

Charles Ratcliffe, cotton mill manager

Charles Ratcliffe, born in 1786, worked at the peak of cotton manufacture when there were five cotton mills in Settle. Initially Charles was the agent for George Faulkner and sons at Bridge End cotton mill, and in the 1840s Charles managed Runley Mill.

Charles and his wife **Nancy Hargreaves** came from Colne. By the 1830s they had moved to Settle and Charles was listed on the electoral register - a definite sign of wealth. Only one in 14 men in Settle were wealthy enough to meet the voting criteria at that time. In 1844 Charles owned property on Albert Hill behind Twisleton's Yard - the site of a weaving shed, and also rented property behind the Golden Lion on Duke Street.

In 1841 census Charles and Nancy were living on Duke Street with their only child **Ellen** and several girls from Colne. Nancy ran a straw bonnet business, employing the girls from Colne. Daughter Ellen, the widow of a Kirkby Lonsdale surgeon Richard Fell Gregg [1], had run a linen business in Settle before she married.

At the Collegiate Church, by the Rev. W. W. Johnson, M.A., deputy chaplain, Richard Fell Gregg, Esq. surgeon, of Kirkby Lonsdale, Westmoreland, to Ellen, only child of Mr. Charles Ratcliffe, calico-manufacturer, of Settle, in the county of York.

Sacred to the memory of Nancy beloved wife of Charles Ratcliffe of Settle, who in sure and certain hope glorious resurrection departed this life February 14th 1848 aged 57 years. Also of the above mentioned Charles Ratcliffe who departed this life on the 10th July 1850, aged 64 years. Blessed are the peaceful, D17



The gravestone confirms that Nancy died in 1848, followed by Charles in 1850, an elderly (for those days) couple passing away quietly at the end of their lives, which looks like the end of the story. But it isn't.

It seems that as part of Charles' grieving process, he found comfort in young **Mary Ann Hartley**. Within six months of Nancy's death, Mary Ann was pregnant with a daughter **Mary Ellen**. 63 year old Charles 'did the decent thing' and married 21 year old Mary Ann just a year, almost to the day, after Nancy's death. Charles was three times Mary Ann's age! Actually, in those days, it was quite acceptable for a man to marry a much younger wife to produce more heirs. Charles died just a year later.

Mary Ann was the daughter of a humble coachman from Great Marsden, Lancashire who had died when she was a child. It's likely she came to Settle to work with the Ratcliffe family's millinery business. After Charles died, Mary Ann initially continued the cotton business at Runley Mill with the help of her brother **Henry**, but changed to the millinery trade, advertising in 1858 [5C].

SPRING GOODS.
M. A. RATCLIFFE
Has now on hand a well selected assortment of
MILLINERY
And Cheap Ribbons in great variety, also a large quantity of
Plain and Fancy
STRAW BONNETS
At extraordinary low prices, to which she respectfully calls
the particular attention of her numerous Friends, and the
Public generally.
Duke Street, Settle, May 1st, 1858.
N.B.—A good stock of MOURNING BONNETS at all
prices, always on hand.

In 1861 Mary Ann had another strategic marriage, this time to widowed inland revenue supervisor **Leonard Ward**. She had three daughters, Martha, Jane and Rebecca (Ettie) with him and they settled in Ashton-under-Lyne. Leonard already had two daughters and a son from his first wife **Mary Long** who had died in Settle in 1860. When he died in 1890, Leonard was buried back in Settle with his first wife, extremely likely to be in a plot immediately behind that of Charles and Nancy Ratcliffe, with a grand stone that is now illegible. RTI imaging shows the letters 'MARY' at the beginning of the inscription.



Curious tales from the Graveyard

Mary Ann migrated to Massachusetts, USA with her daughter **Martha** who had married a cabinet maker, **Simpson Booth**, and eventually died in 1920, aged 92. Daughters Jane and Ettie also emigrated with their husbands. For some reason, Leonard left his (really quite small) estate to Mary Ellen, Charles' daughter who had married headmaster **John Hadfield** and lived in Derbyshire.

