

The Duxburys, hardworking folk

The fertile Duxbury families made good, honest livings with little scandal. George Duxbury, born in 1813 in Colne, seems to be the only surviving son of **John Duxbury**, a weaver and his wife **Mary Whittaker**. George had seven younger sisters and twin sisters who had died before he was born.

In 1840 George married **Alice Yeates** from Burton-in-Lonsdale. They lived in New Street, Langcliffe. George worked as a licensed hawker, a street seller, to earn money to bring up 11 children. However, he was able to supplement his income as a constable. Before the West Riding Constabulary was set up in 1856 the local gentry selected tall, strong men to be community constables for a fixed period, usually a couple of years. It was a well paid role and candidates were expected to be well respected and of 'good character'. In later years, George worked as an insurance agent which was probably far more lucrative than street selling.

Unfortunately, George's reputation was brought into question in 1860 when he was convicted of having been found in possession of wool and worsted yarns in contravention of the 'Worsted Act'. Hand weaving was another lucrative side-line for the working classes and wool products were often obtained, '*no questions asked*'. Despite providing an explanation George was found guilty and he chose to be imprisoned for one month rather than paying the fine of £20. Newspapers provided quite different versions of the story, one saying that an inspector failed to follow up his side of the story and the other claiming that he was arrested after '*a watch was kept upon his motions for no fewer than fourteen nights.*' [1,2]. Nineteenth century policing at its best! However, this was the only hiccup in George's career. In 1866 George '*presided at the piano and gave two solos*' at a concert by the Singing Club at Clapham, '*assisted by several eminent musicians from Keighley*' [3C].

the prisoner having for some time been suspected, a watch was kept upon his motions for no fewer than fourteen nights, and he was eventually found with the embezzled material in his possession. The case was clear, and in default of paying the imposed fine of £20, Duxbury was committed to the Wakefield House of Correction for one month.

Gipsies Laughing " The singing club also sung some excellent pieces, in which Mr. Frederick Camm, who possesses a melodious voice, as the principal alto, was much admired. Mr. Duxbury presided at the piano, and gave two solos, which were enthusiastically applauded.

George and Alice had long lives and are buried at Langcliffe with their youngest daughter Lizzie who died aged 11. Unusually for a hawker's family they have a fine gravestone but this was probably paid for by some of their relations – there were several who had incredibly interesting and successful lives and could have afforded a good stone.

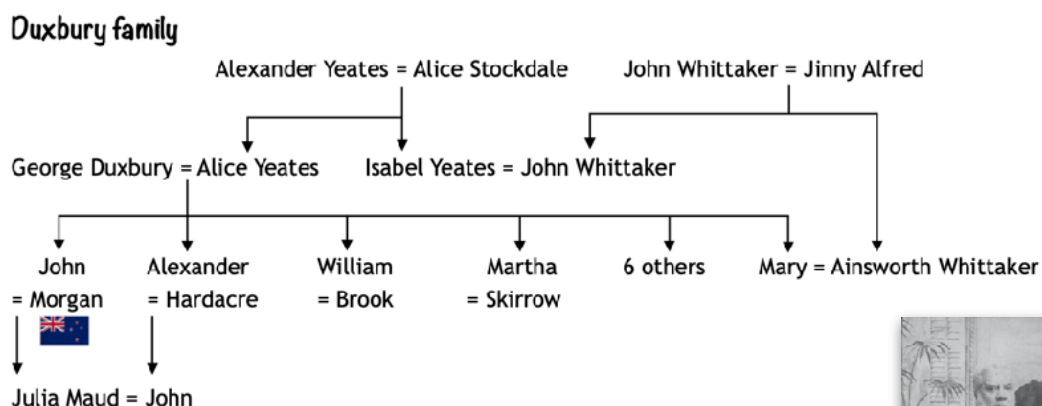
In loving memory of George Duxbury of Langcliffe who died March 23rd 1882 in his 70th year. Also Alice, his wife who died Sept 30th 1898 in her 78th year. Also Elizabeth Ann (Lizzie), their daughter who died Nov 1st 1875 aged 11 years.



