

The Bell family, joiners in the first grave of the Old graveyard

This was a good, hardworking family of tradesmen who populated the Upper Settle and Castle Hill areas of Settle for many years and several are buried in the graveyard.

James Bell, a carpenter, and his wife **Margaret Clark** moved to Settle from Long Preston in the 1830s bringing the first two of six children with them. They died in their 60s and are buried back in Long Preston. Sons **Stephen** and **Joseph** continued their father's trade in Settle.

In 1858 eldest son **Stephen** married **Mary Hodgson**, the daughter of an 'omnibus driver' from Keswick. The family had probably moved to Settle to find work. Mary died just seven years later, aged 35, after the births of two children - there is no burial record for her. Stephen brought up the children alone, which must have been difficult while working as a joiner. Daughter **Annie** married a shoemaker **William Walker** from Cark near Cartmell and Stephen lived with them. Ann died, aged 49, closely followed by Stephen in 1912 and William in 1917. They are all buried in the unmarked grave **GX30**. There is no record for Annie and William's son, **William John Walker**, after the age of 15.

Stephen's son **Thomas**, born in 1864, worked as a carter and general labourer. He lived in Chapel Square, Castle Hill, Constitution Hill and even at the Folly in the early 1900s. Thomas had nine children with two wives. His first wife **Martha Mary Briggs**, a weaver's daughter, died in Burnley in 1888 after giving birth to their second son **John Edward Bell**.



Their first son **Stephen Henry**, a quarryman, had two infant sons buried in the unmarked **GX35**, before they moved away. John Edward didn't have much chance to marry. Aged 22, Private John E Bell [ph1] was killed in action in France, on 14 June 1916, working for the Canadian Forces.

Thomas then married **Mary Ann Hill** who had moved to Settle from Scotland. She gave him a son and six daughters. Mary Ann died in 1927, aged 63, and Thomas spent the rest of his life with three spinster daughters **Ada**, **Nora** and **Gladys** at Underwood at the bottom of Constitution Hill.



Thomas and Mary Ann are buried in the kerbstone *Old grave L37*, together with bachelor son **Arthur Christopher**. There are no burial records for the spinster daughters - perhaps they were cremated.



In loving memory of Mary Ann beloved wife of Thomas Bell who died Dec 25th 1927 aged 60 years. Also of Thomas Bell died Feb 1st 1944 aged 80 years. Also of their son Arthur Christopher Bell died Dec 30th 1955 aged 60 years.



James and Margaret's third son **Joseph** was also a joiner based in Chapel Hill [LSA], very close to the Zion Church. In later life he became an estate valuer. In 1898 he valued the 'Castleberg Leisure Grounds' at £15 12s and 6d. It contained a bowling green, sings and see saws, seven wooden hobby horses, a refreshment hut and



plenty of chairs. At this point *John Taylor*, clogger on Castle Hill was selling the business to *Stephen Kitchener*.

In 1868 Joseph married **Sarah Lyall**, the daughter of Andrew Lyall who was one of the Scottish cattle drovers, making a living transporting livestock to and from the English markets. Malham Moor was on one of the old through routes. This was one of the occupations ground to a halt by the introduction of railways. The chances are that Sarah came to Settle to find work in domestic service when she met Joseph. Sarah died aged just 24 at the birth of their third daughter, **Sarah Jane**, who also died soon after.

Undaunted, Joseph married Sarah's elder sister **Margaret Lyall**. It was not legal to marry the sister of your dead wife until 1907 but there are several examples in our town, as well as several sisters living as 'housekeepers' to their widowed brothers-in-law. Margaret gave Joseph another three sons and seven daughters - quite a houseful. Son **Arthur** died in infancy and **Janet** died aged six. They are all buried with Sarah and Sarah Jane in the Zion churchyard in Settle.



