The Brassingtons and Bridge End Mill

The Brassingtons ran their timber and building company at Bridge End in Settle for nearly 100 years and provided employment and fond memories for hundreds of Settle folk [ph1]. Now converted into apartments, the building still houses a fantastic spiral staircase worthy of any castle and several mechanical relics.

The watermill provided the power for Settle's early industry. It enabled woollen cloth fulling in the 16th century and a forge in the 1770s. Cotton

milling began in 1790 by 'Wilkinson, Buck and Jay' and then several others continued, including William Clayton and Hector Christie, before the Brassingtons took over with their timber workshop, warehouse and sawmill business.



The success of all these businesses depended on the power provided by the magnificent water wheel, 15 feet

wide with a diameter of 12 feet which can still be seen today *[ph6]*. With 'Yorkshire Dales Weather' the river provided unlimited power but when the river level was low extra water was redirected into the millrace. The weir was built later to create a better head of water. When enough water had accumulated the sluices opened and the wheel could operate. Operators remember queuing up to use machinery before the water ran out - a noisy hive of activity with cogs and belts driving joinery machinery for



grinding, mortice, planing, moulders and saws. There were loading doors from the main road to the cellar and first floor joinery workshop. In the cellar Brassingtons made mortar from the waste ashes from the Langcliffe Mills. The second floor could be accessed by the spiral staircase

and had a showroom, offices and the coffin store. There were also numerous sheds outside. Brassingtons also owned Bridge End Yard on the opposite side of Church Street around what is





Two-way Ribble

MANY Dales water - wheels M have been broken up or replaced by turbines. Others lie idle, with rusty faces. At Settle, however, a large water-wheel provides power at a busy joinery establishment. Bridge End Saw Mill has a 15ft. breast wheel with an iron concitivities II is 12ft in disaster.

and the axle runs in a tallow bath. Mr. Fred Brassington, who runs the business with brother John, will show you a date on the arch of the culvert — 1818 — and this gives a hint of the water-wheel's age. When it was first installed it provided power for cotion manufacture, but it is just 80 years since the Brassingtons gave it a fresh job.

now Whelpstone Grove (which they built) which contained workshops and storage for stonework and plumbing. At the back was stabling and pasture for horses and later garages and a petrol pump for their vehicles. There was also a canteen. Bridge End Yard was bought by *Christopher Ellis*. Brassingtons had a showroom in Church Street, currently occupied by a Care office. John Reid's detailed plan of the site is at the end of this account.

Brassingtons were specialists in church renovation and their work included at St Alkelda's church in 1890-2, Clapham church, Slaidburn church in 1960-1 and St John's Methodist church Sunday School in Church Street in the 1940s. They built the war memorial in its original position in the middle of the road junction of Church Street and Langcliffe Road in 1925. The photo [ph1] was taken in 1957 before the war memorial was moved to its current position and before the footbridge over the river was built in 1959. Brassingtons helped to modernise Giggleswick school, built Brackenber Close in Giggleswick plus numerous shops, inns and houses in the area.

So who were the family behind this success?

Henry Brassington, born in 1809 in Duffield, just north of Derby, was a stonemason. Henry and his wife **Jane Knight** had two sons and five daughters. Son **Henry**, born in 1834, was also a stonemason who developed his business to become a builder at Dove Holes in Derbyshire. His wife **Hannah Wright** had five sons and two daughters. By the time of the 1881 census the family had moved to Tems Street in Giggleswick with Henry describing himself as a builder and contractor.

At that time Bridge End Cotton Mill was owned by Hector Christie, having been purchased in 1861. Bridge End mill was not as successful as the other Langcliffe mills and so in 1876 Hector decided to let it out 'on very reasonable terms', an offer initially taken up by a new company to try and manufacture pure oil cake and corn milling [CH]. The secretary of the Yorkshire Banking Company who leased it was John Cowburn. There are no further records for this company suggesting it was unsuccessful.

