

# The Graham family, generations of grocers and entertainers

The Graham family originated in Clapham and, at the beginning of the 19th century, were recorded with the surname **Grime**. By the 1840s most of the family had changed their name to **Graham** - easily interchangeable with a Yorkshire accent. The Graham families often named their sons Christopher, Matthew and John which makes it particularly difficult to keep on top of their relationships to each other, but we'll try. Whilst several Grahams are commemorated with gravestones, many who died in more recent years were cremated.

Christopher, born in 1784, was a farm labourer in Upper Settle and his wife **Mary Lofthouse** had three sons, **Christopher, Matthew** and **Robert** and a daughter **Elizabeth**. Son Robert died, aged just 24, soon after marrying **Ellen Wilkinson-Newsholme**. Daughter Elizabeth died, aged 37 after having six children with cotton spinner **James Pickersgill**. Son Christopher worked as a stonemason. Wife Mary died in 1838 and, soon after, Christopher married widow **Agnes Waddington**. Agnes died in 1852 and is buried in the Ancient graveyard. Christopher was 'Found dead in bed' in 1868, aged 84 [1]. Christopher and Mary were buried together in Giggleswick graveyard.

**FOUND DEAD IN BED.**—On Thursday morning, the 6th inst., Mr. Christopher Graham, who resided with a grandson at Settle, was found dead in bed. Though advanced in years, being aged 84, he had always enjoyed good health, and was as well as usual on retiring to bed on Wednesday night.

It was son **Matthew**, born in 1815, who brought the Grahams into the heart of Settle trade. With his wife **Catherine Hardacre**, Matthew set up a grocery business in Kirkgate. During the 1850s he set up his business in the Market Place next to the White Horse Inn [ph1,SC] and also ran a shop in Langcliffe.



This successful business ran for over 100 years and generated the income to buy local properties including those of **John Turner** further along the row.

Matthew was a member of the Temperance Society and a keen Methodist. In 1855 he gave a lecture on the evils of drink, explaining that 'total abstinence was set forth as the only safe remedy' [2]

**TEMPERANCE.**—The Rev. J. Gibson, from Hornsea, near Hull, delivered a lecture in the Settle Mechanics' Hall, last Monday evening, Mr. Matthew Graham in the chair. Great and serious evils were shown to arise from intemperance, and total abstinence was set forth as the only safe remedy.



In 1857, as Methodist Chapel Steward, had to advertise to try and raise money to overcome debts [SC].

The only blemish on Matthew's reputation was in 1867 when he was fined for using a 'light and unjust weight' in his shops [1].

**convicted in the penalty of 5s. and costs.—Matthew Graham, shopkeeper, Settle and Langcliffe, having been found in possession of a 2 oz. brass weight, which was light and unjust, was fined 6d. and costs : and**

Matthew and Catherine died within two years of each other and are buried in the grave *Old E21* with their daughter *Isabella*. Their stone also commemorated the life of son *Matthew* and daughter *Jane* who were buried in the Ancient graveyard.

*In Loving Memory of Matthew Graham died Aug 20th 1901 aged 88 years. Also Catherine his wife died June 10th 1903 aged 89 years. Matthew their son died Aug 19th 1879 aged 40 years. Jane their daughter died March 28th 1858 aged 11 years Isabella their daughter died Oct 8th 1928 aged 79 years, Old E21*

Their son Matthew helped with the family business but in 1857, when he was 16, was fined for obstructing police [2]. He was 16 at the time.