Alice's younger sister, **Isabel Yeates**, had married **John Whittaker** who began life as a grocer in Padiham and then, during the 1860s, became a cotton manufacturer at the Wellington and Daisyfield Mills in Padiham and the Britannia Mill, Crayshawbooth. In one census John recorded employing 360 hands – he was a significant employer. This was a precarious time to run a cotton mill because of the 'cotton famine' brought about by the American Civil War. Cotton supplies were unpredictable. However John ran the mills well and had a reputation for treating his workers fairly, frequently treating them to trip out. In 1889, he organised a trip to Blackpool, '*the Brighton of the North*', for 350 workers and 150 of the workers' friends and family to celebrate his son, **John Harry Whittaker's** 21st birthday. It was '*greatly enjoyed and the workpeople highly appreciated the excellent treat. Each adult, on the previous day had received a jubilee half crown, and each minor 1/6 and the generosity of Mr Whittaker was declared to be unparalleled in Padiham.*' [3,4]

TREAT TO WORKPEOPLE. — Mr. John Whittaker, manufacturer, celebrated his son's 21st birthday, on Saturday, by providing a handsome treat for his workpeople employed at Wellington and Daisyfield Mills, and the Shed at Crayshawbooth. The

John's obituary described him as being *'one of the leading spirits in the public life of the town.'* [3] John, also a JP, left an estate of £79,000 when he died aged 85 in 1911, worth nearly £10million today's value. Son John Harry continued to run the mill until 1930.



Meanwhile, back in Langcliffe, George and Alice Duxbury's eldest daughter **Mary Duxbury**, born in 1843, married **Ainsworth Whittaker** who was the (much) younger brother of John Whittaker and lived in Bolton. Ainsworth, *'a grocer, draper and retailer of wines'* didn't quite have the business acumen of his brother, being declared bankrupt in 1877. After that Ainsworth worked as an oatcake baker. Ainsworth and Mary [ph1] died within a year of each other in their late 70s, Ainsworth having grown an impressive beard, without a moustache, very fashionable at the time.



George and Alice Duxbury's eldest son **John Duxbury**, worked for his uncle John Whittaker's business in Padiham. (Whilst there he lived in a house next door to **Fanny and Jane Waugh** from Settle, the sisters of NSPCC founder **Benjamin Waugh**.) John Duxbury was also a Sunday School secretary and teacher. When he reached the age of 21, in 1862, John decided to follow his dreams and emigrate to New Zealand, in the steps of several other young men of Settle who had sent back stories of wealth and success. John had a *'fast trip of 83 days'* and, finding no success in gold mines, took on a plot of 20 acres of uncultivated land. By helping to build a road, John was paid in the currency of land rather than cash and so developed a farm which he called *'Langcliffe'*. In 1873 he married **Eliza Morgan**, the daughter of one of the earliest settlers in the area and they had at least eight children [ph2]. Allegedly John returned to Langcliffe once, to buy a bull and a flush toilet, the first in that part of the world. He founded a successful cheese-making industry in Robinson's Bay, Akaroa an idyllic stretch of coastline south of Christchurch.



George and Alice's youngest son **William Duxbury**, born in 1859, started his working life as a butcher, working for **George Joseph Beardall** at the Town Hall. After two years he decided to work for the Midland Railway, helping to build the Settle to Carlisle Railway line. At the time of the 1881 census, aged 22, William was *'out of employ'* but then, perhaps inspired by brother-in-law Ainsworth Whittaker, he became an oatcake baker in Settle. Oatcakes were big business in West Yorkshire and Westmorland, being the carbohydrate of choice rather than bread. Oats could be grown more easily than wheat in this area. Oatcakes (also known as havercakes or riddle bread) were made from a yeasty batter and similar to the modern crumpet but could be up to 30cm diameter. As they cooked on a slate slab over a fire, bubbles rose to give its *'riddled'* appearance. They were easy to cook over fires without the need for an oven and were hung to dry ready for the week ahead. Even so, it was easier to buy from a professional like William

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who, unsurprisingly, won numerous awards for his oatcakes at the North Ribblesdale Agricultural Show.