It is thought that Henry was employed to do repairs to Bridge End Mill and later Hector let it to Henry 'at a peppercorn rent'. Popular sources suggest

The YORKSHIRE BANKING COMPANY, Settle. Secretary (pro tem.)-Mr. JOHN COWBURN. Office-New STREET, SETTLE. THIS Company is formed to lease the "BRIDGE END MILL," Settle, of HECTOR CHRISTIE, ESQ., who has offered it on very reasonable terms, taking into consideration the admirable situation of the Premises and the Water Power in connection therewith. The objects of the Company are to manufacture pare Oil Cake, also to carry on the business of Corn Millers. There not being any Manufactory of this description within a large radius, and there being a great and increasing consumption of Oilcake and Feeding Stuffs in this neighbourhood, the promoters have every confidence of success, and anticipate that a great portion of the Shares will be taken up by consumers of the productions of the proposed Company.

that, as they both came from Derbyshire, albeit different regions, Henry came up to the area with Hector Christie. This is unlikely as there is almost a 20 year discrepancy between their arrival dates. Rather than coming to Settle with Hector Christie, it's far more likely that Henry and Hannah arrived with, or soon after, his sister **Fanny Brassington** who had married **George Yeomans**, a Primitive Methodist, also from Derbyshire. George spent his life working as the foreman at the Craven Limeworks at Langcliffe. The Hoffman Kiln was built in 1873 and George may have moved the area to help with its operation. George and Fanny didn't have children. George died in 1910, aged 65. Fanny spent the rest of her life living with her brother Henry Brassington in Craven Terrace in Settle. George and Fanny are buried in Giggleswick graveyard with a fabulous gravestone. Their grave is right next to that of *Robert Clark* who was the manager of the limeworks and this is probably no coincidence.

In loving memory of George Yeomans of Craven Lime Works who died June 19th 1910 aged 65 years. He was called to a higher service. Also Fanny wife of the above who departed this life March 11th 1929 in her 86th year. Peace, perfect peace. B8/55

After Henry (Snr)'s wife Jane died in 1871 in Derbyshire, he came up to Settle to spend his last years with son Henry. Henry (Snr) died in 1883 aged 74 and was *settleresearch@gmail.com*



buried in Giggleswick graveyard. Naturally most of the family followed him to be buried there. A cross which might have been on top of the base of his stone rests, rather unceremoniously, nearby. Henry's wife and eldest son are also commemorated.

In loving remembrance of Henry Brassington of Giggleswick who died April 25th 1883 aged 74 years. Also of Jane Brassington wife of the above who died at Dove Holes Dale May 4th 1871 aged 67 years and was interred in Wormhill church-yard, Derbyshire. Also of Joseph their son who died at Milford, Derbyshire, October 14th 1850 aged 20 years.



Henry (Jnr) moved to live in Craven Terrace when his father died. A review of 1955 suggests that son Henry Brassington had taken over Bridge End Mill 80 years

previously, in 1875 [2]. Henry ran it as a warehouse, workshop and saw mill for his building business, advertising 'Fireplaces and Ranges, Ovens and Stoves, supplied and fixed. Every





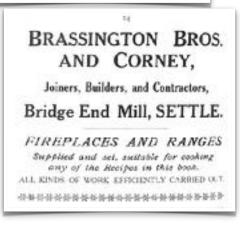
description of Concrete and Granolothic Work. Sanitary Work carried out on the latest improved principles. Drains thoroughly tested'. By 1887 Henry, now aged 53, advertised his business selling everything related to the building trade [LSA]. The huge water wheel was renovated and used to power wood working machines.

By 1889 Henry was advertising for labourers to work for him on specific jobs, including work at Dent church [3]. By 1892 the company name had changed to 'Brassington Bros and Corney' [4, CH]. Henry was now in his sixties and so his sons took over the business in partnership with another builder

from Dent, John James Corney, who lived next door to Henry. The Corneys tell an incredible story! This immensely successful partnership continued until John James' death, aged 59, in 1916 after which the Brassington brothers continued alone, becoming Brassington Sons and Co. Ltd. in 1919.

Henry (Jnr)'s wife Elizabeth died in 1910, aged 74. Henry lived with widowed sister Fanny (Yeomans) in Craven Terrace until he died in 1916, aged 82. For some reason Henry and Elizabeth were not buried in Giggleswick graveyard. Perhaps there was a space for them

settleresearch@



y Men need apply, to H. Bassessurov, Bride



in Elizabeth's family plot back home in Ashover, Derbyshire? The business continued to flourish [ph3]

Henry and Elizabeth's children?