In loving remembrance of Sarah, the beloved wife of Joseph Bell who died June 20th 1872 aged 24 years. Also of Sarah Jane beloved daughter of the above died Sept 2nd 1872 aged 4 months. Also of Arthur Bell the son of Joseph and Margaret Bell who died Oct 9th 1874 aged 14 months. Also of Janet daughter of the above who died March 28th 1884 aged 6 years.

Joseph and Margaret named one of their daughters **Sarah Jane**, but she died aged 20, as did Sarah's daughter **Amy**. A further daughter **Florence Elizabeth** died in infancy and they are buried together in the unmarked *Old grave AX49*. Their daughter **Jessie** married George Graham from Ilkley but died soon after in 1908, presumably related to childbirth.



So by the 1911 census, Joseph had had 13 children but seven had died. Further tragedy followed as son **Robert William** followed the same path as his relation John Edward. Private Robert William Bell was killed in action in France on 5th October 1916 [ph1].

Joseph Bell died soon afterwards in 1917, aged 69, and is buried in the unmarked *grave AX47* with daughter **Jessie Graham**. The grave is also occupied by **Henry Edward Henry**, the 5 month old nephew of navy *Samuel Henry* buried in the *Ancient graveyard E1*. Henry was buried in November 1885 and was the very first burial in the Old graveyard.

Widow Margaret died, aged 80, in 1926 and is buried in the unmarked *Old grave HX55* with their son James who was 86 when he died. James, another joiner, had married Catherine from the *Graham* family. One of their sons, Noel, presumably born on Christmas day, died aged just 2 days and is buried with Joseph in AX47.

Joseph and Margaret's youngest daughter **Lotty** married **Charles Kitchener**, the son of gardener **Stephen Kitchener**. At the time of the 1939 pre-war register Lotty and Charles were living in 'Westmorland' and Charles worked as a 'kennel hunstman'.

Daughter **Florence** married **James Chiddey** whose father, William, had moved to Giggleswick from Bristol for work on the railway. James signed up to the police force in February 1906, aged 25. In his application he said he had previously worked for mill owner Hector Christie in Canada, which is most unusual. James was rapidly promoted and won Good Conduct Class and Commendations for his work. He served in Rotherham, Halifax and Todmorden.

Settle Graveyard Project

There are several newspaper reports about PC Chiddey dealing with street betting, drunk and disorderlies, vehicles without lights [1], suicides, failing to report for duty and insufficient blackouts during the war.

*Appointed to Good Conduct class from 1 Aug 1911 for
praiseworthy conduct at a fire at Luddenden 2 July 1911.
Commended by C.C. for intelligence displayed in the arrest of William
Marsden, (Office breaking) 16 July 1912 -*



HALIFAX WEST RIDING COURT,
SATURDAY.
A FARMER AND HIS LAMP.

Arthur Parke, farmer, Greave House, Midgley, was charged with having a vehicle without light. P.C. Chiddey said he saw defendant one night during the week in Luddenden Lane in charge of a horse and cart. He was leading the horse on the near side, and carried a light in his hand. Defendant, holding up a well-cleaned candle lamp said the cart was a very low one and he was fetching a pig from the station. He thought the light would show better if he carried it. Looking at his summons, he said it was not made out right. He was summoned for not having a light, and he had one.

The Chairman (Sir A. F. Firth): You must not carry it. The vehicle was without lamp, not you.

Defendant: I am summoned for not having a light, and I had one.

The Chairman: The lamp has got to be on the vehicle.

Defendant: Well, I was on the vehicle. (Laughter.)

The Constable: He was walking.

Defendant: I got off the cart to speak to the constable.

Defendant was fined 5s., costs inclusive. "Might I ask," he enquired, "what I am fined for?"

The Chairman: You must read your summons. It is not for me to explain Acts of Parliament to you.



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. It has been written in good faith with no offence intended. If I have inadvertently included errors or breached any copyright I apologise and would welcome corrections.

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.

LSA - Lambert's Settle Almanac with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Todmorden and district news

ph1 – photo credited to Craven's Part in the Great War

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