Way back in the 18th century, havercakes also gave their name to the 1st Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, 'raised in 1702'. *'The recruiting sergeant passed through town with an oatcake stuck on the point of each sword as an inducement to draw the lads to enlist to a regiment where such fare was plentiful'*[2, ph4]. Soldiers carried havercakes in their haversacks.

Back in the 19th century William advertised his business regularly [LSA]. Adverts show he ran his business in Chapel Square and, from 1891, in the Market Place. He advertised his business with a sign on the front of the Shambles and the census returns suggest he lived next door to photographer Anthony Horner [ph10]. In 1899 William moved his business to Cheapside, 'next door to Mr Lambert' taking over the shop from *J W Sidwells*, where he stayed for many years, choosing to have an elaborate window engraving which is still in place today at Age UK, although partially covered by signage.

In 1885, aged 26, William married **Mary Ann Brook**, a miner's daughter from Barnsley, at Settle Parish Church. They had four children although their infant **George** died in Barnsley in 1892. In 1954 the local paper ran an article to celebrate William's 95th birthday, *'the oldest man in the district'* [ph10]. The article mentioned that he had always been a keen sportsman, taking part in bowls and chess when he was unable to play cricket and football. William and Mary Ann retired to live in 3 West View, overlooking the rugby pitch, appropriately. *'Except for being very deaf Mr Duxbury retains all his faculties although he is not able to walk about much. He still has an exceptionally good memory.'* William died later that year, on Christmas Day 1954, one of the oldest burials in the graveyard. His wife had died 32 years previously and they were buried together in *Old K29* with son **Brooke Duxbury**, a mechanical engineer, and his wife **Susan Marion Taylor** who lived in Flaxton near York.



In memory of Mary Ann wife of William Duxbury died Dec 5th 1925 aged 62 years. At rest. Also of William Duxbury died December 25th 1954 aged 95 years. Brooke Duxbury 1895 - 1970, Susan Marion Duxbury 1893 - 1990

William and Mary Ann's daughter **Blanche** performed with the Settle Amateur Operatic Society [ph7]. When she was 44, she became the second wife of **John Whitfield Overing**, a draper and tailor. John's first wife was **Annie Moore**, sister of Settle draper **John Moore**. William and Mary Ann's daughter **Aline Duxbury** married **John Nelson** from the Settle cobblers' business.

Unlike several of her sisters, George and Alice Duxbury's youngest surviving daughter, **Martha**, born in 1862, decided on a career in domestic service, rather than the path of weaving in Lancashire mills. By some good fortune, at the time of the 1891 census Martha was working as a servant at the palatial and beautifully constructed 77 Cromwell Road in Kensington, near Hyde Park in London and just down the road from the Natural History



Miss Blanche Duxbury.

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Museum. That's quite different to Langcliffe! The owner of the property was none other than **Walter Morrison**, the MP for Skipton from 1895 and 'The Grand Old Man of Craven'. He had inherited Malham Tarn House and estate at the age of 21 in 1857. Walter was a generous benefactor with numerous contributions to local business and educational institutions in Malhamdale, Settle and Giggleswick. He took an active interest in Giggleswick School for sixty years and built Giggleswick School Chapel, no expense spared. In 1864 Walter built Settle's Drill Hall and equipped the Settle Volunteer Corps.

Martha had previously served at Malham Tarn House. The butler in residence at the Cromwell Road residence in the census return was **William Skirrow** from Eccleshill, Bradford. Two years later Martha, aged 31 and William, aged 27, (not 29 as stated on the certificate!) married in Kirkby Malham church.