Eldest son Joseph Henry Brassington worked as a builder in



Lancashire and in Sedbergh, perhaps running a branch of the Brassington business there. He married **Jane Anne Young**, the daughter of a local railway platelayer [*ph1*]. Despite not living in Settle or Giggleswick they have a grave with a phenomenal stone in Giggleswick graveyard.



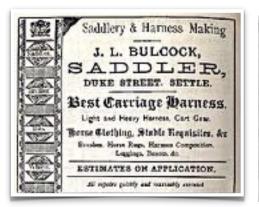
In loving memory of Joseph H Brassington born Oct. 16th 1860 died at Sedbergh Aug. 28th 1906. Also Jane wife of the above who died April 13th 1940 aged 79 years. Also Harry and Marian children of the above who died in infancy.

Henry and Elizabeth's youngest son **Herbert Brassington**, a coal merchant, married **Amy Louise Ransley** and they had at least nine children. They lived near Kendal. Amy's family had moved to Settle from Leeds. Her father **William Ransley** [*ph7*] worked as an overlooker at the mill. Several of her family are buried in an unmarked grave in Settle graveyard, *Old CX30*. Sons **George** and **John Brassington** both attended Giggleswick school. John became an accountant in Middlesex and George worked as a mental health nurse unfortunately described as an 'imbecile attendant'.

Henry and Elizabeth's daughter Jane Brassington married John Lonsdale Bulcock, a saddler [LSA] with his business on Duke Street. They lived on Belle Hill, Giggleswick. In 1887 he was appointed as Verger for Giggleswick Church upon the death of Tommy Monk. He stayed in that

post for 45 years, only resigning when he was 'getting too old' [ph3]. He was also the bandmaster of Settle Brass Band. In 1909 he was presented

with a handsome leather bag in which to carry his instrument [LSA].



9180 mick apr 1 1932 Den Si I hereby gove Notice to terminate my dates as Verger at Gagleswick Church June 30 1932 (45 years Service) Jour truty Heulerek Cetting too de . The Rev + F. P. Brocklehoust:

They are buried in a kerbstone grave at Giggleswick which is now buried by nature next to that of Jane's aunt Ann Yeomans.

John Lonsdale Bulcock died August 16th 1954 aged 95 years. Jane Bulcock died January 16th 1922 aged 63 years. B8/113

Jane and John Bulcock's eldest two children, Henry Hartley Bulcock and



29. Mr. J. L. Bulcock, Bandmaster of Giggleswick Band, was presented by the members of the Band, with a handsome laster bag in which to carry his instrument.—Temperance

Hannah Bulcock died as young children within two days of each other in December 1888. They are buried in a grave with sister Florence May (Bateson) and her illegitimate daughter Hannah, sister Mary (Render) and her son by a previous marriage. Florence Bateson ran a toffee shop on Belle Hill.

In loving memory of Henry Hartley son of J. L. And Jane Bulcock of Giggleswick who died Dec. 29th 1888 aged 61/2 years. Also of Hannah daughter of the above who died Dec. 31st 1888 aged 4 years. In death they are not parted. Also of Florence May Bateson 1896 - 1965, John Lonsdale Knights 1913 - 1967, Mary Render 1888 -1974, Hannah Bulcock 1920 - 19791.

This grave is next to that of John Lonsdale Bulcock's parents Hartley Lonsdale Bulcock, a shoemaker and Duella Mason. John and Jane's son John Hartley Bulcock and wife Kate Hallam are buried in A1h/17 at Giggleswick

In loving memory of Kate beloved wife of John H. Bulcock died Oct. 25th 1939 aged 48 years. Also of the above John H Bulcock died March 17th 1946 aged 53 years. "Thy will be done" A1h/17

