

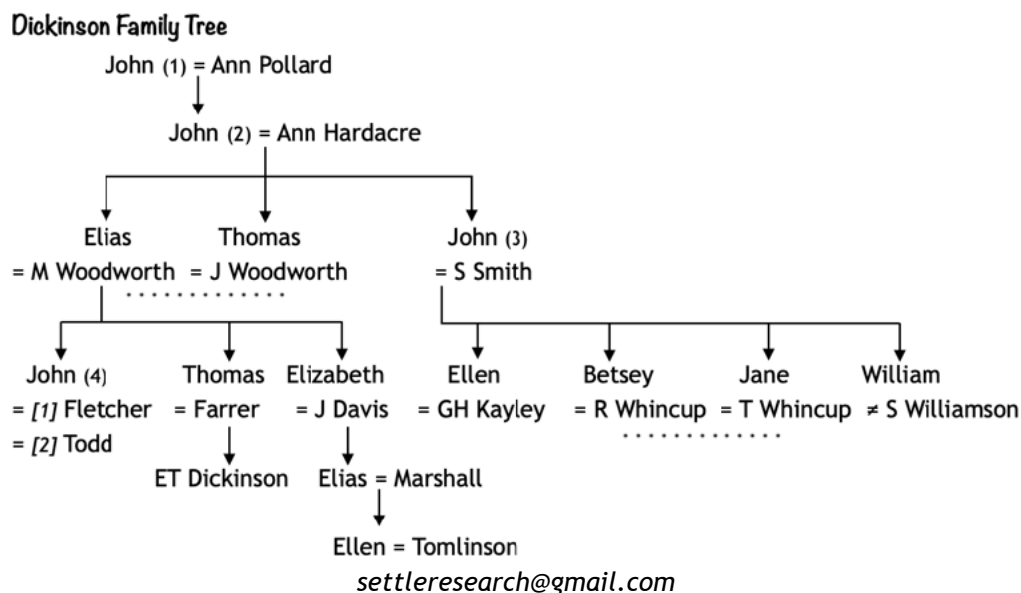
# The Dickinsons of Cow Bridge Farm

The Dickinsons farmed Cow Bridge Farm, beside the River Ribble between Wigglesworth and Long Preston [ph1] for decades. They won numerous awards for their horses, sheep and cattle. Members of the Dickinson family populate Long Preston graveyard, most in unmarked graves, with others in Settle.



John Dickinson (1) and his wife, Ann Pollard, were in the area when they married in 1767. Their eldest son John Dickinson (2) married Ann Hardacre in 1792 and they had five sons and three daughters. By the time of the 1841 census John (2) and Ann farmed at Low Pyethorns further up the Tosside road beyond the Hole House woods and the 'stinky beck'. By the time of the 1851 census they lived at 'an old thatched cottage' called Lord's Waste closer to Wigglesworth. In May 1853 their cottage was burnt down after a fire in the chimney which sent sparks onto the thatched roof. With the help of a man who happened to be passing by, John (2) and Ann just managed to escape unhurt with their more valuable belongings. Their ages were reported to be 86 and 88 which was a slight exaggeration [1]. Ann died 18 months later, aged 86 and John(2) died six months after Ann, aged 87, having moved to Kirkby Malham.

FIG.—On Wednesday morning last, an old thatched cottage was burnt down at a place called Lord's Waste, in the township of Wigglesworth. The building was occupied by John Dickinson and his wife, an old couple, one aged 86 and the other 88. The fire, it appears, originated in the chimney taking fire. A man who happened to be passing the spot during the morning, observed sparks flying from the chimney upon the thatched roof, and ran into the house to apprise the occupants. The fire immediately begun to drop through the roof upon the bed, and the aged couple had only just time, with assistance, to save themselves and their furniture from suffering. Fortunately the poor old people escaped unhurt, and everything that was of any value was got out of the way before their habitation fell to the ground.



## Settle Graveyard Project

John (2) and Ann's third and fourth sons, **Elias Dickinson** and **Thomas Dickinson**, chose to move out of farming. They met the Woodworth sisters from Sawley and in 1822 Elias, a labourer, married **Mary Woodworth** and Thomas, a weaver, married **Jane Woodworth**. Thomas and Jane stayed in Chatburn working as weavers and grocers with their family. Elias and Mary's three children were born at Wigglesworth, Mearbeck and then Langcliffe. Elias was probably attracted to Langcliffe by the opportunities at Claytons' cotton mills. Work began to decline at the mill during the 1840s, but, somehow, Elias managed to secure a job as a gardener working for **Thomas Clapham** at the Old Hall in Stackhouse. Over the years Elias won particular praise and several prizes for his ferns at the North Ribblesdale Horticultural Show. An obituary for one of the Clapham sons included, 'He was a keen naturalist and horticulturalist specialising in the rearing of ferns' – Elias will have done much of the spade work. Elias stayed at Stackhouse for nearly 30 years and, in their 70s, Elias and Mary retired to live with daughter **Elizabeth (Dickinson) Davis** and her family in Settle. Mary died in 1872, aged 77 and was buried somewhere in the Ancient graveyard. It's possible she was buried in one of the two graves with a weathered gravestone. The use of RTI technology clearly identifies 'Mary' as the first part of the inscription.



