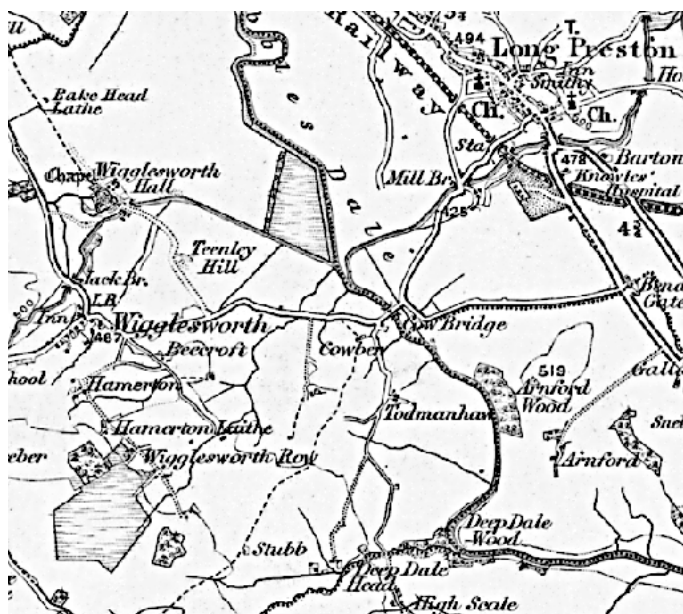


## William Gifford, one of the good guys

**William Gifford** moved to Settle from Bowland when he married **Ellin Coates** in 1798. After William died in 1832, aged 62, Ellen kept the butchery business alive in their shop opposite the back of the Shambles, with the help of her sons and sons-in-law. Ellin, who lived to the age of 83, and William are buried in an unmarked grave at Giggleswick graveyard. They were the parents and grandparents of butchers and other tradesmen in Settle's Market Place throughout the Victorian era, many of whom populate Settle graveyard.

William and Ellin's second daughter **Catherine Gifford** gave birth to a son, **William Gifford (Jnr)** before marrying **Joseph Gill**, a stonemason, from Pateley Bridge and having five more children. William was brought up as part of the family and apprenticed to a shoemaker. Soon after his 21st birthday, in 1852, William took his trade to Long Preston. While he was there he met **Elizabeth Todd** who, at the time of the 1851 census was working as a grocer near Town Head. Elizabeth's family worked Todmanhaw Farm, between Cow Bridge and Deepdale Head Farm. Next door, Elizabeth's brother, **Anthony Todd** ran Deepdale Head Farm and, many years later, Stubb Farm, nearby. When William met Elizabeth, she was looking after a niece, **Jane Todd**, a daughter of her brother Anthony and his first wife **Elizabeth Kilburn**.



On 21 June 1860, William Gifford, aged 28, married Elizabeth Todd, aged 40 when niece Jane was 15. On marriage documentation William described himself as a shoemaker. William's father was listed as 'Joseph Tailor, mason' which is surely a typo for his step-dad Joseph Gill?

60. Marriage solemnized in the Parish Church in the Parish of Long Preston in the County of York

| When Married.          | Name and Surname. | Age. | Condition. | Rank or Profession. | Residence at the Time of Marriage. | Father's Name and Surname. | Rank or Profession of Father. |
|------------------------|-------------------|------|------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| June. 21 <sup>st</sup> | William Gifford   | 28   | Bachelor   | Shoemaker           | Long Preston.                      | Joseph Tailor              | Mason                         |
|                        | Elizabeth Todd    | 40   | Spinster   |                     | Long Preston                       | William Todd               | Farmer                        |

At the time of the census return a year later William gave his occupation as a 'stationer and Registrar for births, marriages and deaths' for Long Preston. Amongst many others, William was the registrar at the death of **Pickles Wolfenden**, innkeeper of the Plough Inn and so we have his signature. In 1869, William was unanimously appointed to the post of assistant overseer of the poor for Long Preston, within the Settle Union (often a related role) [1]. In 1874 William was granted a licence to sell fireworks in time for bonfire night [1].

*William  
Gifford  
Registrar*

**SETTLE.**

**APPOINTMENT.**—At the fortnightly meeting of the guardians of the union, held on Tuesday last, Mr. **William Gifford**, of **Long Preston**, was unanimously appointed to the office of assistant overseer for that district.