Meanwhile Henry and Elizabeth's son Thomas William (Bill) Brassington [ph4] married Mary Ellen Bulcock, John Lonsdale Bulcock's sister,

and they had eight children. It was Bill and his sons who carried on the family business at Bridge End Mill. They also lived in Craven Terrace and then moved round the corner to Ribble Terrace. As a respected businessman Bill held several positions of responsibility in the town including the secretary of the local branch of the British Legion. In 1927 he was involved in outrage when the vicar of Settle church, **Rev Twemlow** decided not to conduct a remembrance day service [5] suggesting that 'the time has come when such services could be conveniently and quietly dropped without the least suggestion of losing any of our kindly remembrance of our noble dead and their glorious deeds.' Needless to say, the service took place.

| The Chairman of the Council (Mr. T. Bradley), in an interview, told me that ad |
|--|
| Chairman and also as an ex-Serviceman he was absolutely disgusted with the atti- |
| tade of the Vicar. The Council, he said, were thunderstruck when the letter was |
| The socretary of the local branch of the |
| British Legion (Mr. T. W. Brassington) said that this was the first he had heard of |
| any dislike on Mr. Twemlow's part to con- duct the service. The men had always turned out before, and would earn out |
| again, should another service be held. |

Bill's 80th birthday was celebrated in 1943 [1] and the newspaper also remarked on his 50 years singing in the choir at Giggleswick church. Bill and Mary Ellen and several of their family are buried and/or commemorated with an enormous stone in Giggleswick graveyard.

In memoriam.

Mary Ellen Brassington 1864 - 1941. Thomas William Brassington 1863 - 1948. Lieut. William Henry Brassington, M.M., 1891 - 1918. Donald Brassington 1910 - 1932. Herbert Talbot Dawson 1878 -1967. Mary Hannah Dawson 1887 - 1983. Archibald and Duella Jackson. John Mason Brassington 1903 - 1996. Doris Leah Brassington 1907 - 2001. Frederick Brassington 1896 - 1983. Margery





REFUSAL TO CONDUCT SERVICE. SERVICE. SETTLE COUNCIL "THUNDERSTRUCK." (From Our Own Correspondent.) SETTLE, Tuesday. The decision of the Vicar of Settle (the Rev. T. F. B. Twemlew) not to take part in the annual Remembrance Day service ment Sunday, coursed a good deal of surprise when announced at a meeting of the Parish Council as arrangements for the service were being made.

VICAR AND DAY OF

REMEMBRANCE.

Many Happy Alderman chairman ol ebrates i. director of Messrs. Brassington d., builders Sons and Co. tractors Settle the enous Church ars he san has also he V # C . superintend

Brassington 1902 - 1992. John Brassington 1939 - 1992. Ronald Victor Hoyle 1901 - 1984. Margaret Ellen Hoyle 1900 - 1986. Olive Marian Brassington 1903 - 1984. Tom Hartley Brassington 1898 - 1991.



Bill and Mary Ellen's eldest son William Henry Brassington [ph5] attended Giggleswick school and then worked for the family firm. He

signed up at the start of the war and served in the 6th Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment. He was promoted through the ranks to Lieutenant in the Tank Corps. He was killed on the Western Front on 25th August 1918 whilst driving his tank [6]. He was 26.

Bill and Mary Ellen's sons Fred, Tom Hartley, John Mason and Donald took over the business. Unfortunately son Donald died aged just 22 of an infectious disease spending his last days at the Harden Bridge isolation hospital near Austwick. In 1894, the company had done some work for the 'Infectious hospital' when it was based in Giggleswick [6].





TANK CORPS.

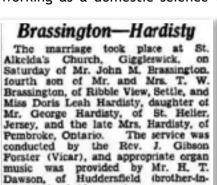
Lt. W. H. Brassington, Tank Corps, killed who W85 in near Bapaume on August 25th, was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Brass-ington, Ribble View, Settle. After leaving Giggleswick School he entered the firm of Messrs. Brassington Sons, and Co. Ltd., builders and contrac-tors. On the outbreak of war he was one of the first to volun-teer and was drafted to teer and was drafted to France in April, 1915, attaining being Me the rank of Sergeant and being awarded the Military Medal. He was recommended He was recommended for a commission and in due course gazetted 2nd Lieutenant on December 7th, 1916, in the Machine Gun Corps. Scon after he transferred to the Tank Corps.