Elias was 74 when Mary died. In 1887 he was seen as part of 'a remarkable group of four persons, whose united ages reached 340'[2]. In November 1888, Elias, now aged 90, was knocked down by a butcher's cart and broke his thigh [LSA] – Ouch! He eventually died in 1891, aged 93. Elias was buried in Settle graveyard with his daughter Elizabeth Dickinson and her husband John Davis.

**LONGEVITY IN THE SETTLE DISTRICT.**—A remarkable group of men was formed by chance on the Town Hall steps, Settle, yesterday. It was composed of four persons, whose united ages reached 340 years, or an average of 85 years. The names and ages are as follows:—Elias Dickinson, 88; Joseph Garner, 88; Thomas Hardacre, 82; Thomas Hardacre, Long Preston, 82.

*In Loving Memory of Elias Dickinson Born Feb 25th 1799 died April 24th 1891. Also of Elizabeth (his daughter) wife of John Davis Born March 24th 1823 died June 9th 1897. Also of John Davis Born July 26th 1829. Died Feb 7th 1904. Their Children Rise Up and Call them Blessed*

6—Accident to Elias Dickinson, of Settle, who was knocked down by a butcher's cart and had his thigh broken.—Entertainment for the benefit of the Mechanics' Institute at Long Preston.

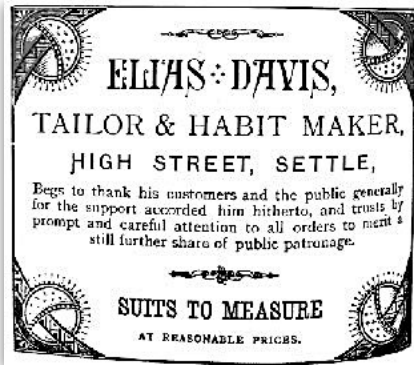
The photo of the gravestone [ph2] was given to the family soon after Elizabeth's death in 1897, inscribed with just Elias' and Elizabeth's details. The graveyard behind was empty, right up to the railway embankment. It's full of burials now. It was not possible to bury Elias with Mary as the Ancient graveyard had shut in 1882, being 'dangerously full' and the Old graveyard had only just been opened.



Son-in-law John Davis worked as a labourer, light porter and warehouseman. John and Elizabeth's son, **Elias Davis**, was a dapper young man [ph3] who bought a tailoring business from **John Snell**, [LSA] opposite The Folly in Settle. Author James F Riley recalls 'keeping an eye on the slim silhouette and side whiskers of his neighbour, Elias Davis the tailor, still the model of the well-dressed Edwardian'[A] – indeed he was! Alongside **Dr Buck**, Elias was an active member of Settle St John's Ambulance, helping to deliver a talk on 'Restoration from Drowning' with **Thomas Henry Holden** [ph4]. We have numerous example demonstrating how important that was, unfortunately.

**PROGRAMME:**  
Introductory Address on Ambulance Work ..... Dr. BUCK.  
Restoration from Drowning, by Silvester's Method, adopted by the Royal Humane Society,  
Messrs. T. H. HOLDEN, and E. DAVIS.

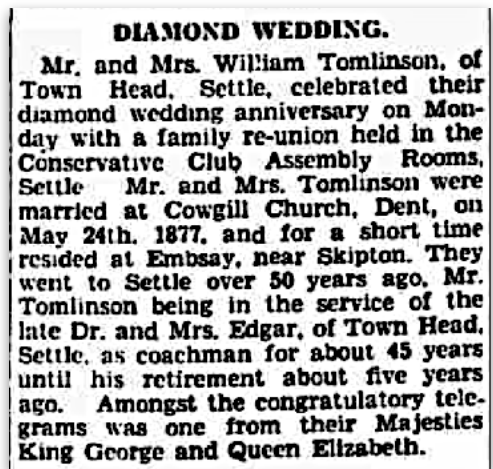
Settle Graveyard Project



Elias Davis had married the daughter of a market gardener, Ellen Marshall. They are buried close to Elias' parents in Old C49 with their five year old daughter Mildred Davis.