**SETTLE.**  
**SETTLE PETTY SESSIONS.—On Tuesday last, Matthew Graham, jun., of Settle, was convicted in the penalty of £2 and costs, for obstructing the police in the execution of their duty. The alternative being two calendar months' imprisonment.**

**PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL, SETTLE.**

The Trustees of the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Settle, take the liberty of addressing the following

To the benevolent public,

The Primitive Methodists since the year 1836 have been labouring in the town of Settle in harmony with other sections of the Christian Church, in preaching the gospel, visiting the sick, instructing the young &c. In the year 1840, the aforesaid Primitive Methodists built a Chapel in Upper Settle, on which there is at present a debt of Two Hundred and Twenty Pounds. In consequence of the death of the Mortgagee, the trustees of the aforesaid Chapel must discharge the present debt on or before the 11th day of March, 1857, or the chapel will be sold by his (the deceased mortgagee's) executors. A friend has promised to lend One Hundred and Fifty Pounds provided the debt of the chapel be reduced to that sum. The trustees are unable to borrow a greater sum, they are therefore necessitated to appeal to the liberality of the public for the purpose of raising the remaining Seventy Pounds.

Settle, Jan. 10th, 1857.

**MATTHEW GRAHAM, Chapel Steward,  
 THOMAS BRAITHWAITE, Minister.**



Matthew and Catherine's son *Christopher*, also a grocer in the family business, married *Sarah Maria Smith* who, like many others, had come to Settle from Norfolk to find work. They had seven children but four died in infancy. They are buried with two of them and spinster daughter *Winifred*. Four year old *Louise* did not have a burial record but *Florence* is in the Ancient graveyard.

*In loving memory of Sarah Maria wife of Christopher Graham born Oct 8th 1855 died Dec 2nd 1896. Louisa their daughter born Jan 11th 1878 died July 15th 1882. Also Florence Alfonza born Oct 13th 1880 died July 9th 1882. Matthew Noel, their son born Dec 25th 1887 died March 1st 1888. Also Malcolm Rupert born Nov 28th 1885 died March 12th 1889. Also of the above Christopher Graham born Oct 28th 1852 died Aug 28th 1927. Also Winifred May Graham daughter born 16th May 1894 died 16th November 1991, Old B22*



Christopher and Sarah Maria's son *Christopher Harold*, known as *Harold*, understandably, performed for the Settle Amateur Operatic Society in his youth [ph2]. He worked as an engineer and electrical fitter which served him well in the war. His obituary in 1945 explains his contribution to the military forces [2].

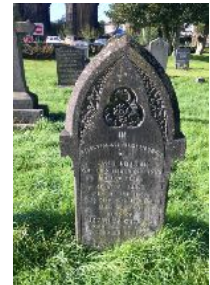
**MR. C. H. GRAHAM.**

Many mourners attended the funeral of the late Mr. Christopher Harold Graham, of Prospect Terrace, Settle, at the Parish Church. As the cortege entered the church a party of the 31st Battalion West Riding Home Guard, and old comrades of the last war, formed a guard of honour. An original member of the Settle L.D.V. Group, Mr. Graham was R.Q.M.S. of the 31st Battalion. Rev. J. G. Hathaway

After the war, Christopher and Sarah Maria's daughter **Catherine Grace Graham** married **Charles Alfred Fermor Rogers** who worked in his family business of ladies fur garments in Middlesex. He was a pilot during the war [ph3]. They retired to the Isle of Wight.



Going back a couple of generations, Matthew and Catherine had a son **John Graham**, born in 1842, who stayed in the family business. He married **Jane Johnson** from Manchester and they had eight children. John ran the shop and the Post Office in Langcliffe and then retired to Craven Terrace. They are buried in *Old E19* with their son Matthew and his wife.



*In Affectionate Remembrance of John Graham who died March 14th 1902 aged 60 years. Also of Jane wife of the above who died July 16th 1923 aged 76 years. Also of Matthew Graham died Feb 4th 1935 aged 60 years Also his wife Emma Jane May 19th 1946 aged 71 years, E19.*

To avoid further confusion, all the Grahams in the rest of this account are John and Jane's descendants!