Fred described himself as the 'Director of a building company' in the 1939 pre-war register. He retired from the company in 1961 and went to work as an inspector of schools in Cambridgeshire with his wife **Margery Milford.** They are both commemorated on the family gravestone but Fred was buried elsewhere. Son **Tom Hartley Brassington** worked in the company office but moved to Leeds to run his own scaffolding company after an unfortunate indiscretion with the use of the till. He had married **Olive Marian Jones** and lived on the Mains in Giggleswick. They are commemorated on the family stone but buried elsewhere.

Son John Mason Hartley, known as Jack, continued attended Giggleswick School and worked in the business until it closed its doors in 1969 but still provided for funerals after that. He was regarded as a good boss by his many employees. In 1938 he married **Doris Leah Hardisty** who was born in Canada but had been working as a domestic science teacher at Settle Girls High

School [6]. They had a reception at the Ashfield Hotel. The article describes his prominent role in the Settle Amateur Operatic Society. There are several reports of Jack's performances [5] and photos [ph1-left] performing with brother Donald. Jack was also caught on film doing work on the top of Giggleswick Chapel [ph1].

Jack and Doris had a son John who was drowned in a boating accident on lake Ullswater in 1992, aged 53.



law of the bridegroom). The bride was given away by her uncle, Mr. Harry Linn, of Scarborough, and the best man was Mr. Fred Brassington, of Settle (brother of the bridegroom). After the ceremony a reception was held at the Ashfield Hotel, Settle, after which Mr. and Mrs. Brassington left for their honeymoon. They will reside at "Highlands," The Mains, Giggleswick on their return.

The bridegroom is a director of the firm of Messrs. Brassington, Sons, and Co., Ltd., builders and contractors, of Settle, and is an old boy of Giggleswick School. A well-known vocalist, he has taken the lead for many years in the productions of the Settle Amateur Operatic Society, and is a former playing member of the North Ribblesdale Rugby Union Football Club.

The bride has been domestic science mistress at the Settle Girls' High School and formerly held a similar post at Skipton Girls' High School and Silsden.

Settle Graveyard Project





Bill and Mary Ellen's daughter Mary Hannah Brassington married Herbert Talbot Dawson from Dewsbury. In the 1939 pre-war register they lived in Ribble Terrace and Herbert described himself as a company secretary, also working for Brassingtons despite being partially blind. Daughter Duella married Archibald Jackson, a manager at the Langcliffe limeworks. Daughter Margaret Brassington married Ronald Victor Hoyle, a director of a leather works in Wakefield.

1955 was a year to celebrate 80 years of success at Brassingtons![6] This successful business closed in 1969 after nearly 100 years. The building became an antiques repair workshop operated by John Clough and was converted into flats in 1985 by Randalls of Skipton [ph1]. The idea of the 'Settle Hydro' was launched in 2007, located in the millrace to produce electricity equivalent to the consumption of 30 two-bed houses per year. The fish pass was built in 1959 alongside the millrace to allow salmon and sea trout to bypass the weir and climb up the river to their breeding grounds and, to this day, the fish have priority for water over the Hydro!

John Reid [ph1-right], was an apprentice and employee of Brassingtons. This young man left the company in 1966 to work as a joiner in Settle Rural District Council and is now one of the finest authorities on the history of Settle, for which this project is immensely grateful. John has kindly provided a detailed plan of the Brassington works it was set out in its working days. He provides an excellent account of Brassingtons for the North Craven Heritage Trust which appears on their website www.northcravenheritage.org.uk



A FINE SHOW AT SETTLE

The Settle Amateur Operatic Society set a new high level of schievement last night in presenting, at the Victoria Hall, Settle, before a large audience, the musical play. "The Desert Song." Mr. T. Bulman, of Leeds, was the producer, and Mr. W. O. Brown the musical director.

Good work was done by John M. Brassington, Freds Croit, Kathleen Lambert, Charles Lawson and Mary Poder.

1818 waterwheel aids work of 1955 joiners

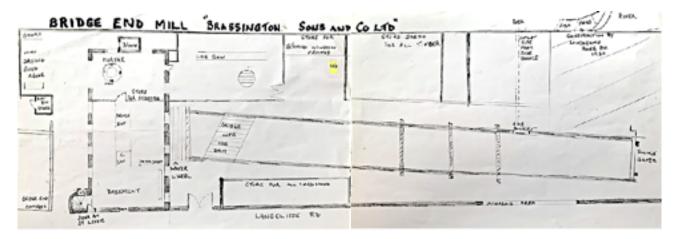
THE men who work in the joinery establishment of Messrs. Brassington, at Settle. look antiously at the river in times of drought or flood, for most of the machines depend for their power on a handsome water wheel and either condition of the Ribbie can be serious.