*In Loving Memory of Elias Davis who departed this life Dec 18th 1933 aged 74 years. Also of Ellen beloved wife of the above died May 19th 1948 aged 92 years. Also of Mildred daughter of the above died May 25th 1898 in her fifth year, Old C49*

Elias and Ellen Davis' other daughter, Ellen Davis, married Richard Mason Tomlinson, son of William Tomlinson and Ann Mason [ph5]. William worked as the coachman to the Edgar family at Townhead for 45 years, living at Townhead Cottage. They celebrated their diamond (60th) wedding anniversary in 1937 and received a telegram from King George and Queen Elizabeth [3]. The newspaper report tells us they married at Cowgill church near Dent which is where Ann's parents farmed. William and Ann lived very long lives and were buried in the grave New G23. Richard and Ellen were buried in New D2



*In loving memory of Ann Tomlinson who passed away Oct 19th 1945 aged 87 years. Also William beloved husband of the above who passed away May 15th 1951 aged 96 years. In God's keeping, New G23*

*In Loving Memory of Ellen Tomlinson who died Dec 6th 1964 aged 73 years. And Richard Mason Tomlinson, husband of the above who died Mar 22 1972 Aged 82 years, New D2*



In 1852, Elias and Mary Dickinson's eldest son, another John Dickinson (4), married Margaret Fletcher in a double wedding with her sister, Mary Fletcher, who married Rathmell's James Mansergh. Margaret died four years later, possibly with childbirth related issues. In 1867, John married again, this time to Ann (Todd) Waterhouse, a widow and eldest daughter of Henry Todd, a gardener at Townhead estate in Settle. Obviously, John Dickinson was the ideal son-in-law for Henry, being perfectly experienced to take over gardening duties at Townhead when Henry died. John was a good man. When wife Ann died, aged 48, John

## Settle Graveyard Project

continued to bring up his six children and Ann's nieces, nephews and grandchildren from her first marriage. John is buried with both his wives in Settle graveyard.

*In loving memory of Margaret, wife of John Dickinson who died Oct 5th 1856 aged 32 years. Also of Ann, his second wife who died Sept 19th 1887, aged 48 years. Also of the above John Dickinson who died June 4th 1902 aged 77 years, Anc E2.*



Elias Dickinson's son **Thomas Dickinson**, born in 1827, married **Hannah Farrer** and they had two children. Thomas [ph6] worked as an innkeeper, policeman and insurance salesman in Liverpool and Cheshire but they retired back to Settle. They are buried with their spinster daughter Mary Ann next to Elias and Ellen Davis.

*In Loving Memory of Hannah wife of Thomas Dickinson who entered into rest June 19th 1899 aged 70 years. Also of the above Thomas Dickinson died June 27th 1908 aged 80 years. Also May Ann daughter of the above died May 20th 1938 aged 77 years, Old C50*



Thomas and Hannah's son **Elias Thomas Dickinson** became a Wesleyan Minister in Cheshire. In 1885 he married a farmer's daughter, **Sarah Clark** and they had one child who died in infancy. Ten years later Elias Thomas died of an attack of peritonitis which he appears to have contracted after a chill picked up on a ferry to the Isle of Man for a holiday. He was just 39 [4].

**DEATH  
OF THE REV. E. T. DICKINSON, OF  
PADIHAM.**  
We regret to announce the death, from peritonitis, of the Rev. E. T. Dickinson, which took place at Dalton-in-Furness, on Friday last. About three weeks ago Mr. and Mrs. Dickinson left Padilham for their holidays, and it appears that in the passage to the Isle of Man the rev. gentleman caught a chill which induced an attack of peritonitis, from which he never recovered. On their

Back at Cow Bridge, John (2) and Ann Dickinson's eldest son, **John Dickinson (3)** took over the farm of around 40 acres. In 1818 he married **Sarah Smith**, the illegitimate daughter of a teenaged **Grace Smith**. John (3) and Sarah (Smith) Dickinson had five daughters and three sons. Life at Cow Bridge obviously suited them as John lived to the age of 92, still farming and Sarah to the age of 86, both dying in 1885. This is despite John suffering a broken thigh in 1877, aged 84 when Mr Wood fell on him after colliding '*with a fat bull which was being driven through the market, blindfolded!*' [5]. Unlucky!

following circumstances, he was knocked down and fallen upon by Mr. J. Wood, a neighbour, who came in collision with a fat bull, which was being driven through the market opposite the Post Office, blindfolded. He was picked up and carried into Mr.

