

## William Butterfield and Christopher Laytham, 'cow leech doctor'

William Butterfield, born in 1784, was a gardener from Shipley. He found his way to Settle where he married **Ann Dibb**. They had at least four children but only son James survived. William was the first sexton at the church from 1838, maintaining the church buildings and grounds and digging graves. William earned a salary of £5 per half year. The early vestry records tell us that the man appointed *'is to have the yearly salary of five pounds for attendance on Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day. He will be in attendance during Divine Service to see that all be kept orderly and quiet and persons properly seated in their pews. He is to attend to the warming apparatus and lighting of the church and keep it clean and in good order'*.

Just five years later, in November 1843 William resigned this post. There were two very good reasons for his resignation. Firstly, his wife Ann died in July 1843, which may be linked to the second reason which was son James' accidental transgression.

William Lodge Paley's diaries tell us that on June 2nd 1843, son James accidentally shot 46 year old **William Hargreaves** in the shoulder while they were shooting sparrows and he died. William was a labourer who had married Abigail Baldwin and had three sons. Amazingly there are no records of a coroner's inquest – did James just run away? He wouldn't be the first. Before the organisation of a nationwide police system in the 1870s, it was possible to escape justice by moving to a new county, or if the case was severe, by emigrating to the States or Australia.

June 2.—Wm. Hargreaves, who was accidentally shot in the shoulder by James Butterfield, died to-day; they were shooting sparrows.

Eightth August 1847 84 Park Lane Liverpool	James Butterfield	Male 29 years	Victualler	apoplexy (Certified)	+ The marks of Jane Hamilton present at the death 82 Park Lane Liverpool
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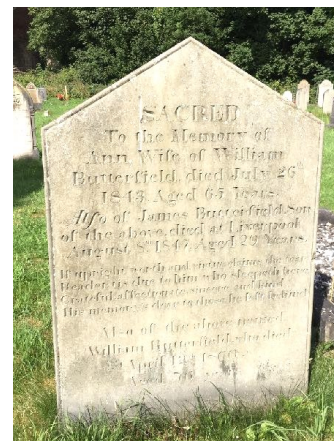
Four years later in Lancaster, on 22 April 1847, James married **Isabella Jackson** who was the illegitimate daughter of Elizabeth Jackson, a domestic servant from Caton. Did Isabella know anything about the shooting? In a twist of fate and just 15 weeks after their marriage, in Liverpool, James died of apoplexy, working as a victualler (innkeeper). William went to the expense of bringing James' body back to Settle for burial and also paid for a notable inscription, perhaps feeling the need to reinforce his good character?

*Sacred to the memory of Ann wife of William Butterfield died July 26th 1843 aged 65 years. Also of James Butterfield, son of the above died at Liverpool August 8th 1847 aged 29 years.*

*If upright worth and virtue claims the tears, reader tis due to him who sleepeth here. Grateful, affectionate, sincere and kind. His memory's dear to those he left behind.*

*Also of the above named William Butterfield who died April 12th 1860 aged 76, B9*

What happened to James' widow Isabella? Isabella and her mum moved to Settle and worked as servants at Stackhouse. Nine years



later, in 1856, Isabella married **John Laytham**, who worked as a 'druggist'. John was the son of **Christopher Laytham**, a 'cow leech doctor' – an early vet, based in Upper Settle. **Christopher Laytham** was the illegitimate son of Alice Laytham from the Wigglesworth Laytham / Latham family. Christopher described himself as a 'cow leech doctor', – one who '*heals diseases of cows*', an early vet, but also a horse-breaker. Later, Christopher described himself as a veterinary surgeon. Veterinary qualifications and accountability were unusual until an Act in 1881.

In 1824 Christopher married **Ann Clark** who 14 years older than Christopher so may have been married before. They moved to Settle in the 1830s with their two children who Ann gave birth to when she was 38 and 42.

Christopher got himself into a spot of trouble with this assault in 1852 and had an unusual problem in 1853 when finding a shoemaker's awl, four inches in length embedded in the lower jaw of a cow. [1].

**ASSAULT.**—Mr. Christopher Laytham, of Settle, horse breaker, was summoned before the magistrates on Tuesday, for assaulting and beating Richard Coates. The assault was admitted, but it was contended that the defendant was provoked to it. Mr. Cowburn appeared for the complainant, and Mr. H. Robinson for defendant. Fined 10s. and costs.

**SINGULAR CIRCUMSTANCE.**—Mr. Christopher Laytham, cattle doctor, Settle, has communicated to us a somewhat singular circumstance connected with the ailment of a cow, which came professionally under his notice a short time since. The cow (belonging to Mr. Jas. Johnson, of Huntworth, near Settle) had been laboring under excessive pain. After a careful examination of the beast's mouth, Mr. Laytham perceived what he thought to be an abscess in the centre of the lower jaw. He then made an incision into the enlargement, and found, to his great astonishment, a shoemaker's awl, measuring in length four inches. He, of course, extracted it, and his patient is now progressing favorably.

Isabella's husband John Laytham died just four years after their marriage and six months after the death of both his parents. These deaths so close together are typical of an infection such as tuberculosis. Isabella really didn't have much luck with husbands. Isabella continued to run the tobacconist part of John's business [SC]. Ten years later Isabella and her mum died within a week of each other and they are both buried with the Laythams.

*In memory of John Laytham of Settle who died December 11th 1860 aged 36 years. Also of Christopher Laytham, father of the above who died June 1st 1861 aged 61 years. Also of Ann wife of the above who died June 18th 1861 aged 75 years. Also of Elizabeth Jackson of Settle who died Decr 6th 1870 aged 78 years. Also Isabella wife of th(e above n)amed John Laytham and (daughter) of the above named Elizabeth (Jackson) who died Decr 13th 1870 (aged) 56 years B3*

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Has in stock the following assortment of **PIPES**, viz,—  
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Chapel St., Settle, April 2nd, 1866.

Christopher Laytham's cousin **Joseph Laytham** also moved to Settle and worked as a farmer, living in Upper Settle. He had three wives and died in 1870 aged 67. Joseph, his second wife Ann (Smith), and his father Richard are all in the Ancient section of the graveyard in unmarked graves, but hopefully together. They all died during the years when the burial plan was not updated, so we do not know where exactly they are.



## Settle Graveyard Project

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. Life stories can be found on [dalescommunityarchives.org.uk](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'.

Newspaper cuttings with kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette

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