John and Jane's second son **John**, born in 1871, made a name for himself in Settle for different reasons. He married **Margaret Ann Clark**, the daughter of **Robert Clark** (who had built Ribble Terrace) and they lived with her parents there. John and Margaret Ann didn't have children which left John with plenty of time for other things, including bellringing at the church. John began work in the family business but in his 30s became a professional 'society entertainer', performing across the country, including the London scene. Unsurprisingly, John regularly took a lead role in the Settle Amateur Operatic Society [ph2]. He generated great reviews, this one was in the Keighley News. [ph1]

CRICKET CLUB ENTERTAINMENT—The Bocking Wesleyan Cricket Club held a most successful entertainment on Saturday evening, in the School-room, the occasion being a return visit of the popular elocutionist and comedian, Mr. J. Graham. Mr. S. Thompson presided, and Mr. Graham had no difficulty in entertaining the large audience with his varied recitations and musical selections. The genuine humour of his songs, and the pathos of the musical monologues, "The Game of Life," "Not understood," "What is a gentleman?" and "The lesson of the water mill," were keenly appreciated, and his recitations, "Betsy and I are out," and "How Betsy and I made up" (Carleton) were finely rendered, while in mimicry Mr. Graham's original sketches all met with well-merited applause.—Keighley News...

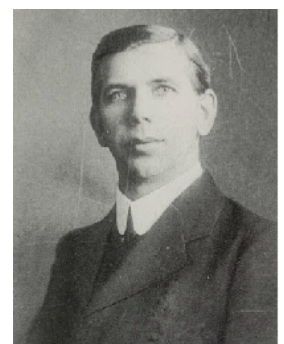
♦ LIST OF ♦  
 humorous Songs, Recitals, Monologues, & Sketches,  
 AS RENDERED BY  
**John Graham,** RIBBLE TERRACE, SETTLE.  
 Rejected Funerist and Elocutionist.

Repertoire kept up to date by the addition of new pieces.

Sincerely Yours  
 Don J. Graham

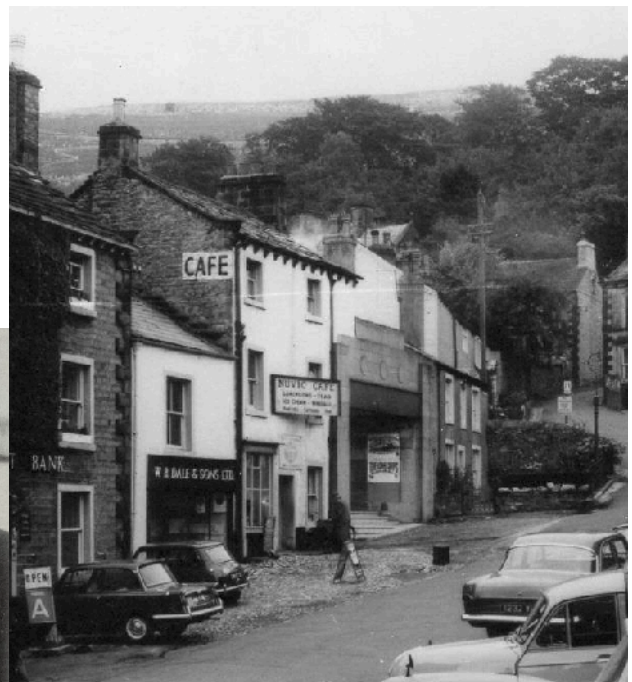
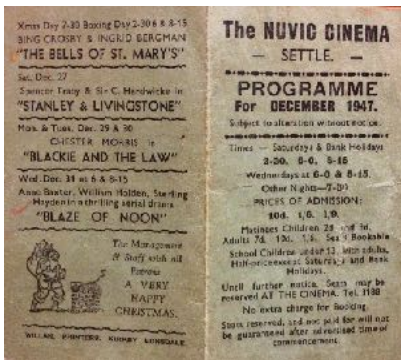
KIRKGATE  
 KINEMA.

Finest and most up-to-date  
 PICTURES.  
 LESSEE — JOHN GRAHAM.



The new technologies of the 20th century brought cinema to Settle in 1915 at the Assembly Rooms in Kirkgate, uphill from Victoria Hall and now a cafe. **Robert Dale** started the business and R Howarth and **Tanny Jerome (Horner)** followed. Tanny took the 'Picture House' cinema to Victoria Hall in 1919. John Graham took over the business in the 1920s, joined by his nephew **Arthur Graham**, son of John's brother Arthur. It was called 'Kirkgate Kinema' [ph2].