William's father, another **William Skirrow**, died when he was two so he was brought up by his mother **Elizabeth (Starkey) Skirrow**. Both of William's parents were widowed when they married so William had five half-siblings on his father's side, three on his mother's side and two full siblings. Quite a family! Most of them remained in Bradford working in the woollen mills. Martha worked her way up to become the cook and then housekeeper of the London residence. William and Martha stayed in service to Walter Morrison for their whole lives. In census returns Martha and William happened to be at the London property but they may well have worked in both properties, Downton Abbey style.

When William and Martha married their witnesses were fellow servants **Robert Battersby** and **Bella Lodge**. Robert, born in 1850 was the illegitimate son of **Alice Battersby** in Long Preston. By the age of 21 Robert worked at Malham Tarn House as a groom and by the time of the next census worked as the coachman, a position he held for the rest of his life. He didn't marry. **Bella Lodge**, born in 1853, was the daughter of **Charles Lodge** of Starbotton, a successful lead miner. Bella's mother, **Elizabeth Carr**, died when Bella was six. Bella was not listed on census returns at Malham Tarn until 1911 having worked in service in Gargrave and Linton (near Grassington) but obviously knew William and Martha by the time of their marriage in 1893. Bella became the housekeeper at Malham Tarn and it was said that she acted like a lady when the master was away.

This wonderful photo of unknown source [ph8], probably taken around the time of the war, shows some of Walter Morrison's staff at Malham Tarn. Notes with the photo describe that Robert Battersby is on the back row with the hat, William Skirrow stands on the right with his pipe and Bella Lodge [L] and Martha Skirrow [R] are sitting together at the front with the dogs. The man on the far left is likely to be **John Robinson Dickinson**, a footman and son of a Settle grocer. The scullery maid at the front was **Gladys Ward**, the daughter of Walter's gamekeeper **Alfred Ward** who had taken over the position from his father **William Ward**. Alfred's sister **Beatrice Ward** married **William Henry Lupton** who had worked for Walter Morrison as a chauffeur. Walter employed several other staff from Settle. **Mary Garner**, employed as a housemaid, was the



Back row (left to right): The cook (Elizabeth Carr),
Walter Morrison (with pipe), Robert Battersby (with hat),
William Skirrow (with pipe), Bella Lodge (left),
Martha Skirrow (right).
Front row (left to right): John Robinson Dickinson (with hat),
Gladys Ward (with dog), Martha Skirrow (with dog),
Bella Lodge (with dog).
The girl on the front
is Gladys Ward
daughter of Alfred Ward
gamekeeper (from Settle).
The staff (ph. 8) (scullery maid)

daughter of gardener **Robert Garner** and had previously worked for **John Birkbeck** at Anley. **Walter Clark**, a footman, was the son of the **William Clark** the innkeeper at Settle's White Horse Inn. **Sarah Jane Holmes**, the daughter of a Settle postman worked as a housemaid before marrying **James Henry Hunter** who worked as the groom at the Esthton estate at Gargrave. **Craven Wilson Ralph** worked as a labourer on the Malham Tarn estate and later married **Ada Woolgar**. Settle's **Edgar William Brown** worked as a carpenter at the estate and married **Mary Jane Woolerton**.

When Walter Morrison died in 1921 it was William Skirrow who formerly registered his death. Walter's estate was worth £2 million, which is equivalent to around £100 million today's value. Mr Morrison famously left generous bequests to his servants including a huge amount of £3000 each to William and Martha Skirrow and £1000 to Robert Battersby and Bella Lodge [2,6]. Walter Morrison's land steward was **John Winskill** who also received £1000. John was the son of another **John Winskill**, a very successful builder and one of Settle's largest employers. John's second wife **Harriet Britton** had also worked for Walter Morrison as a housemaid before marrying John.