**H. Christie, Esqrs.**—*Fireworks Licenses.*—Applications were made to sell fireworks by Mr. **William Wildman**, and Mr. **D. Ineson** at **Settle**, and Mr. **William Gifford**, **Long Preston**, which were granted.—*Caution*

A year later William was on the committee organising the presentation of a life-boat to the RNLi alongside **Ellwood Brockbank**, **John Cowburn** and **William Towler**. The RNLi had been given the Royal Prefix in 1854 by Queen Victoria. Since 1824 it was the 'National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwrecks'. Incredibly, despite being 35 miles from the nearest coast, between 1868 and 1914 the Settle Branch of the RNLi, established in 1862, raised enough money, over £3600, to buy seven life-boats which were thought to have saved 148 lives in all. The driving force behind the operation was **Christopher Brown** of Stainforth, supported by **Walter Morrison** of Malham Tarn Hall. Miss **Mary Brynning** was also a prolific fundraiser. Incredibly, two of the boats were brought to Settle by train and then drawn by a team of heavy horses and a huge cart to be christened and then paraded through Settle — what a spectacle! The 'Christopher Brown' [ph1]



Settle Market Place, Lifeboat week, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)

was launched on Easter Sunday, 14 April 1868 followed by the 'Ellen and Margaret' in 1875 [ph2]. Ellen, Christopher's mother, had died in 1860, aged 71 and Margaret, his sister had died in 1841 aged 13. Cheap trains were provided from Lancaster, Morecambe and Bentham to encourage people to attend. The boats were presented to the Institution with appropriate pomp and ceremony. 'Mr Brown was astride his favourite white horse, his face radiating his deep happiness. It was a day

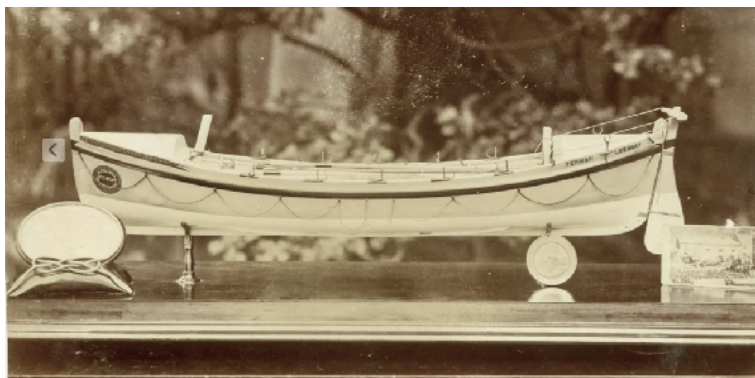
**STRAW HATS**  
It was a day of rejoicing and of celebration, and the warm spring sun shone beneficently down upon a throng of top hats, straw hats with enormous feathers, billycocks, bustles and leg-of-mutton sleeves.

## Settle Graveyard Project



Settle Market Place, Lifeboat week, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)

*of rejoicing and celebration and the warm spring sun shone beneficially down upon a throng of top hats with enormous feathers, Billycocks (Bowler hats), bustles and leg of mutton sleeves.’* That evening a fundraising concert was held in the Music Hall (Victoria Hall). This lifeboat was based at Penmon, Anglesey and operated on the coast of North Wales. A model of the Christopher Brown, together with commemorative memorabilia and postcard, provides more detail [ph3].



William Gifford and the committee made arrangements for the Ellen and Margaret to come to Settle on 26 May 1875. The boat was 32ft long and 7ft 6in wide and *‘fitted with the most modern self-righting appliances.’* On a sunny day the banks were closed and the crowd wore blue ribbons around their hats, upon which was written *‘Ellen and Margaret’*. Children were given medals, two inches in diameter to mark the occasion [ph2]. They sang songs including:

*Get ready my lads, for such wailings we hear,  
Arise from your shipwreck, in terror and fear,  
Hearts of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our men,  
The helpless we will rescue again and again.*

**Mrs Ingleby** of Lawkland Hall, a relation of Christopher Brown, broke a bottle of sherry over the stern of the boat to christen her.

Amongst other celebrations, **Rev William Pierson** *‘read a portion of the 107th Psalm in a most impressive manner’*. The 107th Psalm appropriately includes verses about sailing ships in a storm: *‘They reeled and staggered like drunkards; they were at their wits’ end. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper;*



## Settle Graveyard Project

the waves of the sea were hushed. They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven.' **Hector Christie** of the Langcliffe Mills and **Walter Morrison** gave speeches and the band played God Save The Queen [ph1]. There were three hearty cheers in honour of Mr Brown and the RNLI. This boat was stationed at Hornsea, north of Hull.

