up, the registers stolen, the canes broken, and other damage done. Detectives came from Leeds, but nothing was ever made out.

The School suffered in consequence of these troubles, and the number of scholars fell to about thirty.



Edward had remained a bachelor and left probate (including shares in the Great Western Railway) to his spinster sisters **Margaret** and **Mary** who had lived with their unmarried brother **Thomas** in Barbondale. The latest living sibling was Margaret who left an estate worth over £1million today's value, although worked as a laundress! Her nephews were the beneficiaries. Edward, Margaret and Mary had another two brothers who married and had families with respectable careers in banking, farming, clerks to solicitors and the clergy.



## Joseph Harrison, of the Excise

This fine gravestone was the second erected in the graveyard, just after that of *Christopher Edmundson*, solicitor.



*Sacred to the memory of Mary, wife of Joseph Harrison who died at Settle Feb 16 1840 age 46 years. Also Marianne their youngest daughter who died Novr 17th 1840 in her 15th year, Anc D4*

**Mary Harwood** was born in Scarborough in 1792. Aged 24 she married **Joseph Harrison**, the son of a **Reverend John Harrison** of Marske-on-Cleveland on the coast near Middlesborough. John had served the church in Marske for nearly 50 years until his death in 1837, aged 83. In 1820 he led a team to raise funds to build a church in Redcar [1].

Joseph worked in excise, so will have travelled around the country with his work, making him hard to track, especially with such a common surname. Mary died in February 1840, followed soon after by daughter Marianne – perhaps they both suffered from an infection? An article printed upon daughter Marianne's death suggests Joseph and Mary had several daughters, with Marianne being the youngest. The last record for Joseph is in the 1851 census return when he was living in York, aged 60, with unmarried daughter Hannah.

### PROPOSED CHURCH AT REDCAR.

AT A MEETING convened by Public Advertisement, and held in the School-Room, Redcar, on TUESDAY, JULY 29th, 1820, to further the intentions of two former Meetings, for promoting the erection of a CHURCH at REDCAR, the Rev. **JOSEPH HARRISON** in the Chair:—

*It was resolved,—*

- 1st. That it is most desirable that a Church should be erected in the Town of Redcar.
- 2nd. That in order to accomplish this object, the consent of the Archbishop of this Diocese, the Patron, and the Vicar of **Marske** be obtained, to build in or near the Town of Redcar, a Church or Chapel of Ease, to the Mother Church at Marske.

On the 7th inst., at Settle, after a long and painful illness, borne with patience and resignation, in the 15th year of her age, **Marianne**, youngest daughter of Mr. Joseph Harrison, of the Excise, and granddaughter of the late Rev. Joseph Harrison, Vicar of Marske-in-Cleveland, Yorkshire.



## Stanly Harrison, Lawkland farmer

*In loving memory of Elizabeth Agnes, daughter of Stanly and Agnes Harrison of Settle who died 24th August 1880 aged 31 years. Also of Agnes the beloved wife of Stanly Harrison who died 19th August 1891 aged 75 years. Also of Stanly Harrison who died 16th Oct 1895 aged 80 years, C12.*

Stanley Harrison was born in Kellet, near Carnforth. He spent his life farming in Bentham and Lawkland with his wife Bentham born **Agnes Batty** and their four children. Stanley had only just retired and moved to Prospect Terrace in Settle when daughter Elizabeth died. Son **William Thomas Harrison** had a successful farming life, spending his last years at



## Settle Graveyard Project

Eldroth House. He is buried with his wife **Mary Jane Nelson** and their daughter Gladys in the *Old graveyard E62*.

*In Loving Memory of William Thomas Harrison of Eldroth House who died September 18th 1902 aged 54 years. Also of Mary Jane wife of the above died March 29th 1927 aged 69 years. Also Gladys third daughter of the above died July 18th 1918 aged 25 years, Old E62.*

Mary Jane's sister **Hannah Agnes Nelson** married a farmer **Thomas Ayrton** and they are buried not far away in the *Old graveyard F55*



*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.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk) includes all the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing, and always welcomes queries, information and family knowledge on [settleresearch@gmail.com](mailto: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 – Yorkshire Gazette, 2 – Leeds Intelligencer, 3 – Lancaster Guardian*

*ph1 – photo with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life, ph2 – credited to the descendants of the family via [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk), user Lynn\_Couch, ph3 – with thanks to the archives at Giggleswick Church.*