

38 Harrisons

There are 38 people with the surname Harrison buried in Settle graveyard with three gravestones commemorating 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** who lived in Settle. They had six daughters and two sons born during the nine years between their marriage in 1828 and Mary's death in 1837. Of these eight children, six died in infancy and a daughter died aged ten. The stress of constant pregnancy/nursing and the grief after losing so many children may well have contributed to her death. The children are buried in Giggleswick graveyard rather than at Settle as they died before Settle graveyard had opened. Henry died in 1851, aged 47, with just one daughter, **Ellen Harrison**, 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 Parker**.

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 and also worked as 'accoucheurs' – male midwives. 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.

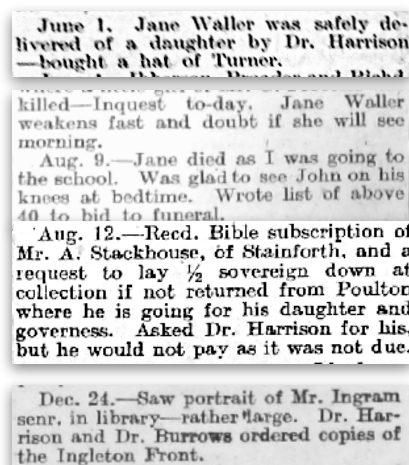
Edward Harrison was a surgeon and will have served an apprenticeship, perhaps with a medic in Settle. He was born in 1801 in Lowfield, near Kirkby Lonsdale, one of many children of **James Harrison**, a wealthy farmer and his wife **Elizabeth Blewett**. Edward commenced his practice in Settle in January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

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.

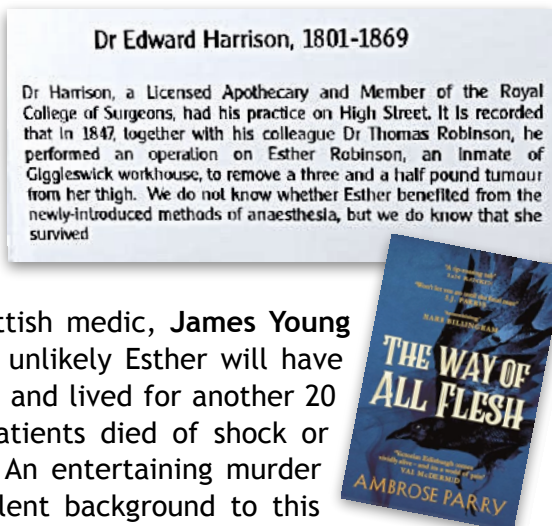
Mary and Margaret were spinster daughters of **William Wilman** who had previously run the Joiner's Arms (now Wholesome Bee). Miss Mary Wilman was described as 'gentry' in the 1828 Trade Directory. She had an illegitimate daughter, **Betsy Wilman**, who married next door neighbour **John Turner**, a 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.

In June 1824, the local diarist William Lodge Paley recorded that 'Jane Waller was safely delivered of a daughter by Dr Harrison' [WLP] – a very 19th century way to record a birth. This was Jane (Ellis) Waller the first wife of John Waller who ran the Black Horse Inn at Gigglesworth. Unfortunately he also records that on 6 August 1825 'Jane Waller weakens fast and doubt she will see morning.' She did survive the next day but on 9 August 'Jane died as I was going to the school. Was glad to see John on his knees at bedtime (Praying). Wrote list of above 40 to bid to the funeral' [WLP] Despite Edward's best efforts, 19th century midwifery was primitive and may have contributed unwittingly to this death. Infant Ann survived and remained a spinster, living with relations at the Black Horse until her death aged 47. John remarried. Between two wives John had 13 children but five of those died in infancy.

Mr Paley, also a bookseller, also told us that, in August 1844, Edward refused to pay his Bible subscription as his payment was not yet due. Fair enough! Later that year Edward and **Dr Burrows** ordered copies of the 'Ingleton Front'.