What an event to be part of! All the seven lifeboats were named either 'Christopher Brown', stationed on Anglesey or 'Ellen and Margaret' stationed at Hornsea. The last launch was in 1921, after which motorised boats were used.

The life-boat fundraising movement in Settle was so popular and effective that the Temperance Society adopted the 'life-saving' idea to form the Temperance Life Boat Crew, saving lives through persuading people away from alcohol [1,CH]. Quite clever really! Welsh navy **John Owen** performed for them.

SETTLE.  
TEMPERANCE LIFE BOAT CREW —The members and friends of the above society gave the first of their entertainments this season on Saturday evening last, Captain Phillipson in the chair. The Hall was well filled with a very enthusiastic audience. The programme, which comprised songs, readings, recitations, and dialogues, was gone through in a very creditable manner. The reading in the Lancashire dialect by Master R Lambert, entitled "Owd Shunt" kept the audience convulsed with laughter, and was deservedly applauded. The dialogues with the assistance of a few friends were very creditably rendered. Mr. John Owen very efficiently sung a Welsh song.

and it died from inanition. Another organization sprang up, known as "The Lifeboat Crew," its aim being to present temperance truths to the public by means of plays or dialogues. At the outset large audiences were attracted, but the difficulty experienced in providing fresh programmes within a reasonable time rendered the efforts too spasmodic to be effective, and eventually the "crew" was disbanded.

Meanwhile, back in Long Preston, William's mother, Catherine (Gifford) Gill came to live with him, Elizabeth and Jane after her husband died in 1874. Her five other children had either died or moved away by then. Daughter Ellen Gill was just a few weeks old when she died in 1840 and, as such, was one of the first burials in Settle graveyard. The family had not purchased a grave plot by then and so little Ellen was buried in the infants' corner of the graveyard.

William died in 1882, aged 51 from 'cramp of the lungs' (pleurisy) after a long period of 'very precarious health'. His glowing obituary revealed 'he had connected himself officially and otherwise with every movement that tended to the benefit and advancement of his fellow townsmen' [CH]. He was secretary to the local building society, a member of the Oddfellows, took on duties at the Mechanic's Institute as well as being a correspondent and agent for the Craven Herald newspaper.

the Craven Herald, and for some time acted as secretary to the local building society, besides being officially connected with the Mechanics' Institute. Mr Gifford had been in very precarious health for some time, and in spite of all that the highest medical skill could do, he died on the day above-mentioned, death being attributed to cramp of the lungs. He was buried in the parish churchyard on Monday last, the service being read by the Vicar, the Rev J. E. Coulson, M.A. The funeral was attended by a large number of the friends of the deceased and several Oddfellows, of which Order Mr Gifford had been an active member for nearly 25 years.

William predeceased his mother, Catherine, who stayed with Elizabeth and Jane until she died in 1885 but was taken back to Settle for burial with her husband Joseph, son **Thomas Gill**, aged six, and daughter **Sarah (Gill) Fletcher** who died after giving birth to seven children. Sarah's husband, **Thomas Fletcher** remarried and had another eight children. A busy man!

*In affectionate remembrance of Joseph Gill of Settle who died Sept 14th 1874, aged 67 years. Also of Thomas, son of the above who died Mar 7th 1845. Also Catherine Gill wife of the above who died Nov 26 1885 aged 84 years. Thy will be done. Also Sarah their daughter who died July 11th 1880 aged 37 years, Anc B6*



## Settle Graveyard Project

Elizabeth and Jane both died in 1894. William, Elizabeth and Jane are buried together, with many other members of the Todd family nearby. From the inscription we can tell that the gravestone was not erected until after Elizabeth's death.



***In Affectionate Remembrance of William Gifford who died at Long Preston July 13th 1882 aged 51 years. Elizabeth wife of the above, died August 1st 1894, aged 74 years. Also Jane Todd, niece of the above, died January 4th 1894 aged 49 years.***



Who was Christopher Brown? He was a bachelor who had a comfortable life in Stainforth living off the proceeds of the land inherited from his parents. His mother was **Ellen Ingleby** of the family who owned Lawkland Hall and associated land, which speaks for itself. His father was **James Batty Brown** of Stainforth, a successful '*silk mercer and woollen draper*' in the bustling metropolis of Liverpool. Christopher was the eldest of seven children, but three siblings died as infants. James died in 1828 when he was just 39 and is buried in a surprisingly unmarked grave in Giggleswick with a 30 year old son, also **James Batty Brown** and, possibly, their 13 year old daughter, Margaret.

