

## Thomas Holmes, father of a plumbing dynasty

Thomas Holmes was born in 1811 in Glasson Dock on coast beside Lancaster. He married **Betty Richmond** in Giggleswick in 1832 and they had five sons and three daughters. Thomas set up a plumbing business in Castle Hill which was to last over 100 years and also owned land and property back in Glasson Dock. Thomas worked until he died, aged 71, one year after Betty's death. They are buried together in a top spot, right by the door of the church, close to the graves of their children Ann, Betty and William who, for some reason, all died when they were 17 years old.

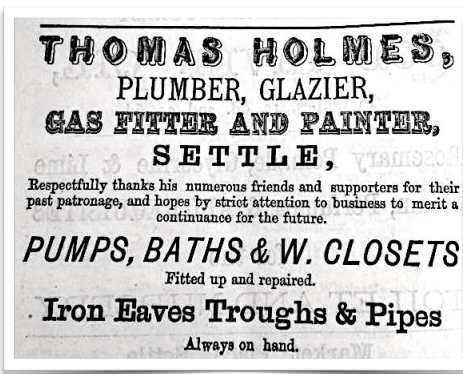
*In memory of Thomas Holmes of Settle who died Feb 15th 1882 aged 72 years. Betty the beloved wife of Thomas Holmes of Settle who died Octr 9th 1881 aged 71 years, C1.*

*In memory of Ann, daughter of Thomas and Betty Holmes, who died January 10th 1850 aged 17 years. Also of William their son who died Novr 1852 aged 17 years. Also of Betty their daughter who died April 14th 1866 aged 17 years, C4.*



Thomas' sons James, Thomas and John ran the business together for a while [LSA].

Thomas and Betty's third son **Thomas Holmes (Jnr)**, born in 1838, worked as a plumber on Castle Hill too [LSA]. In 1866 he married **Isabella Johnson** and they had at least 11 children. Two of them, **John** and **Francis Thomas**, died in infancy and are in the Ancient graveyard. In 1880 Thomas had a bit of an accident stepping on a plank [1].



Thomas (Jnr) was a member of the first Settle Parish Council in 1894, along with several other familiar names [5], which is when this photo [ph2] was taken. In 1895 the Parish Council was involved in a dispute with Mrs Birkbeck over the access on 'Lodge-road' between Anley and the Lodge.

Isabella died in 1894, aged 47 and is buried in the unmarked grave *Old AX69* with adult sons **William Henry** and **Frederick George** and her youngest infant son **Edwin**, aged just 10 weeks. After eleven children she must have been worn out.

**ACCIDENT.**—On Tuesday afternoon last, whilst Mr. Thomas Holmes, plumber, Settle, was engaged upon some work in connection with the building of a new house at Craven Terrace, he stepped upon a wrong plank, which caused him to fall to the ground, a distance of several yards. He sustained injury to both wrists, and was also bruised in several places.

**PARISH COUNCIL.**—The usual monthly meeting of the Settle Parish Council was held on Tuesday evening, in the Boardroom, Castle Hill. Mr. G. K. Charlesworth presided. There were also present Messrs. Thos. Clark, Wm. Dugdale, T. Harger, T. Holmes, Jno. Hunter, Chas. J. Lord (hon. Clerk), Jno. Lord, Jno. Parker, and Jas. Parker.—A letter was read from Mrs. Birkbeck, in which she stated that the Lodge-road was a private one. It was resolved that Mrs. Birkbeck be asked to furnish the Council with proof of the same. —

At the time of the 1901 census the Castle Hill house was occupied by five of Thomas's children, but not Thomas. Why? 58 year old Thomas had married 39 year old **Mary Ann Lamb** [ph3]. Mary Ann came from a successful Lawkland farming family and many of her descendants are buried in Giggleswick graveyard. Her parents John and Mary are in B8/73. Wife Mary is unnamed on the gravestone but she was the sister of farmer **Emmanuel Johnson** whose daughters married into several of our graveyard families. In one of those local crossings of paths, Mary Ann was the first cousin of Thomas' first wife Isabella, their grandparents in common being John Johnson and Ann Newsholme.