Brother Henry Hartley went into partnership with his brother John in cotton manufacture. Runley Mill was destroyed by fire during the 1850s. Undaunted, Henry and John started a business in Kirkby Malham but by the 1870s had established themselves back in Settle, employing over 100 men. Henry lived at King's Mill and John at Marshfield in Kirkgate, Settle. The cotton industry was in decline, but, cleverly, the brothers spun cotton waste, which provided a thriving business during the 'Cotton Famine' when cotton imports from America were disrupted by the civil war. In 1885 they sold 2 pairs of sheets to Charles Edwin Towler [John Reid]. In 1886 Henry's wife died, and the partnership with brother John was dissolved. Henry moved to Burnley with his many children, still working in cotton [ph1]. Henry's descendants remember that he died a pauper on the streets of Blackpool, unfortunately.



Sales by Auction,
KING'S MILL, SETTLE.
PRELIMINARY ADVERTISEMENT.

MR. MATTHEW WATSON has received instructions from Messrs. J. and H. Hartley to catalogue and **SELL BY AUCTION** (piecemeal), on the above premises on an early date, the whole of the **WASTE SPINNING MACHINERY, LOGMS, and Effects** in the above Mill, namely, cop bottom, Old-ham willow; single breaking-up machine, 4 sets of 3-cylinder breaking machines, soft waste willow, single lap machine for 48in. cards, 15 single carding engines, 48-in. on the wire, with coiler fronts; Derby doubler, 2 roving frames, 120 spindles each; 2 do., 90 spindles each; 2 pairs mules, containing about 3,600 in all; 20 sheeting looms, 20 narrow looms, contents of smithy and mechanics' shop; the whole stock of waste, yarn, and cloth in process of manufacture; strapping, mill stores, and many loose effects.

Fuller particulars in posters, catalogues, and future advertisements.

John and Henry put King's Mill up for sale in 1887 [2], however John continued to work at King's Mill. His wife **Mary Wormwell** had given birth to an illegitimate child called Hartley Wormwell a few years before they married, and this could have been John's child. They had five other children. John left Mary the equivalent of £400,000 today when he died, in 1895. They are buried in the *Old grave C18* with their son John who died in the same year as John (Snr). They have a fine gravestone.

In loving memory of John Hartley of King's Mill Settle born June 2nd 1826 died Feb 23rd 1895. Also Mary wife of the above born March 19th March 19th 1828 died Jan 18th 1905. Also John Walter their son born July 14th 1870 died Oct 16th 1895, C18



So what happened to Charles and Nancy's widowed daughter Ellen? Well, the surprises keep on coming. She met **Frederick Furlonger**, the son of Timothy Furlonger, an innkeeper from Warminster. Frederick was a solicitor's clerk who had invested in the railways. However, like many others, he was unlucky and lost a considerable amount of money. Unlike many others, he was so desperate that in August 1850 he embezzled one pound and 12 shillings from his employer in Woodbridge, Suffolk [3].

SINGULAR CASE OF EMBEZZLEMENT.—*Joseph Symonds* alias *Frederick Furlonger*, 31, a respectably dressed man, who took notes during the trial, was charged with having embezzled various sums of money the property of his employer, Mr. John Wood, of Woodbridge.—Mr. Power appeared for the prosecu-

Mr. Coburn then stepped into the witness-box. He said, I am a solicitor, at Settle, in Yorkshire. The prisoner married the daughter of a client of mine; during the railway mania he got into difficulties; his real name is Furlonger; he never was a clerk of mine

Curious tales from the Graveyard

During the trial it transpired that he had an alias 'Joseph Symonds' and had committed bigamy, already having a wife Sophia Brown (and a daughter Alice Ann Furlonger), 'a very foolish thing to do'. Oh dear. It also implied that Frederick had falsely claimed 'through the medium of a forged certificate' that he had worked as a clerk for the Settle solicitor *John Cowburn* who himself lost money on the railways.

Frederick was found guilty. He was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, with hard labour, narrowly avoiding transportation. This explains why Ellen was found in the 1851 census as 'Ellen Gregg' in Staffordshire with their son Charles

John 'Gregg'. Charles' birth and baptism records was under the name Furlonger. This whole business may also have something to do with the death of Ellen's dad Charles in July 1850.