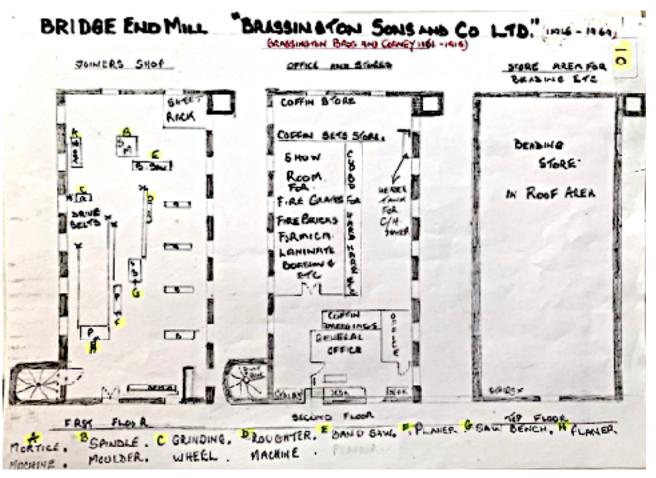
ate on the arch of the

| A date on the arch of the | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| relvert-1418-gives a hint of | the bridges also being flooded. |
| the waterwheel's ags. Water | Mr. Fred Dramington, who |
| reaches it by way of a culvert | with his brother, John, is new |
| made of stone and clay, but | in charge of the basiness will |
| occasionally during heavy | tell you that the power from |
| flouds the backwater rushes to | water is cheap and the men |
| the wheel, sometimes at the | who work in the mill have |
| evel of the axle, and this raises | grown accustomed to the old |
| a few problems, as the wheel | gearing, so the wheel will con- |
| is then automatically braked | linue to serve their needs. |
| It is a 15 feet breast wheel | |
| made of iron, and there is a | Members of his family have |
| diameter of 12 feet. The axle | occupied the premises for just |
| revolves in a bath containing | at years. His grandlather, Henry, look them over after |
| Latiow. | Henry, tool them ever after |
| The weir is semi-circular. | processing of cotion, and the |
| about 6 level high, and local | work was continued under the |
| people crossing the nearby | direction of Thomas William |
| bridge subcanaciously look at it | direction of Thomas without |
| and see the state of the river. | demainingson, meany's son. |
| Along the top of the weir are | Breasingtons have carried out |
| wooden shutters which can be | many important jobs during 60 |
| raised in time of drought to | years as joiners, including the |
| hold back a greater depth of | restoration of Churches at |
| water, but these are not often | Gigglerwick Dept, Long Pres- |
| | ico and after fire damage, at |
| good supply. | Lecz and Thornion-in-Lonstale. |
| The supply was extremely good | They provided the woodwork for the Chapel at Giggleswick |
| in August, 1953, for the river | tor the chape at Gugleswick |
| was higher that anyone could | School, built the School chapel |
| remember and two peer of water | at Sedbergh and the Wasleyan |
| stood in the mill, collages near | Chapes at manual |









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settleresearch@gmail.com

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. 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'.

With many thanks to the wonderful John Reid for his help in compiling this account. The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Bradford Observer, 2 – Westmorland Gazette, 4 – Yorkshire Evening Post, 5 – Leeds Mercury, 6 – Lancaster Guardian

CH – with the kind permission of the Craven Herald and Pioneer

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

ph1 — photo with the kind permission of John Reid, ph2 — credited to relations via <u>ancestry.co.uk</u>, username ryoung12121, ph3 — credited to the Back in Settle Facebook page, from the Ben Mackenzie collection, ph4 —photo credited to W R Mitchell Gossip from Giggleswick, ph5 — credited to Craven's Part in the Great War, ph6 — credit to Visit Settle website, ph7 — photo from Steve Cowburn, family descendant