

## The Harpers, stonemasons

**Thomas Harper** was born in December 1806, the illegitimate son of **Mary Harper**, aged 21, two years before her marriage to **John Oldfield**. When he was 23, Thomas, a stonemason, married **Margaret Stockdale** the daughter of a farmer turned spinner. They had nine children, living in Settle's Church Street, but Margaret died in October 1858, aged 47 when the youngest was eight. She was buried in the unmarked *Anc BX2* with two children, **Thomas**, aged 15 and **Mary Ann**, aged six. An earlier child, **Joseph Stockdale Harper**, died, an infant, in 1832 and was buried in Giggleswick graveyard as this was before Settle graveyard had opened. A couple of years later Thomas married widow **Margaret (Silverwood) Bamford**. Thomas died two years later in 1862, aged 55 and Margaret died in 1870, aged 47. They may have been buried with the rest of the family or elsewhere in the Ancient graveyard.

Fortunately, the surviving children were old enough to fend for themselves by now. Son **Joseph** worked as a joiner, in and around Bradford. Daughter **Harriet** married a mill overlooker, **Stephen Illingworth** from Scotland. They married in Scotland but had their family in Bradford.

Son **John Williamson Harper** moved to Sheffield, the heart of the steel industry and worked as a spring maker. However, when he married **Ann Thilley** they ran a confectionery business together. They didn't have children and didn't seem to spend money as he left an estate worth over £300,000 at today's value. Probate documentation suggests this was left to **Silvester Harper** who was the illegitimate son of John's eldest sister **Isabella Harper**, born three years before her marriage to **Henry Robinson**, who was from Settle but worked as a blacksmith at a mill in Lancashire. Silvester Harper was born just a year after John Williamson Harper and worked as a hatter in Colne.

Thomas and Margaret's son **James Henry Harper** disappears from the records apart from a couple of transatlantic sailings in which he described himself as a merchant. By the time of the 1901 census, now aged 52, he was in Giggleswick workhouse, described as a confectioner and baker. He died a year later. Incredibly, he has an impressive gravestone, Old F34.



***In memory of James Henry Harper who departed this life May 13th 1902  
Aged 54 years, Old F34***

Who paid for that? Certainly younger brother John Williamson Harper could have afforded it. Alternatively, immediately in front of James Henry's grave is that of his brother **Stephen Harper** and family. Stephen became a cordwainer/shoemaker. In 1861, aged 23 Stephen married **Ann Pooley Bentham**, a butcher's daughter from, yes, Bentham. They had a son and a daughter living their whole lives in Colne. However, they had reserved their grave plot back in Settle. Their stone, which is identical in design to brother James Henry's also commemorates the lives of Stephen's parents.

***In Memory of Ann Pooley wife of Stephen Harper of Barrowford who died  
March 20th 1899, aged 62 years. Also the above Stephen Harper died Jan  
7th 1905 aged 66 years, Margaret wife of Thomas Harper died Oct 24th  
1859 aged 47 years. Also the above Thomas Harper died Oct 20th 1862,  
aged 55 years, Old E34***



The two children stayed in Colne and their spouses both had the surname  
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Howarth and were probably related. **Thomas Gibson Harper** was a joiner and married **Maretta Howarth**, a weaver's daughter. Daughter **Margaret Ann Harper** married **William Howarth** whose family ran the George and Dragon Inn, which still operates to this day in Barrowford. It wasn't an easy life. In 1894 Inspector Pincock took them to court for opening outside official hours after they provided brandy for a woman having difficulty in labour, thought to be dying. Fortunately, the charge was dropped [1]. However, Inspector Pincock had not finished yet! In 1900 he refused to

**They returned to the inn with Lenton, and the landlord said he supplied the whisky because Lenton said his wife was dying and the doctor had ordered him to fetch it.—By**

continue their license because, he said there were so many public-houses in the area. William's solicitor interrogated Mr Pincock, suggesting he was picking on the Howarths — PC Pincock was unable to give any other reason. During the hearing it was revealed there were 1500 visitors in a week, drinking seven barrels of beer. It was clean, in good order and used for pic-pic parties.

#### A LICENSE REFUSED.

Inspector Pincock objected to the renewal of the license of the **George** and **Dragon** public-house, The Green, on the ground that there were too many public-houses and beer-houses in the neighbourhood for the requirements of the population.

A reason for their healthy trade could be because at the time of the 1891 and 1901 censuses a neighbour, and probably customer was a certain **Phineas Butler**, related to several Settle families.

To say Phineas, a plasterer, enjoyed his alcohol is an understatement. In 1862, Phineas was referred to as one of the 'worst characters in Barrowford' [5]. In 1864, he was referred to as 'an old offender' and was fined 5 shillings for being drunk and disorderly [4]. In 1874 he refused to leave the Glenn View Inn and turned violent [5]. In 1877 he 'lost the use of his legs' [3]. There were plenty more. In 1890 he was fined 10 shillings plus costs, having four previous offences [3]. This is very generous — there were at least seven.

given his decision. They were so violent, and annoyed and hindered him in his business so much that he ordered them out; they refused to go until the referee had given his decision. He then sent for P.C. Bradshaw, who was on the grounds, to assist him in getting the defendants out. This they found it impossible to do.

hurried off with it. Mrs. Lenton's mother would tell the Bench that her daughter fainted in her arms and she told her son-in-law to go for the brandy as she was afraid that something would happen to her daughter. If the **Howarths** had not supplied the brandy under the circumstances the general public would have condemned them. Lenton looked for a policeman but

shows a good trade.—If I can convince you that close on 1,500 people entered the **George** and **Dragon** for drinking purposes, from Saturday last up to this dinner-time, wouldn't that be a strong fact? Yes, of course they would go to any other house near by, if they could not go to that particular house.—You know that a house which does seven barrels a week is a fairly good house? I should think it is.—With regard to the house itself, it is a well-designed house for the business? It is not a bad house; I should think it is a good house, the inside is better than the outside.—It is kept clean and in good order? Yes.—And the accommodation for the customers is ample? Yes.—Do you know that since the Park has been opened this house has been largely used by pic-nic parties for meals? I don't know; I have never seen them.—It is the nearest house to the Park? Yes, I believe it is.—Do you know that this house has been licensed for something like 70 years? I do not know.—Do you know that with the exception of a small penalty a few months ago there has never before been a conviction against this house? Not that I know of.—You have no complaint against **Howarth**? No complaint.—It is a house close to the police station and under good supervision of the police? No, the other public-houses are just the same, it is not so easy to notice as the other houses.—I am curious to know why the **George** and **Dragon** is singled out. We have 30 there within that radius. I should

**Nelson**; **Phineas Butler**, plasterer, Barrowford; and **Thos. Walker**, bread baker, Colne, were summoned for drunkenness. **Tillotson** had eight previous convictions recorded against him. He was fined 10s. and costs. **Butler**, who had four previous convictions, was similarly dealt with and **Walker** was ordered to pay costs.

**Nelson**, on the 17th inst.—**Phineas Butler** was fined 5s. and costs for being drunk and incapable, and lying on the road near Club-houses, in Barrowford, on the 19th inst. Defendant said he was not drunk but somehow had lost the use of his legs at that time.—**Elizabeth Pickles**, of Lee Marsden was charged with being drunk, and ordered to pay costs.

## Settle Graveyard Project



*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](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'.*

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