*In affectionate remembrance of John Lamb of Blaithwaite who died November 2nd 1894 aged 66 years. Also wife of the above who died at Settle Nov. 4th 1910 aged 80 years.*

When Mary Ann was 16, her uncle Edward Lamb disappeared and, as it transpired had a tragic and lonely death. He suffered from mental health problems and, presumably, took his own life in a disused building after telling relations he intended to go abroad. His body was not discovered for several months [6].

Thomas and Mary Ann lived in Goldielands, Settle with their three daughters and Mary Ann's mum who was just seven years older than Thomas. Thomas died suddenly of a stroke in 1908, aged 70. The report of his death said that he was 'one of the oldest and most respected tradesmen in the district' and 'was of a jovial nature, fond of cracking a joke, and a man who would always do a good turn, if possible to his fellow human beings.' [A] It also explained he had a prominent role in the church choir and choral society and had lead roles in the Amateur Dramatic Society productions of 'Pinafore' and 'Trial by Jury'. Although buried in an unmarked grave, his coffin bore an inscription 'Thomas Holmes, died Nov 29th 1908, aged 70'.

he retired to rest on Sunday night. About 11 p.m. he appears to have been taken ill and shortly afterwards had an apoplectic stroke, and died in about an hour. He was one of the oldest and most respected tradesmen in the district, and had been a hard worker all his life. He was of a jovial nature, fond of cracking a joke, and a man who would always do a good turn, if possible, to his fellow beings. He was

**SAD OCCURRENCE.**—An inquest was held on Monday, before Mr Thomas P. Brown, deputy coroner, on the body of **Edward Lamb**, a farmer at Armistead, near Settle. The deceased, who has for some years shown signs of aberration of mind, was missing from his home about two and a half years ago, and was then found concealed in one of the farm outbuildings. He left his home again about a year ago, with the expressed intention of going to America, taking about £430 with him, and leaving a bill in which he provided that in case he should not be heard of for four years, his property should be divided according to his directions. A letter was received from Liverpool from him, saying that he had paid his passage, and would sail shortly; but his friends on inquiry found out that he had not sailed in the vessel he had taken a passage in, and they expected he would remain in the neighbourhood of Liverpool, and turn up again at Christmas. His body was accidentally discovered on the 17th inst., near to his own residence in a loft of an old building that is seldom used. About £400 was found on his person. He was 43 years of age, and is supposed to have been dead about eight or nine months. The jury found a verdict of "Found dead."

one of the committees. He took a great interest in music, and was at one time a leading man in the choir at the Parish Church and a member of the old choral society. He also, in his early days, took part in the operatic and other performances of the now defunct Amateur Dramatic Society, having leading parts in "Pinafore" and "Trial by Jury." He was at one time a volunteer, possessing the long service medal, and took a great interest in the Volunteer Band and finally retired with the rank of band sergeant. He was also one of the first members of

Mary Ann and their daughters took over the house and business in Castle Hill, with the help of step son Thomas. She described to as a 'Plumba's business' in the census return. Thomas is buried in unmarked *Old grave* FX66 with his second wife and son **Orlando Johnson Holmes** from his first marriage and **Nelly Holmes**, a spinster, from his second.





Thomas and Isabella's eldest daughter **Jane Holmes** married **Gregory Twisleton** who was the cousin of the Yorkshire dialect poet **Tom Twisleton**. Gregory was a grocer in Settle's Market Place. They are buried in an unmarked grave *New KX27*.

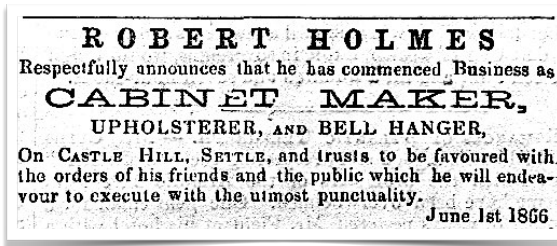
Going back a generation, Thomas (Snr) and Betty's daughter **Jane Holmes** married the extremely talented **Edmund Handby** and they are buried in *Old G28* with their son Edmund and his wife. Their stone also commemorates the life of their son John.



