

The Kellams, making a creative living from the railway

This story is one of the working class Victorian family trying to earn a living amidst the opportunities of the industrial revolution and 'railway mania'. Many investors made a fortune but for the workers it was hard graft making a quick buck where you could, officially or otherwise.

Grace Worrell Hawley was born in Lincolnshire in 1811. In 1830, aged she married **William Kellam**, a carpenter from Peterborough. The birth places of their seven children show that Grace and William travelled around the country to find work - in Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Kent and London. William died in London in January 1858 aged 47. Grace was left with a young family and no income. There were not many options for widows who were left without an inheritance. It was acceptable to continue your husband's business, and some widows ran boarding houses, inns or worked as dressmakers. Grace worked as a nurse and was in Sheffield and Cardiff at the times of the next censuses.

The building of the Settle to Carlisle railway provided opportunities for Grace's sons. Grace and sons **Robert** and **Worrell**, also carpenters, arrived in Settle by January 1872, which is when Grace died. She's buried in an unmarked grave in the Ancient Graveyard. Robert and Worrell found creative ways of making money on the railway. In 1877 and 1878, Worrell, a foreman, was taken to court for fraud — he was taking on labouring jobs and using men to do the jobs whilst fiddling their time sheets so that their wages were paid by the railway [1,2]. The newspaper reports suggest this had happened before. The case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

THE ALLEGED FRAUDS ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY.—On Wednesday, at Settle, a gang of carpenters, named Worrall Kellam, and a timekeeper, named Fredk. Park Jones, both employed by the Midland Railway Company on the southern section of the Settle and Carlisle Railway, were committed to take their trial at the Assizes, charged with conspiring to cheat and defraud their employers by means of falsified time-books. Bail was accepted.

In the meantime, brother Robert had married **Rosetta Barker** who had come to Settle from Essex, probably to work in the mills. In October 1877, just after Worrell's first offence, Robert was also taken to court for 'fraud'. Settle's **John Cook** had previously been sacked by Robert's brother Worrell. John belatedly decided to report an incident whereby Robert had stolen six feet of mahogany from the railway to make a puzzle money box [3]. The jury decided that Robert was '*not guilty, with a doubt*' and the chairman said he had '*escaped justice by the skin of his teeth*'. Meanwhile Rosetta had four children, one of whom, **Frederick Henry** died an infant and is buried in the Ancient graveyard, hopefully with Grace.

In June 1880, Robert decided to get his own back on the railway. By now the family lived in Lancaster. They had been travelling on a train from Morecambe to Lancaster. Allegedly when the train stopped, Robert's wife Rosetta stepped off the train which then jerked. A doctor confirmed she had a dislocated hip.

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY FRAUDS.

At the Leeds Assizes, on Saturday, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, Worrell Kellam (40), joiner, and Frederick Dark Jones (23), timekeeper, were again indicted for having unlawfully conspired together to obtain, by false pretences, from Joseph Smith, the master of Settle New Station, and the Midland Railway Company £31, and divers other sums of money, on divers other dates, the property of the Midland Railway Company, at Settle, in September last. It will be remembered that some time ago the Midland Company were found to have been systematically swindled to a considerable extent by their gangers, and others employed in making the Settle and Carlisle line. Westerman and Herrick, two foremen, were tried and convicted at the Manchester Assizes, the former being sentenced to twelve and the latter to six months' imprisonment. Kellam and Jones were tried early in the present Assizes, and were discharged. On Saturday, Mr. Fenwick, for Kellam, with-

THE ALLEGED FRAUDS ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY.

At the West Riding Sessions at Wakefield, on Wednesday, a young man named Robert Kellam, a joiner in the employ of the Midland Railway Co., and brother to Worrall Kellam, who was recently committed for trial for conspiring to defraud the Midland Railway Co., was charged with having stolen six feet of mahogany, value 5s., the property of the company.—Mr. Barker prosecuted, and Mr. Lockwood defended.—It appeared from the evidence for the prosecution that the prisoner had been in the company's employ for three or four years in the capacity of carpenter and joiner. About a year ago a fellow-workman named John Cook saw the prisoner cut the wood from a mahogany board in the workshop at Settle. Of the wood he made a knife-box, and he also made out of some pieces of mahogany picked off the floor of the shop a puzzle money-box, resembling outwardly a closed book. These things were made at the shop. Cook

learned counsel.—After a short consultation, the jury found that the prisoner was "Not guilty, with a doubt."—The Chairman, in discharging the prisoner, pointed out to him that he had escaped by the skin of his teeth. .

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The detailed newspaper article [4] described the incident boiling down to the Kellams' word against the railway, and decided in favour of the railway.

By the time of the 1881 census the family were in Norfolk, where Robert worked as a carpenter, and then they moved to London. Rosetta died in 1888. By the 1911 census, Robert worked on the docks in London living with his much younger second wife **Martha Parson** and more children. Robert died later that year, aged 64.

William Kellam's brother, **Albert Kellam**, made a more honest living on the railway. Albert was a tailor and became one of the many traders at Ribblehead making a good living from the navy community while the Settle to Carlisle Railway was being built, 'like wasps attracted to a jam pot'![3] Albert, his wife **Ann (Evans) Kellam** and four children lived at hut 39, Batty Wife Hole. Other hawkers visited Ribblehead for the market days but some families, including the Kellams, lived there full time.