In 1847, together with surgeon **Thomas Robinson**, 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. She had run a lodging house to make ends meet after the death of her husband but had fallen on even harder times and so had no choice but to find herself in Giggleswick workhouse [ph1]. The benefits of chloroform as an anaesthetic were not discovered until 1847 by a Scottish medic, **James Young Simpson** (after experimenting on himself) 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 for the wealthy classes, hence the term 'operating theatre'[ph4]. These demonstrations reached their peak in the 1870s and 1880s, so much so that some hospitals totally re-vamped their theatres to appeal to the wealthy folk viewing the operations. 19th century social attitudes were such that paupers' deaths didn't really matter as much of those of upper classes. Surgeons didn't wear scrubs, nor use standard hygienic procedures. They didn't 'examine' patients, especially ladies, so performed surgery on the basis of what they were told in discussion. Surgeons needed to learn anatomy to perform these operations. It wasn't until the Anatomy Act of 1832 that bodies from workhouses became legally available for surgeons to dissect which stopped the lucrative trade of the infamous 'body snatchers'.



In June 1861 Edward was a witness in a hearing of a case of alleged cruelty to a 13 year old Giggleswick schoolboy, **James Edward Wright**, by the Headmaster **Reverend John Richard Blakiston** [ph2]. After the assault, Edward Harrison examined the boy. 'I found a mark on his chest like a star; one on the lower part of his 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,



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 swollen, 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.

Passionate debates representing both sides of the case and Rev Blakiston's management style were aired in the correspondence pages of newspapers until November 1863. 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]

Despite this being a career ending incident for teachers today, the incident didn't do much harm to Rev Blakiston's career. This full account if this incident is covered in the story of Rev Blakiston. 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 and just before the inevitable increase in workload with the arrival of the railway workers building the Settle to Carlisle Railway. There were some horrific accidents but far more died, along with wives and children, of contagious diseases due to insanitary conditions. Edward has a memorial stone in a quiet area behind the church. Unfortunately it was made of sandstone and so has eroded considerably.

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

Edward had remained a bachelor and left probate (including shares in the Great Western Railway) in the hands of his spinster sisters **Margaret Harrison** and **Mary Harrison** who had lived with their unmarried brother **Thomas Harrison** in Barbondale. The last living sibling was Margaret who worked as a laundress. Edward, Margaret and Mary had another two brothers who married and had families with respectable careers in banking, farming, the church and clerks to solicitors.

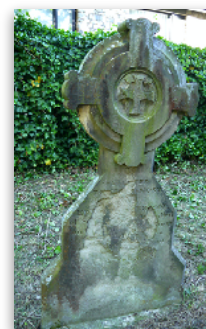
John Holme Burrow, who practised as a surgeon in Settle, wrote a considerable quantity of verse which he published under the non-de-plume of "Bryan Yorke." He is perhaps best known as the author of "Jabez Oliphant," a novel in which local characters are freely introduced.

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."

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.



Joseph Harrison, of the Excise

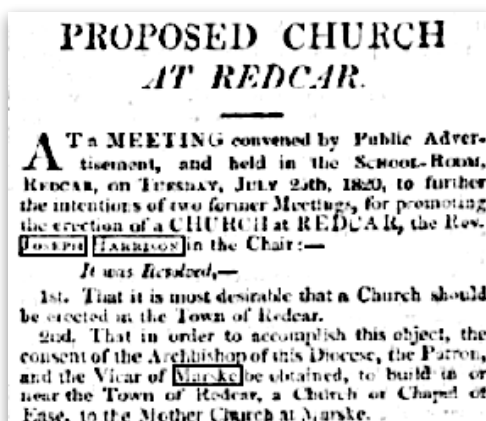
This fine gravestone was the second erected in the graveyard, just after that of *Christopher Edmundson*, solicitor. It is position in the land behind the altar alongside the graves of many of the wealthy as this was the preferred location for the best chance of resurrection.

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 Reverend Joseph Harrison of Marske-on-Cleveland on the coast near Middlesborough. Joseph 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



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.

— perhaps they both suffered from an infection? An article printed upon daughter Marianne's death [2] 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.



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 1815 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 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*



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.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. 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, user Lynn_Couch, ph3 – with thanks to the archives at Giggleswick Church, ph4 – credited to husheduphistory.com

WLP – the diaries of William Lodge Paley with thanks to the Museum of North Craven Life