*In loving memory of Jane wife of Edmund Handby died Feb 17 1909 aged 62. Also Edmund Handby died (?) Feb 1918, aged 67. Also Edmund ...their son died Sept 10 1935 aged 57 years. Also of John their son died at Germiston South Africa March (?) 1904 aged 28 years.*

Thomas (Snr) and Betty's youngest son **Robert** was a cabinet maker, upholsterer and bell hanger [SC]. In the 1881 census, he was lodging in London describing himself as a

widower and an American farmer. He will have had some interesting stories!



Eldest son **John Richmond Holmes** was born 18 months before his parents' marriage in Lancaster, so may not have been Thomas' son. However, he was brought up as part of the family and also became a plumber. His wife **Elizabeth Burniston** gave him two sons and two daughters although the eldest, **Thomas Holmes**, died in infancy in 1862 and may be buried with his grandparents in *Ancient C1* or with aunts and uncles in *Ancient C4*. The other three children remained unmarried. John Richmond Holmes, his wife, and their unmarried children are commemorated in *Old C37*.



*In loving memory of Elizabeth wife of John Richmond Holmes who died Sep 15th 1892 aged 58 years. Also Thomas son of above who died in infancy. Also of the above John Richmond Holmes who died Dec 3rd 1900 aged 69 years. Also Margaret daughter of the above who died Jan 2nd 1938 aged 75 years. Also Ann eldest daughter who died Nov 16th 1942 aged 83 years. Also Thomas their son who died April 23rd 1950 aged 82 years.*

Their second son, another **Thomas**, made a living as a painter. His name and that of his partner **George**

**Armistead**, was found on a wall of a house in Giggleswick where they had been working [ph1]. After his parents died Thomas lived with Handby and Burniston cousins and spent his last years back in Castle Hill with sister who had worked as a cook in domestic service for most of her life. Daughter Margaret spent most of her life living with her aunt and uncle, Edmund and Jane Handby. Ann and Margaret were buried together with their parents filling the grave and so son Thomas, the last to die, was buried alone in the unmarked grave *New EX3*.

Daughter Ann remained a spinster with an impressive life. Her obituary suggest she was 'the cook housekeeper to titled and other well known families in London and the southern counties.' At the time of the 1901 she worked for Lieutenant Colonel Morgan Samuel Crofton in Essex. On retiring to Settle she was a founder member of the North Ribblesdale habitation



#### OCTOGENARIAN'S DEATH.

The death has occurred as a result of an accident sustained at her home a few weeks ago, of Miss Ann Holmes, Castle Hill, Settle. A member of an old Settle family, Miss Holmes, aged 83, was for many years cook-housekeeper to titled and other well known families in London and the Southern counties. Upon her retirement she returned to Settle and resumed her interest in many local organisations. She was one of the original members of the North Ribblesdale Habitation, Primrose League, and a staunch churchwoman. She was a member also of the Settle Women's Voluntary Services.

for the Primrose League (Conservative Party), WVS and the church [7].

John Richmond Holmes' wife Elizabeth Burniston was the second daughter of William Burniston, a farmer at Winskill, and his wife **Margaret Leak**. Elizabeth's two brothers, Richard and John, both became police constables. Local constabularies were established in 1856 and the brothers signed up straight away. John joined the Lancashire force and worked in Manchester. Richard signed up to the West Riding Force in December 1856. His records tell us that he was 5ft 9 inches tall, had dark brown hair, grey eyes and a florid (flushed) complexion. Before joining the force he had worked in Langcliffe as a butcher for Thomas Preston.

Richard was promoted a couple of times and served in Morley and then Stainborough, a rural area south of Barnsley. He dealt with the usual breaches of licensing laws and other petty crime. Richard's beat included the enormous Wentworth Castle estate [ph4]. In 1873 Richard was rewarded with £50 by **Frederick William Thomas Vernon Wentworth Esquire** after alerting his staff to a fire in the western part of the hall. The fire was put out in about two hours using the equipment on site and the local fire brigade.