In 1931 nephew **Arthur** [ph2,CH] had a new cinema called the 'NuVic' developed in the Market Place on the site of the current Coop building [ph1]. It was remembered as being not at all comfortable there were some double seats. During the war cinemas provided the most up to date news reels of progress on the Front. Films changed four times a week and had to be brought from Leeds. Television eventually took over with the last film shown in the 1950s [ph1]. After that the building was used for bingo and roller skating. He also owned cinemas in Grassington, Ingleton, Bentham, Milnthorpe and Pateley Bridge.



John's brother, John and Jane's son **Arthur**, took over the Langcliffe Post Office [ph1] from his dad, John. Arthur and brother **Matthew** married sisters **Mary Elizabeth** and **Emma Jane Sanderson** respectively. The sisters' father was **John Sanderson** who had run the Talbot Inn in Settle for many years. Arthur and Mary Elizabeth are buried in the unmarked grave **New LX42**.



Arthur and Mary Elizabeth's son **Arthur** (who ran the cinema chain) married **Clara Grace Grisedale** [ph2]. Arthur was a bit of an entrepreneur. As well as the cinematic business Arthur also owned a dog racing track in Skipton with a training track in Settle (on the site of what is now Limestone View). Arthur even manufactured Kendal Mint Cake, here in Settle. Their daughter **Beth Graham** was well known in the town and in local politics throughout her life, the article below in 1950 [2].



Arthur's brother, John and Jane's son **Matthew**, who married **Emma Jane Sanderson**, was an engineer and railway fireman. They are buried with Matthew's parents, in **Old E19**, above.



John and Jane's daughter Jane Graham married Joseph Ralph Cardus, the illegitimate son of *Mary Cardus* and *Thomas Ralph*. Mary and Thomas lived together and had several children but never married. Joseph was a successful joiner. Joseph and Jane are buried in the unmarked grave *New LX1*. John and Jane's daughter Catherine married James Bell, son of *Joseph Bell* the joiner.

## Young Woman Candidate

SETTLE is to provide one of the hundred lady Parliamentary candidates, whose nominations were made this week, in the person of Miss Elizabeth M. Graham, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Graham, of Linden, Settle.

Miss Graham, who is one of the youngest candidates to be nominated, is 23 years of age and has been chosen as Liberal candidate for the Faversham Division of Kent.

politics. She was formerly secretary of the London University Liberal Society and of the Union of University Liberal Societies and, at the age of 20, she was appointed secretary of the National League of Young Liberals, holding this office for about a year.

Since her return to Settle Miss Graham has been actively connected with the Skipton Division Liberal Association and the Settle Branch of the Young Liberal Association for which she has been organiser.

Miss Graham is an accomplished member of the Settle Dramatic Club and has played the leading part in two of its last productions with great merit. Her



John and Jane's son Christopher [ph1], another grocer, married Margaret Ralph, daughter of *Kit Ralph*, and they are buried in *Old G46*

*In affectionate remembrance of Margaret the beloved wife of Christopher Graham of Settle born Dec'r 7th 1879 died Oct'r 27th 1911. Also the above Christopher Graham died Jan 11th 1934 aged 57 years. Rest in peace, Old G46*



John and Jane's youngest daughter Bertha also performed for the Settle Amateur Operatic Society [ph2] before marrying Fred Vernon Hollinshead, a labourer and moving to Lancashire.



*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](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 [settleresearch@gmail.com](mailto:settleresearch@gmail.com). Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.*

*Illustrations kindly provided by Teresa Gordon. The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.*

*Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Lancaster Guardian*

*ph1 – photo credited to the Back in Settle Facebook site, ph2 – with kind permission of John Reid at the Settle Amateur Operatic Society*

*CH - with the kind permission of the Craven Herald and Pioneer*

*SC– Settle Chronicle with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust*