

## Stephen Pellat Smith, schoolmaster, Giggleswick School

*In Memory of Stephen Pellatt Smith eldest son of Stephen and Mary Sophia Smith: born August 17 1848 died December 22 1905. 'Keep innocency and take heed unto the thing that is right. For that shall bring a man peace at the last.'* E58

This unusual stone and distinctive inscription commemorates the life of a single man from Kent who was a modern languages schoolmaster at Giggleswick School. He died at The Ashfield in Settle, now the social club but a Temperance Hotel in those days – bachelors of a certain class often lived full time at hotels and inns. Stephen was definitely of a certain class and left a very generous estate to his brother **Douglas Rucker Smith**. That could be the end of a very short story if it weren't for his family.



Grandfather **Benjamin Smith** was born in Birmingham, in 1764. He began his career as a button and shoe fastener manufacturer. In 1802 he moved to Lincoln's Inn, London and set up a silversmith business. Here he married **Susannah Pellat** in 1817. Biographies explain *'His reputation as a master silversmith secured some important commissions, including commemorative pieces for Wellington – a presentation plate, a huge pair of candelabra, and the Wellington Shield with myriad figures in relief.'* He also excelled working on a smaller scale: silver salvers, trays, Grecian sugar bowls or elegant tea sets, and dealt in diamonds and other precious stones. Some of his antique pieces are still on sale today worth over £30,000!! [ph1].



Unfortunately the end of his life was a disaster – he was declared bankrupt in March 1850 with debts of £100,000 and assets of only £21,000 [1] and died just a month later.

By June 1850 son Stephen had taken over the business in partnership with **William Nicholson**, a senior employee in the company [2]. Obviously, they took advantage of the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace of 1851 to showcase their excellent craftsmanship. The quality of work was obviously maintained as there are numerous reports of Lord Mayors and dignitaries presented with Smith and Nicholson silverware to celebrate promotions or retirement [3].

**INTERESTING TESTIMONIAL.**—The *employés* and others connected with the execution of the works on the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway, presented to Wm. Field, Esq., a handsome piece of plate, in testimony of their respect and esteem, at a public dinner at the Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury, on the 2nd inst. It was manufactured by Messrs. Smith, Nicholson, and Co., the eminent silversmiths, of London, and forms a centre piece of unique design, standing 38 inches high, weighing 350 ounces, and valued at £300.

### LAW AND POLICE — SATURDAY.

#### COURT OF BANKRUPTCY.

There were fifteen meetings to-day, before the presiding Commissioners Goulburn and Evans, but the majority of them, being merely audit and dividend meetings, were devoid of any feature of public interest. The principal topic of conversation among commercial circles, was the extensive failure of Mr. Benjamin Smith, the wholesale silversmith of Duke-street, Lincoln's-Inn-fields. Mr. Smith filed a declaration of insolvency on the 9th of March

Stephen had a lead role in the Silver Trade Pension Society which provided relief for distressed members and their widows [4]. William Nicholson retired in 1864 and Stephen continued with his eldest son, our Stephen Pellat Smith. They had premises in King Street,

### SILVER TRADE PENSION SOCIETY.

evening. The chair upon this occasion was taken by Mr. George W. Adams, supported by Mr. **Stephen Smith**, Mr. George Lambert, Mr. Figg, Mr. Holland, Mr. Piper, and about 100 other gentlemen.

Covent Garden and in Oxford Street.

Stephen (Snr) had married **Mary Sophia Greaves** who came from Warwickshire, the daughter of a banker. She came with outstanding credentials (and dowry). Sophia's sister **Celina** married **Edward Fordham Flower** [ph4] who founded the Flowers' brewery in Stratford-upon-Avon. Edward was also an author who successfully campaigned for a Shakespeare memorial theatre to mark the tercentenary of his birth in 1864. Sophia's brother **John Whitehead Greaves** was a pioneer in the slate industry in Wales, winning a 'Class 1 Prize' in the 1851 Great Exhibition. As treasurer and chairman for the Ffestiniog Railway, John travelled on the first train in 1836. Sophia's younger sister **Rebecca Mary** became the mother of **Sir Michael Henry Larkin**, a cement manufacturer and the first of the Larkin Baronets.



