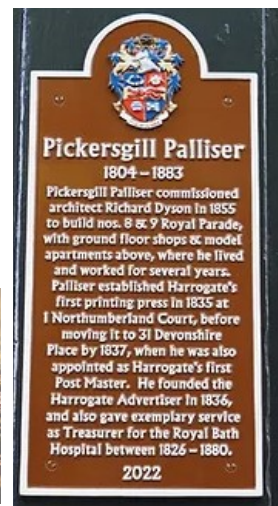


Annie Simpson, surgeon's wife

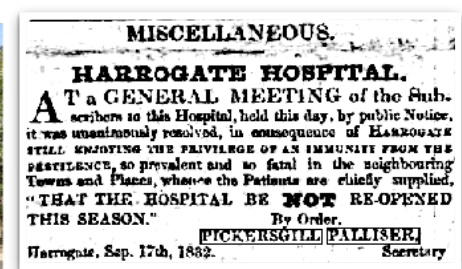
Robert Simpson was one of several Scottish surgeons to work in Settle. He married Annie Morley from Harrogate in 1856 and came to Settle after the birth of their eldest child, Elizabeth Gray Simpson. Annie was the only child of Robert Morley, a painter, who died just months after she was born in 1835. Robert was 70 but Annie's mother (and Robert's second wife) Elizabeth (Wheatley) Morley was just 37 at the time. Annie could be related to the Morley ancestors of *Isabella Stubbs*.

At the time of the 1841 census Annie was found in a boarding school in Knaresborough, aged 6, with a Mary Palliser, aged 8. In May 1839 widowed Elizabeth had become the second wife of the wonderfully named Pickersgill Palliser (son of James Palliser, a baker and Betty Pickersgill) but she died in December 1840, aged 42. Perhaps there were childbirth issues? Pickersgill had one surviving child, Mary Palliser, from his first marriage to Mary Morley (confusingly). Their son, Morley Palliser, died aged three. After Betty's death Mary and Annie were shipped out to a school while Pickersgill married his third wife, a widow Mary (Craven) Harper, in November 1841. Little Annie was lucky that her stepfather still cared for her after her mother's death.

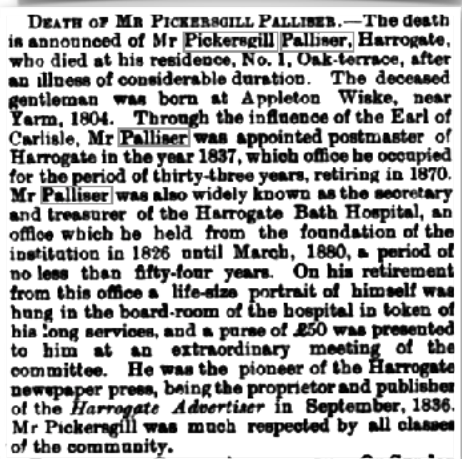
Pickersgill Palliser was a busy man. He was a fascinating character whose life is honoured by a brown plaque in Harrogate. He established Harrogate's first printing press in 1835 and created the '*Harrogate Advertiser*' still in business today. Pickersgill became Harrogate's first Postmaster, a post he held for 33 years. He was the secretary and treasurer for the Royal Bath Hospital, now the Harrogate Hilton Majestic Spa Hotel [ph1], from its foundation in 1826 until 1880, 54 years later. The 'hospital' was a spa facility, regarded as having medical benefits, rather than the sort of hospital we recognise today and Pickersgill transformed its profits. In September 1832 Pickersgill announced that, 'in consequence of Harrogate still enjoying the privilege of an immunity to the pestilence so prevalent and so fatal in neighbouring' communities, the hospital would not be re-opened for the forthcoming season [2].



On Pickersgill's retirement a life-sized portrait of him was hung in the hospital boardroom and he was given a purse of £50. In 1855 Pickersgill commissioned the building of the Royal Parade shops and fine period living apartments, directly opposite the Royal Pump Room entrance [ph2]. The original handwritten deeds still exist. Unsurprisingly local papers (and Wikipedia) all celebrate his achievements [3].



