

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 in an unmarked grave. 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 Hodgson family had probably moved to Settle to find work. Mary died just seven years later, aged 35, two years after the birth of her second child, but there is no burial record for her locally. 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 Cartmel and Stephen lived with them. When he was 23, Annie and William's son, **William John Walker**, emigrated to Canada on a steamship, arriving in Quebec on 23rd February 1909 but died in the Victoria Hospital of pneumonia on the 1st of March, just a week later. He was buried in Quebec. Ann died a year later, aged 49, closely followed by Stephen in 1912 and William Walker in 1917. They are buried in the unmarked *grave Old GX30*.

Stephen's son **Thomas Bell**, 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 Bell**, a quarryman, married **Rose Ann Porter** and their two infant sons, **Thomas** and **Francis**, were buried in the unmarked *Old GX35*, before they moved away to Barnoldswick. Second son John Edward didn't have much chance to marry. John Edward (Jack) first served with the East Lancashire Regiment but was transferred to the Canadian Infantry soon afterwards. Jack [ph1] had served in Canada for over three years but was killed in Poperinge, France on 14 June 1916 as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, aged 27.



Thomas then married **Mary Ann Hill** who had moved to Settle from Scotland. They had 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 an unmarried son **Arthur Christopher Bell**. There are no burial records for the spinster daughters – they were probably 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, Old L37



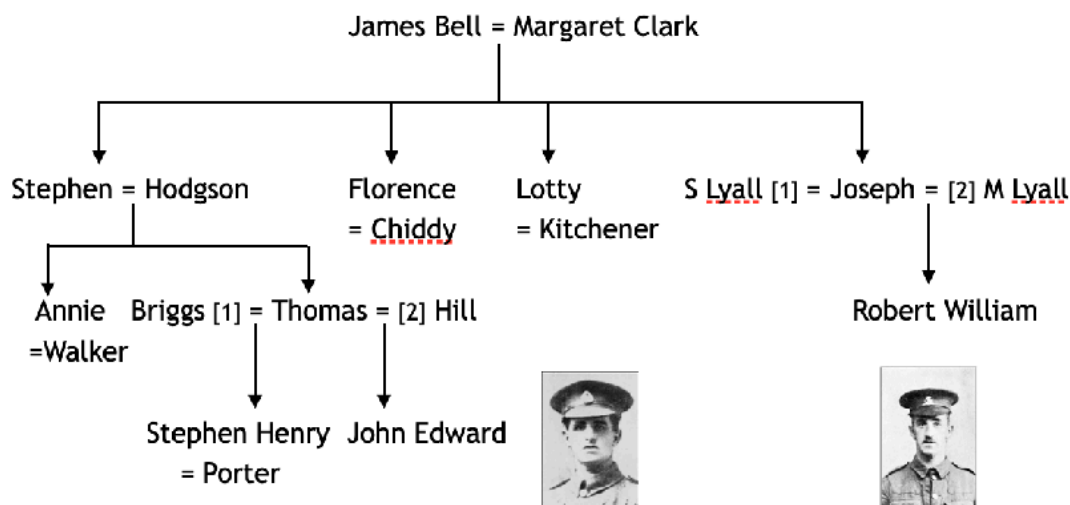
James and Margaret's third son Joseph was also a joiner based in Chapel Hill [LSA], very close to the Zion Church. In later life he became an estate valuer. In 1898 he valued the 'Castleberg Leisure Grounds' at £15 12s and 6d. It contained a bowling green, sings and see saws, seven wooden hobby horses, a refreshment hut and plenty of chairs. At this point **John Taylor**, clogger on Castle Hill was selling the business to **Stephen Kitchener**. In 1902



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Joseph bought a cottage with gig-house, stable and warehouse from the estate of James Twisleton, for £92.

The Bell Family



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 which 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 and Joseph had another three sons and seven daughters – quite a houseful. Son **Arthur** died in infancy and **Janet** died aged six. They are 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 fathered 13 children but seven had died in infancy or childhood. Further tragedy followed as youngest son **Robert William** followed the same path as his cousin 1x removed, John Edward Bell. Private Robert William Bell joined 'Tunstill's Men' in the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment in September 1914 and never had any leave before he was killed in action on the Western Front on 5 October 1916 aged 30 [ph1]. He worked as a joiner with his dad before he enlisted and, in a moment of passion in 1911 fathered a son, **Wilfred Reginald Charlesworth**, with a local



Settle Graveyard Project

This account has been compiled by Sarah Lister 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.

The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project and can be found on [dalescommunityarchives.org.uk/settle graveyard project](http://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'.

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ph1 – photo credited to Craven's Part in the Great War, ph2 – photo credited to the Back in Settle Facebook site, submitted by Tony Lodge