So, this was the family background of Stephen Pellat Smith – no pressure then! Stephen was the eldest of three sons and six daughters and assisted his father in the business. The silversmith business had been international – descendants have passports to show that Stephen and his father travelled to Europe, Egypt and Russia so Stephen must have been fluent in languages in order to do his business. However when his father died, Stephen decided to use his languages in other ways and sell the business to Mappin and Webb. Stephen went to work with his youngest brother, **Douglas Rucker Smith** at Giggleswick School as a teacher of modern languages. While Stephen was helping with the business, Douglas was studying Classics at Oxford. By the mid 1880s Douglas took up a teaching post at Giggleswick School. The 1891 census records them together with **John Rosindale Wynne-Edwards**, a Mathematics and Science master.

<i>Stephen Pellat Smith</i>	<i>Assistant Master</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>Modern Language Master</i>
<i>Douglas Rucker Smith</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>Classical Master</i>
<i>Philip Bearcroft</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>Junior School Master</i>
<i>Arthur Cross</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>Clerk in Holy Orders</i>
<i>John Rosindale Wynne-Edwards</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>Mathematical &amp; Science Master</i>

In July 1881 there was massive storm in the Ribblesdale valley. Such was the ferocity of the water that the topsoil on PenY Gent was washed off and the characteristic stepped rakes were revealed, now being the defining feature of the hill. In 1887 Douglas Rucker Smith and John Rosindale Wynne-Edwards were, allegedly, the first men to tackle the circuit of the Yorkshire Dales' Three Peaks, completing it in less than 10 hours. There were none of the the slabbed footpaths we walk on today so that's not a bad time.

#### THE YORKSHIRE

#### THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

was created in 1887 when local school teachers J.R. Wynne-Edwards and D.R. Smith set out one morning from the village of Horton-in-Ribblesdale with the aim of summiting Pen-y-ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough in a single walk. They returned 10 hours later, sparking a huge surge of interest in the challenge that continues to increase in popularity with each passing year.

John Rosindale Wynne-Edwards [5] was a talented man. He was, unsurprisingly, Welsh born and a scholar at Giggleswick before becoming a schoolmaster. He left in 1895, married and took up a post in Cheltenham. Aged just 37 John became the Headmaster at Leeds Grammar School where he stayed for 20 years. He was involved in the discussions about the formation of Leeds University. He retired to Austwick and is buried in the graveyard there with his wife.



Canon Wynne-Edwards



Douglas Rucker Smith also left Giggleswick in 1895 to become the headmaster of Richmond Grammar School. His descendants have a silver (obviously) tray, tea pot and jug with the inscription, *'From past and present members of Giggleswick School, Yorkshire, DR Smith Esq MA July 1895'*. Who would the silversmith have been?

In 1897 Douglas married Miss **Isabella Golland** with brother Stephen as a witness. Isabella had her photo taken at the Horner Studios the year before. Douglas and Isabella didn't have children. Douglas became an inspector of schools in Peterborough and later they retired to Worcestershire. Isabella had previously donated prizes to encourage Giggleswick folk to develop window gardens, along with Mrs Crofton of Linton Court on Duke Street, Settle [ph6]. She had also been a *'a lady organist'* at Giggleswick church with Miss Stansfeld. In 1889 she was presented with a candelabra, obtained from Robert Grime [8]. She lived with her widowed mother Matilda Golland at the grand Beck House in



Miss I Golland and dog, Beck House 1896, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)