John(3) and Sarah's third daughter, **Ellen Dickinson**, became the second wife of **George Henry Kayley** and joined many other Yorkshire folk who made up the community of cow keepers in Liverpool. They may well have known **Alice (Baynes) Taylor**, the daughter of **Obadiah Baynes** the beer seller, and her husband **Thomas Taylor** also a Liverpool cow keeper. John (3) and Sarah's fourth and fifth daughters, **Betsey** and **Jane Dickinson** married brothers **Thomas** and **Richard Whincup** who have their own fascinating account.

John (3) and Sarah Dickinson's second son, **William Dickinson**, didn't marry and so stayed with his parents. He continued farming at Cow Bridge farm after they eventually died. Just before they died, a labourer, **William Wilson**, stole 75lbs of wool from William for which he was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour[6].

**THEFT OF WOOL.**  
William Wilson (50), labourer, not on the calendar, was indicted for stealing 75lbs. of wool, the property of William Dickenson, farmer, of Cow Bridge, near Wigglesworth, in the West Riding, between the 19th and 26th October. Mr. Fenwick prosecuted; Mr. Law defended. The jury found the prisoner guilty of receiving, and he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

## Settle Graveyard Project

Without a wife, William Dickinson had the help of a housekeeper, **Sarah Mary Williamson**, who had worked with the family for a number of years. When William died in 1903 he left his reasonable-sized estate to Sarah Mary. Sarah was able to give up work and retire, at the age of 40, to live at 'The Concrete' next to The Maypole in Long Preston. Sarah Mary Williamson did alright by William, especially considering how tight the finances would have been while she was growing up. Sarah Mary Williamson was the youngest child of **John Williamson**, an agricultural labourer and his wife Mary (Newhouse) Williamson from Rathmell. In 1862 John won an award from the North Ribblesdale Agricultural Society for bringing up 'the largest family without receiving parochial relief ... having 9 children, 5 living, their ages being 16,14, 9, 6 and 1'[7]. Sarah Mary was born a year later. So, altogether John and Mary had ten children but four died in infancy or childhood.

To the labourer in husbandry who has brought up the largest family without receiving parochial relief, William Lofthouse, Stainforth, 9 children, 6 of whom are living, their ages being 19, 15, 9, 7, 4, and 1; 2nd, John Williamson, Rathmell, 9 children, 5 living, their ages being 16, 14, 9, 6, and 1.

A year after John Williamson's death widow Mary married again. Her new husband was a widower, **Stephen Shaw**, of 'Conscience', at the North end of Long Preston on the opposite side of the railway. He was 21 years older than Mary. Stephen, a self-made man, had been given a piece of waste land upon which to build 'according to his conscience' and so built himself a home named 'Conscience'! Stephen began life as an agricultural labourer. In 1846 he was declared bankrupt, a '*labourer and general huckster*' and had court appearances for '*riding without reins*' and twice for '*leaving a waggon laden with wood in the highway*'. He was fined a hefty 19 shillings on the second occasion as a repeat offender. Despite this, he progressed to become a builder and had stone quarries near Hunter's Bark on the hills above Long Preston towards Airton. He is thought to have built some of the larger houses in Long Preston. Unfortunately, in 1872, six years after the wedding, Stephen put a notice in the Craven Pioneer stating "I, Stephen Shaw of Long Preston will not be answerable for any debt my wife, Mary, may contract after this date" to which Mary replied, the following week, "Stephen Shaw of Long Preston had no necessity to give any caution in public as to me (his wife) pledging his credit as I have not done so, neither do I intend to." Despite this, they were still living together at the time of the 1881 census. When Stephen died in 1887, aged 77, his estate was worth just £24. Mary died three years later.



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](http://dalescommunityarchives.org.uk/settle-graveyard-project). The 'Old Settle' family tree on [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk) includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on [settlerearch@gmail.com](mailto:settlerearch@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 descendant Mike Howarth for his help with this account.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Kendal Mercury, 2 – Bradford Daily Telegraph, 3 – Lancs Guardian, 4 – Burnley Express, 5 – Craven Herald & Wensleydale Standard, via the Long Preston Heritage Group, 6 – York Herald, 7 – Lancaster Gazette

ph1 – with thanks to the Long Preston Heritage Group, ph2,3,5,6– with thanks to descendant Mike Howarth, ph4 – credited to the Back in Settle Facebook site

A – Listening and Remembering, Memoirs of a Settle Boy by James F Riley

LSA - Lambert's Settle Almanac with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life

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Some of the material in this account has been published by YDMT in the book 'Meandering down the Ribble, Born and Bred in the Long Preston Floodplain' who have given permission for it to be included in this account