So, what about young Annie Morley and Mary Palliser? They emerged from school as eligible young ladies, suitable to become a wife of a respectable surgeon from Edinburgh. Mary Palliser married Samuel Hornby, a successful Harrogate draper, on 28 February 1856 and Annie, her half-sister married Robert Simpson six months later. The Palliser and Hornby gravestones in Grove Road Cemetery, Harrogate



Settle Graveyard Project

leave passers by in no doubt of their importance! Samuel Hornby left a large donation from his enormous estate to the Royal Bath Hospital when he died.

Robert and Annie Simpson moved from Harrogate to Settle almost straight away and lived in the large house, Linton Court, opposite the Golden Lion on Duke Street. Descendants think he also worked as surgeon for the workhouse may have also lived at 'Undercliffe' in Duke Street.



Annie died upon the birth of their third child, **Dundas Morley Simpson**, (known to the family as John!) who survived.

Sacred to the memory of Annie, wife of Robert Simpson of Settle who died Sept 29th 1864 aged 29 years, E9.

In 1866 Robert's medical skills were required after an assault on Ann (Marsden) Towler, wife of Bartholomew Towler. Ann had been attempting to stop a fight between *Joseph Young* and his wife *Elizabeth (Foster) Young*. 'Ann went to the rescue and struck the prisoner with a stocking she had in her hand' but sustained broken ankle bones after Joseph turned upon her instead. Lovely chap. He blamed alcohol – he was drunk and said didn't know what he was doing.

Soon after this, Robert took his three children back to Scotland. Robert died four years later aged 35, so the three children were brought up by their grandfather, **Dundas Simpson** who lived until he was 94 in Lanarkshire. Dundas ran an extremely lucrative business, linking with the South African Exploration and Mining Company.

Son Dundas (John) emigrated and made a successful living as an engineer on a gold mine in Denver, USA. Daughter **Isobel Simpson** spent her life working as a governess and then housekeeper in the South of England. If any proof were needed that these families remained close, Robert and Annie's daughter **Elizabeth Gray Simpson** married **Thomas Craven**, who just happened to be the nephew of Mary Craven, Pickersgill Palliser's third wife. Thomas made a fortune as a merchant for the East India and China companies while Elizabeth ran a training institution/boarding house for students training in domestic service. They had six children.

Robert was replaced as a surgeon by **Edwin Septimus Green** who also lived at Linton Court but met a premature and grim end to his life.



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 settlresearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'



WIFE BEATING AND SAVAGE ASSAULT UPON A WOMAN.—Joseph Young, plasterer, Settle, for whom a warrant had been issued under the Aggravated Assault Act since September last, surrendered himself to the police on Wednesday, and was on the same day brought up in custody before Mr. George Snaresfeld, Mr. John Birkbeck, and Mr. William Robinson, at Settle, charged with having beaten and ill-used his wife on the 8th September. The prisoner was also charged under the same Act with having on the same day committed a savage assault upon Ann Towler, the wife of Bartholomew Towler, of Settle, labourer. Young had been drinking, and on his wife upbraiding him for his drunken habits, he commenced beating her and pulled her into the street by the hair of the head. Mrs. Towler went to the rescue and struck the prisoner with a stocking she had in her hand, whereupon the prisoner turned upon her and kicked her. She fell to the ground and was so seriously injured that medical assistance was called in, and on Dr. Simpson examining her injuries he found some of the small bones of the ankle to be broken. She had been under the treatment of Dr. Simpson for about a month. Several witnesses were called, who stated that they saw the prisoner dragging his wife in the street by the hair of the head, and who also saw the prisoner kick Mrs. Towler. On the prisoner being called upon for his defence he said he was drunk and did not know what he was doing when the alleged offences were committed. The prisoner's wife was called at the request of the Bench, and in answer to their inquiries she said the prisoner was generally a good husband, except when under the influence of drink. The Chairman said these were very aggravated assaults, and could not be looked over. The sentence of the court was in each case that the prisoner should be committed for a period of one month with hard labour to the Wakefield House of Correction. The Chairman further remarked that he trusted his sentence would be a warning to the prisoner, and strongly advised him to abstain from drink altogether.

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With thanks to Norma Lowery for her help with the compilation of this account.

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

ph1 – credited to tripadvisor.co.uk, ph2 – credited to onthemarket.com

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Yorkshire Gazette, 3 – Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale Herald