The article was corrected a week later by a member of the staff, also explaining that *'the venerable owner of Wentworth Castle was not disturbed in his sleep, and was not aware of the alarm until he woke up at his usual hour in the morning.'*[3]

FWT Vernon Wentworth Esquire was nominally the High Sheriff of Yorkshire. He was a direct descendant of William the Conqueror, the name 'Vernon' coming from the town of the same name in Normandy. As a child, he had inherited Wentworth Castle from his great-grandfather, the Earl of Strafford, and as a result added the surname Wentworth by royal license. He had married **The Lady Augusta Brudenell Bruce**, a direct descendant of 'Bruce of Bannockburn'. When he died, aged 90, Wentworth's obituary painted a picture of a reclusive yet benevolent character. How the other half live. Wentworth Castle is now owned by the National Trust.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, three years after the Wentworth Castle fire PC Richard Burniston was assaulted by **Daniel Mellond** who had come over to Barnsley from Lancashire and was causing trouble [4]. Mr Wainwright, surgeon, said Richard *'had received a very severe contused bruised on the left side of his face, as well as a black eye'*. Richard's police record also made a note of this injury, stating he was hit with a hedge stake.



**STAINBOROUGH.**  
**THE FIRE AT WENTWORTH CASTLE.—MUNIFICENT REWARD TO P.C. BURNISTON.**—We understand that F. W. T. Vernon Wentworth, Esq. has sent to Police-constable Burniston, through whose alertness the fire at Wentworth Castle last week was discovered before it had attained serious dimensions, the sum of fifty guineas, as an acknowledgment of his services. In reference to the account of the fire which was given last week, "Fairplay" writes from Wentworth Castle as follows:—"Permit me to correct the account respecting the fire at Wentworth Castle, published in your paper to-day (Saturday). The policeman rang a small bell at the porter's hall door, and then came round to our bed room window, which is on the same floor, and we spoke to him, and immediately opened the door, and conducted him to where the fire was in the store room. The large bell, that is described as having been rung by him, he was not able to get to, as it can only be rung from inside the house." We may add that the venerable owner of Wentworth Castle was not disturbed in his sleep, and was not aware of the alarm until he woke at his usual hour in the morning.

of Keresforth Hill. A struggle ensued, but P.C. Burniston took charge of a man named Hargreaves, and Hird apprehended Ford, and they had reached Kingstone-place, when the prisoner Mellond came behind the former officer and struck him a very violent blow over the side of the face with a stick, which knocked him down and stunned him. When he came round he found that the prisoner Ford had escaped, carrying with him a pair of handcuffs. Both prisoners, however, were apprehended the same night, but Ford had contrived to take off the handcuffs.

**Walter Kay, and Edward Hargreave.**—Mr. Wainwright, surgeon, said that on examining P.C. Burniston he found that he had received a very severe contused bruise on the left side of the face, as well as a black eye, and was even now very faint; and that P.C. Hird had received a blow on one side of the jaw. In Burniston's case there was a danger of erysipelas setting in.—In reply to the bench, Mr. Sykes said



Brothers Richard and John both married but didn't have children.

William and Margaret's daughter, **Hannah Burniston**, married a railway platelayer called **Robert Wigglesworth** who was from Rathmell, confusingly. Robert was the illegitimate son of **Mary Wigglesworth** who married farmer **William Heywood** 18 months after Robert was born. For some reason, during the 1880s, Robert disappeared from records and Hannah Maria and their two daughters changed their name to Heywood. Hannah Maria died, an 83 year old washerwoman, and is buried with her daughter **Annie Bentham** and her husband **James Bentham** in the unmarked *Old KX33*.



William Burniston, aged 61 and Margaret, aged 52 both died in 1853 and were buried at Langcliffe with their eldest daughter **Mary Ann** who had married **Samuel Harding**, a hatmaker.



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

*ph1 – photo with the kind permission of descendants of Chris Chandler, ph2 – with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust, ph3 – credited to the Back in Settle facebook page, via family descendant Michele Ives-Davess, ph4 – credited to Wikipedia*

*LSA – Lambert's Settle Almanac, SC – Settle Chronicle, with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust*

*Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Barnsley Independent, 3 – Cheltenham examiner, 4 – Barnsley Chronicle, 5 – Lancaster Standard, 6 – Leeds Times, 7 – Lancaster Guardian*

*A – credited to descendant Michele Ives-davess via the Back in Settle Facebook page, originally from the Colindale Newspaper Library in London*

*The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.*