Christopher, '*whose life work will live long after its authors name has passed from public recognition*' [2], owned 758 acres of land including the Cowside and Sherwood House estates, including '*excellent fishing in the Ribble and Catterick Force.*' When he died in 1886, aged 70 he left an '*ample fortune*' of £14,000 in 1886 — worth millions at today's value. He was buried at Stainforth with his mum Ellen and they had a fine memorial stone in a quiet spot by the wall of the graveyard.

--  
**Settle.**  
**DEATH OF A CRAVEN PHILANTHROPIST.**—There recently passed away at the secluded village of Stainforth, near Settle, Mr Christopher Brown, one whose life work will live long after its author's name has passed from public recognition. As an

***In memory of Ellen, widow of James Batty Brown, died 4th October 1860, aged 71 years. Also of Christopher Brown, son of the above, died 20th June 1886, aged 71 years.***



*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'.*

Thanks to Mel Ingram and Long Preston Heritage Group for their contribution to this account.

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## Settle Graveyard Project

Map reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

ph1 – Image 2022.1.4.5, ph2 – Image 2022.1.35.10 from the Horner Photographic Studio Collection

### ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION.

*Supported solely by Voluntary Contributions.*

*Patroness—Her most Gracious Majesty the Queen.*

*Vice-Patron—His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, K. G.,*

The Committee of Management have to state that during the year 1886 (to the 26th October) the Royal National Life-boat Institution expended £23,000 on its 293 Life-boat Establishments on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in addition to having contributed to the saving of 466 persons from various shipwrecks on our coasts, for which services it granted 13 Silver Medals, 9 Binocular Glasses, and 12 Votes of Thanks, besides pecuniary awards to the amount of £32,336.

The number of lives saved either by the Life-boats of the Society or by special exertions, for which it has granted awards since its formation, is 32,336 for which services 97 Gold Medals, 985 Silver Medals, and £89,500 in cash have been paid in rewards.

The expense of a Life-boat, its equipment, transporting carriage, and boat-house, averages £1,000, in addition to £70 a year needed to keep the establishment in a state of efficiency.

#### SETTLE BRANCH.

*President—Walter Morrison, Esq., M.P. | Hon. Sec.—Capt. Stackhouse.*

We are pleased to announce that the Annual Subscriptions to the Settle Branch are still on the increase, as will be seen by the following list :

| £          | s. | d. | £          | s.         | d. | £       | s.         | d.         | £  | s.          | d.      |             |   |   |
|------------|----|----|------------|------------|----|---------|------------|------------|----|-------------|---------|-------------|---|---|
| 1862...    | 25 | 17 | 6          | 1868 ..    | 65 | 4       | 0          | 1874..     | 80 | 6           | 6       | 1880... 106 | 1 | 0 |
| 1863 ..    | 42 | 16 | 0          | 1869 ..    | 67 | 0       | 6          | 1875 ..    | 90 | 1           | 6       | 1881... 106 | 2 | 6 |
| 1864 ..    | 52 | 11 | 6          | 1870 ..    | 70 | 2       | 6          | 1876... 98 | 3  | 0           | 1882 .. | 106         | 6 | 0 |
| 1865 ..    | 56 | 8  | 0          | 1871... 73 | 5  | 0       | 1877... 98 | 5          | 6  | 1883... 109 | 17      | 0           |   |   |
| 1866 ..    | 61 | 2  | 0          | 1872... 77 | 7  | 0       | 1878 ..    | 99         | 15 | 6           | 1884 .. | 110         | 1 | 6 |
| 1867... 63 | 0  | 0  | 1873... 77 | 13         | 0  | 1879 .. | 103        | 19         | 6  | 1885... 110 | 4       | 0           |   |   |

Total amount of Contributions from January, 1862, to December 31st, 1885, £4898 12s. 1d.; viz—Annual Subscriptions, £1951 10s. 6d.; Donations £2947 1s. 7d.

Contributions may be paid into either of the Banks in Settle, or to the Honorary Secretary, Capt. Stackhouse, who will thankfully receive the smallest donations.

provided courtesy of the Museum of North Craven Life, ph3 – with thanks to the ben McKenzie Collection, via the back in Settle Facebook site.

Some of the material in this account has been published by YDMT in the book 'Meandering down the Ribble, Born and Bred in the Long Preston Floodplain' who have given permission for it to be included here.