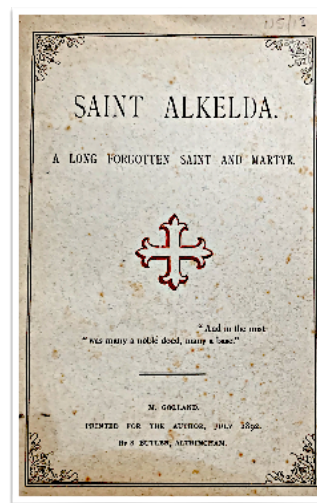


**PRESENTATION.**—Last week the members of the Giggleswick Church Choir marked their appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Miss Stansfield and Miss I. Golland, the two lady organists at this Church, by presenting the former with a marble timepiece, purchased from Mr Fattorini, of Skipton, and the latter with a handsome candelabra obtained from Mr R. Grime. The inscription on the timepiece read as follows: "Presented to Miss Stansfield by the Giggleswick Church Choir, March, 1899." A card attached to the candelabra conveyed the following words: "Presented to Miss I. Golland by the Giggleswick Church Choir, March, 1899." The presentation took place at Miss Stansfield's residence. Mr

Giggleswick.

Isabella's father **Walker Golland** had died, aged 52, before she was one year old. Walker was a highly respected surgeon in Manchester who worked as surgeon to the Board of Guardians [6] and, for 15 years, at Belle Vue Prison in the centre of Manchester [7]. He was remembered for his *'ability, zeal and humanity exhibited in the discharge of his duties'* Matilda and the children lived off dividends which were sufficient to pay for a life time companion and servants. They moved to Settle during the 1890s. In 1892 Matilda wrote a booklet about the origins of St Alkelda *'a long forgotten saint and martyr'* [ph4].

Isabella's brother **Alfred** was also a surgeon, a prison surgeon and Mayor of Altrincham. Her sister **Mabel**, aged 46, became the third wife of 67 year old **William Allan Jamieson**, a Scottish physician and academic author. A year after their wedding William was knighted.



## Settle Graveyard Project

Matilda died in 1903 and is buried in the Old graveyard D58 with a magnificent gravestone. Living in Beck House, Giggleswick, there must be some reason that she was buried in Settle graveyard rather than at Giggleswick? Stephen died nearly two years later and is buried in the grave directly behind her. They are both alone in their graves.

*In Loving Memory of Matilda Golland of Beck House Giggleswick. Fell asleep Feb 9th 1903 aged 79 years Lead Kindly Light, D58*



What happened to Stephen's other siblings? Well they all did rather well. Stephen (Snr) left his property to his sons and money to his daughters. Four spinster daughters had a comfortable life. According to the family, **Laura** and **Bertha** took their money to run 'Birklands' finishing school in St Albans. They valued physical exercise and so provided tennis courts, hockey pitches, a cricket pitch, gymnasium and a 9 hole golf course [ph3]. They made 'an indecent sum of money for a woman' and retired to Malvern.



Daughter **Janet** moved to Switzerland to paint water colours and her mother, Mary Sophia joined her. They died in Switzerland within a year of each other. Daughter **Elizabeth Emily** remained a spinster and settled in Buxton. Daughter **Sophia Constance** married **Chas Walker**, a horse breeder and gentleman. They lived at the impressive Holmshurt Manor, a Jacobean country house 'with 20 rooms, 12 stone fireplaces and stained-glass windows built by the pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones near Burwash, Sussex. The manor was more recently owned by Roger Daltrey [ph2].



Daughter **Margaret** married a vicar, **William Llewellyn Herford**, and spent her last days in South Africa. Son **Gerard Henry Smith** was a surgeon who decided to pursue homeopathy and became a lead consultant, his work taking him around the world with expeditions in Africa and Tasmania [ph5]. He was even appointed surgeon to King Edward VII. Gerald had experimented with early forms of X Ray without knowing of the dangers and eventually died of facial cancer. He had reached the age of 76, however.



*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.*

*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'.*

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

## Settle Graveyard Project

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lloyd's weekly newspaper, 2 – the Sun London), 3 – Worcester Journal, 4 – Morning Post, 5 – Yorkshire Evening Post, 6 – Manchester Courier, 7 – Liverpool Mail, 8 – Craven Herald

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