**MALHAM TARN
MILLIONAIRE.**
Bequests to Servants in
Mr. Morrison's Will.

So, Martha and William were handsomely rewarded for their service. They retired to live in West View in Settle, with widowed brother William Duxbury. William Skirrow died, aged 60 and Martha died, aged 73 and they are buried with Martha's spinster sister Alice.

In affectionate remembrance of William Skirrow born Sep 13th 1865 died April 29th 1926. God takes our loved ones from our homes, but never from our hearts. Also Martha the dearly beloved wife of the above born July 4th 1862 died June 18th 1936 also of Alice Duxbury born Aug 25th 1845 died Nov 7th 1920. Peace perfect peace, Old H50



George and Alice Duxbury's son **Alexander Duxbury**, born in 1852, also stayed in the area. He spent his life working as an insurance agent and lived on Belle Hill, Giggleswick with his wife **Jane Hardacre**, the daughter of a Giggleswick road repairer. They had three sons. In 1916 Alexander worked as a special constable [ph9]. Alexander and Jane's sons were the age to serve in the war. Eldest son **George Harold Duxbury** attended Giggleswick School and began his career in a solicitor's office. He served for nine years with the 6th battalion of the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment and then three years with the 162nd Siege battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. He survived the war but contracted tuberculosis and died aged 45 in 1929.



Alexander and Jane's son **John Duxbury** was inspired by his uncle John who had emigrated to New Zealand. He joined his uncle and worked in the family cheesemaking business, known as '**Duxbury Bros**' in Robinson's Bay. He signed up with the New Zealand Field Artillery in 1917 and served for two years. In 1917 he married **Julia Maud Duxbury**, his first cousin, daughter of uncle John Duxbury. They had come back to Settle by 1930 – Julia Maud died and was buried in the New graveyard.

In loving memory of Julia Maud wife of John Duxbury of Robinson's Bay, Canterbury, New Zealand, died Dec 13th 1930 aged 50 years, New K1.

John stayed in Settle to look after his ageing parents. Jane was 81 when she died in 1936 and Alexander was 87 when he died in December 1939. They are buried with son **George Harold Duxbury**, a solicitor's clerk.

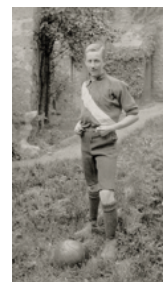
In Loving Memory of George Harold son of Alex and Jane Duxbury died June 29th 1929 aged 45 years. Also Jane the dearly beloved wife of Alex Duxbury who died November 22nd 1936 aged 81 years. Also the above Alex Duxbury who died December 22nd 1939 aged 87 years, New L4.



In 1940 John married his second wife, **Ethel Neasham**, in Leeds and they went back to live in New Zealand for the rest of their lives.

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Alexander and Jane's youngest son, **Alexander** was a keen footballer and played for Settle's Bluebottles team [ph9]. As early as 1908 Alexander signed up to join the 6th West Riding Regiment. His papers report that he lived at Jessamine Cottage at the bottom of Constitution Hill and worked as a tinner. Luckily for him, Alexander's military contract finished in 1911. There are records for Alexander travelling across the world to Vancouver, Canada and Sydney and Brisbane, Australia and New Zealand. He died in Victoria, Australia, in 1968.



Going back a generation, George and Alice Duxbury's daughters **Isabella**, **Ellen** and **Margaret** moved to Lancashire to find work in the cotton mills, husbands and then had families there. Isabella married **Richard Worsley**, an overlooker. Ellen married **James Waddington**, a funeral director and Margaret married **Robert Birtwhistle**, a bread baker. Son **George** was a housepainter who lived with his wife, **Sarah Eleanor Todd**, and family in Gargrave and Harrogate.



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'.

A – information about Walter Morrison from the excellent Malhamdale Local History Group on the website www.kirkbymalham.info/KMLHG

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

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Some information about George Duxbury credited to 'Langcliffe, Glimpses of a Dales Village' article by Jim Nelson