Albert and Ann's eldest son, 22 year old **Abraham Kellam** was not with the family — unfortunately he was in prison. A year before Abraham and partner in crime, **James Williams**, both miners and blacksmith strikers, had committed 'A Daring Highway Robbery' at Saddleworth, violently assaulting Irishman **John King** with a knife, for the sake of a couple of sixpences as he left an Inn. Abraham and James Williams ran away but Abraham was caught hiding in a barrel![5]. They were both imprisoned for a year.

It seems this was a bit of a habit for Abraham. Six years before, in Kent, Abraham had stolen sixpence from his employer, **Mr Lyon**, an ironmonger — he must have had a thing for sixpences![6] In that hearing it transpired Abraham had been to court before for stealing lead but Mr Lyon asked the court to discharge him, which they did.

Bearing this in mind, Abraham had his first spell in prison, for a month. After this Abraham disappears from records until 1886 when he married and settled down in Nottinghamshire with a wife, working as a tunnel miner.

Second son Alfred was also a tailor. On 26 May 1873 at St Leonard's Church, Ribblehead, Alfred married **Sarah Ann Hill**, the daughter of a railway labourer at Ribblehead. Sarah Ann may well have been attracted by Alfred's physical prowess! On 9 March 1872, a cold Monday, there was 'a scene of great animation, the people being congested in vast numbers, to witness what was in this wild region, a novelty, viz a foot race between Alfred Kellam and James Barker. The two competitors might be seen approaching the scene of the contest at about ten am being driven in a wagonette and pair [of horses]. Kellam's fine

ACTION AGAINST THE MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY.
Kellam v. Midland Railway Company.—This was a special jury case heard before Messrs. J. J. Crookell, W. Ireland, R. Greenwood, M. Harrison, and J. Helme. It was an action brought by **Robert Kellam**, joiner, Windermere-road, Lancaster, to receive damages for injuries sustained by his wife on Good Friday last at the Green Area Station of the Midland Railway, through the alleged negligence of the defendants servants. Mr. Whelton appeared for

THERE were shops at **Batty Wife Hole**, and hawkers came to the shanty town like wasps attracted to a jam pot. The navvies ate vast quantities of beef, and cattle were driven in on the hoof to satisfy their appetites.

DARING HIGHWAY ROBBERY AT SADDLEWORTH.

JAMES WILLIAMS (31,) miner and striker, and **ABRAHAM KELLAM** (21,) of the same trade, were charged with feloniously assaulting (together with another person) an Irishman named **John King**, and robbing him of a small sum of money, at Saddleworth, on the 27th June.

Whilst prostrate, **Kellam** put his hand in his right-hand 'trousers' pocket, and then—probably finding some difficulty in effecting his object—he drew a knife and cut away the pocket altogether, at the same time inflicting a severe wound on one of the prosecutor's thumbs. Whilst engaged in this daring outrage in broad daylight the prisoners were disturbed by two men coming in sight and observing their actions, and they ran away. The strangers gave chase in company with

ROBBING AN EMPLOYER.—A boy named **Abraham Kellam**, living in Willow-road, Sydenham, was charged before Mr. Maude, at Greenwich police court on Tuesday, with stealing sixpence from the till in the shop of his master, **Mr. Lyon**, ironmonger, High-street, Sydenham. It appeared that the lad was left

INGLETON.

FOOT RACE FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP AND £10.—On Monday last, **Batty Green** presented a scene of great animation, the people being congregated in vast numbers, arrayed in every variety of dress, to witness what was in this wild region, a novelty, viz, a foot race between **Alfred Kellam** and **James Barker**. The two competitors might be seen approaching the scene of contest about ten a.m., being driven in a wagonette and pair. **Kellam's** fine proportions and elasticity of sinew produced a very favourable impression on the spectators, and he became the favourite, although the men appeared well matched. At eleven o'clock the signal was given,

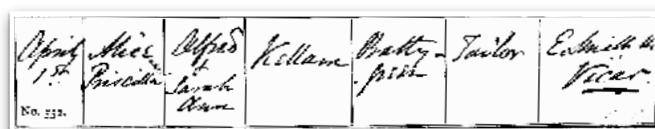
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proportions and elasticity of sinew produced a very favourable impression on the spectators and he became the favourite.' [1] The race was 200 yards which Alfred completed in 22 seconds, winning by 3½ yards. For comparison, Usain Bolt has the record for running the 200 metres in 19.19 seconds, in an athletics stadium with purpose built track and designer kit and trainers. So, Alfred was pretty fast! Alfred won a very generous prize of £10. There were several other events on the day with Alfred winning three other races. Another report says that the Umpire was none other than **Job Hirst**, the viaduct sub-contractor (who died later in the year, in December 1872). Alfred also won races at several local fairs with prize money of around 10 shillings. Sarah Ann and Alfred married the following year.



Almost a year later Sarah Ann had their first child, **Alice Priscilla Kellam**, and she was baptised on 1st April 1874. Unfortunately she died in January 1875, aged 10 months —

conditions at Ribblehead were appalling. Alfred and Sarah Ann didn't have any more children. They spent most of the rest of their life in Glamorgan, Alfred still working as a tailor. In 1886



he was declared bankrupt but was still found in Glamorgan working as a tailor after that. They both died in their late seventies. Arthur's parents and most of his siblings settled in Glamorgan too.



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. Thanks to Teresa Gordon for the sketch.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 — Manchester Evening News, 2 — Birmingham Daily Post, 3 — Lancaster Guardian, 4 — Lancaster Gazette, 5 — Batley Reporter, 6 — Sydenham Times