Frederick and Ellen had a second son, **George Frederick Furlonger**, in 1854 but he died in infancy. Ellen 'officially' married Frederick in 1861 just after the the death of his first wife Sophia and birth of their third son, **Frederick Ridgeway Furlonger**. As if all this wasn't enough, Frederick was then declared bankrupt in 1868 – oh dear again! Frederick died in 1879, still working as a solicitor's clerk in Wiltshire. Ellen died at the Lambeth workhouse three years later.

Frederick's daughter Alice Ann was brought up by her grandmother **Alice Brown** who ran an inn in Bristol. Alice Ann married a schoolmaster **James Elliott** who ran a school in Hastings. They had four children and plenty of servants, so Alice Ann 'did alright' despite Frederick.

Frederick and Ellen's son Charles John Furlonger also had a busy life. He made a living from odd jobs in Surrey, including painting and selling mineral water. He married **Emma Holmes**, a butchers daughter and they had nine children.

Son Frederick Ridgeway Furlonger emigrated to Queensland, Australia in the 1870s. He mixed with 'the pioneers of the timber industry'. When he died in 1943, aged 87, Frederick's obituary tells us that he was a good Christian man. He worked as a solicitor's clerk and was also a librarian at the School of Arts [4]. In 1896 Frederick was an auditor for the municipal district of Lismore [4].

So Frederick did rather well too. Once in Australia Frederick married **Clara Hollingworth** and they also had nine children, one of whom was called **Charles Radcliffe Furlonger** [ph2].



You have been foolish enough to marry two wives—a very foolish thing to do—at the same time, what was still more foolish, you have been engaged in railway speculations, and lost a good deal of money. Under these circumstances, one ought not to bear too hardly upon a person who has tried to get back into a respectable situation, under such circumstances. Excepting in the matter before me, I do not attribute to you the idea that you came, through the medium of a forged certificate of character, for the purpose of cheating Mr. Wood. But the temptation seems to have come upon you whilst you were there, perhaps from distress owing to railway speculations. As I hope you are not wholly irremediable, the sentence is, that you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for twelve calendar months. If I thought you had done this deliberately, I should certainly sentence you to transportation. But I do not. The prisoner burst into tears, and cried bitterly as he was removed.

MR F. R. FURLONGER— AN APPRECIATION

(Contributed.)

To those of the older generation the opinion is general that the passing of Mr. F. R. Furlonger deprived the community of a good citizen, a conscientious Christian, and a worker in all good causes. Born in England, he came to Australia as a young man, and was associated on the Richmond in the early 70's with such pioneers as Messrs. J. G. Snow, J. E. Glasgow, J. P. F. Walker, J. D. Forbes and E. Savill, Senr., in the timber industry. For many years Mr. Furlonger was confidential clerk in the office of Mr. N. J. Simmons, solicitor, and at one period was librarian of the School of Arts.

As a speaker he gave well-thought-out and logical addresses. He was a great Bible student. In 1885 he came into membership with the Church of Christ, and his main activities since that time were with the Church and temperance work. At the time of his death he held the office of Elder, having been previously secretary and treasurer for long terms. For the last year and eight months he resided in Brisbane, where his wife, who was associated with him in all his Christian activities, predeceased him a few months ago. Of his large family, one daughter, Mrs. M. A. Newton (Lismore) and four sons, Charles, James, Robert and Liam, survive.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LISMORE.

NOTICE is hereby given that John William Coleman, Vincent John Norris, and John Gollan have been duly elected as Aldermen for the abovenamed Municipality for the ensuing three years.

And Claude St. Helier Syer and Frederick Ridgway Furlonger as Auditors for the current municipal year.

JAMES FRANCIS O'FLYNN,
Councill Chambers, Lismore, Returning Officer.
4th February, 1896.



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.

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 settlerearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'. The lives of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.

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SC - Settle Chronicle, with kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust

ph1 - photo kind permission of Robert Currie, descendant of the family, ph2 - photo credited to the descendants of the family on ancestry.co.uk, user HollingworthN

Thanks to Robert Currie and Jim Parker for their help with the compilation of this story.