

The Charlesworths, wealthy folk

William Charlesworth was born in 1719 in Birstall near Leeds. He made a fortune as a wool stapler, buying wool, grading it and selling it on. This was at the time that Leeds was becoming the capital of the wool trade so he was in the right place at the right time. His wealth enabled an extremely comfortable lifestyle for himself and generations to come. William and wife, **Sarah (Wormald) Charlesworth's** daughter **Rachel Charlesworth** married **Thomas Gomersall** and two of their sons, the heroic **Lt Col John Gomersall** and **William Gomersall**, who lived part of his life in Kirkby Malham, have incredibly interesting stores which feature in our project.



William and Sarah's son **Thomas Charlesworth** [ph1], born in 1749, continued the trade. Thomas married **Sarah Beedham** and they had four children living in the grand Park Square near the centre of the city. Thomas' burial record tells us he died of 'insanity' aged 51 on the 6 August 1800.

Thomas and Sarah's son **John Beedham Charlesworth**, born 1774, is our main interest and he married his cousin **Ann Gomersall**. Their eldest son **Thomas Charlesworth**, born 1798, married **Sarah Newbould** from Sheffield. They had their five daughters and one son living in the exclusive mansions on Headingley Hill, the upper class suburb of Leeds before moving to 17 Hanover Square in the centre of town. The houses in this Georgian square housed many respectable and wealthy folk over the years. At the times of censuses Thomas was described as a cloth merchant, proprietor of houses and a bank director having fingers in several lucrative pies. When he died in 1865 his estate was worth £12000, equivalent to millions today. At the time of the 1871 census widow Sarah had employed **Mary Ann Louisa Agar** and her cousin **Elizabeth Ann Saville** as housemaids — sadly Mary Ann found her way to Settle graveyard just a year later, buried next to her aunt **Ann Weymes**. Thomas and Sarah are buried at St Michael's church in Headingley. Five of Thomas and Sarah's daughters remained wealthy spinsters, living together for most of their lives.

Thomas and Sarah's only son **Charles Henry Charlesworth**, born in 1833, trained to become a solicitor. In 1861 Charles Henry moved to Settle and went into partnership with **Christopher John Geldard** — 'Geldard & Charlesworth' [SC]. One of their clerks was **James Twisleton** who worked for Geldard's solicitors for 50 years. Their business was in the Market Place but in March 1863 moved to the property on the corner of Duke Street and Chapel Street, opposite the Craven Bank just in time for the evergreen arch to be erected for the royal wedding of the Prince of Wales [SC]. Around that time Charles Henry, on behalf of Christopher Geldard took **Joseph Harrison Oddie Wilson** to court. Geldard was a trustee of Rathmell school. Wilson, a school master, had been given the school-house as accommodation but didn't leave when he resigned due to bankruptcy. Neither did his family leave when he was imprisoned for perjury.



and above the arch. From the Craven Bank to the new building erected for the offices of Messrs. Geldard and Charlesworth, a lofty arch spanned the roadway with side arches over the causeways. Within the circle of the central

Outside work Charles Henry threw himself into life in Settle. In 1862 he gave a donation of 10 shillings and 6 pence to the Lifeboat subscription fund, indicating his address was Runley Bridge. He was mentioned in

COUNTRY COURT.—T. H. Ingham, Esq., the Judge, held his court on Thursday, the 15th ult. There were, as is usually the case, very few cases, and the only one which possessed any interest for the public was *Geldard v. Wilson*, in which Mr. Charlesworth (of the firm of Geldard and Charlesworth) appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr. Buck for the defendant. The action was brought by Mr. Geldard as a trustee to obtain possession of the school-house at Rathmell, at present occupied by the defendant, who was formerly the village schoolmaster.

Settle Graveyard Project

numerous reports of cricket matches, being a particularly good bowler and also played the trombone rather well [SC].

On 25th April 1865 Charles Henry married **Sarah Georgina Stansfeld** at Settle Church. The path to the church had been carpeted and strewn with flowers. *'A large and fashionable party then partook of a sumptuous wedding breakfast . . . finishing up by a serenade from the Band of the North Craven Rifles.'*[SC] Sarah Georgina's father was **George Stansfeld**, the Settle barrister, and her mother was **Sarah Birkbeck** — they were connected to the wealthiest families in Settle.

R. Stansfeld, and J. Birkbeck, jun., Esq. On coming out of the church, the path which had been previously carpeted, was strewn with flowers (some of which the Bridegroom picked up and will no doubt preserve as a memento of one of the most pleasing events of the day) by a class of Sunday school girls. A large and fashionable party then partook of a sumptuous wedding breakfast, and the day which had thus auspiciously commenced was spent in a most genial manner, finishing up by a serenade from the Band of the North Craven Rifles.

After their marriage at the time of the 1871 census Charles Henry [ph6] and Sarah lived at Marshfield on Kirkgate, close to Ashfield mansion, the home of Sarah's parents who had both died in 1869. The Settle and Carlisle Railway was built between 1869 and 1875 and the grounds of Ashfield, known as 'Ashfield Square' or 'Stansfeld Square', were used to house the operational headquarters for the railway and 16 navy huts, with a further navy hut at Marshfield, inhabited by **PC Alfred Phillipson**. It's likely that Charles Henry coordinated negotiations and compensation for the use of the land by the railway. In 1879 Charles and Sarah moved to Bankwell in Giggleswick although were also lived at Holly Bank on the opposite side of the road. Electoral records show Charles also owned the Goldielands Terrace. Charles Henry spent a considerable amount of time working on banking law and so was based at the Craven Bank in Skipton for much of his time. Being a respected figure Charles Henry was asked to take on numerous positions of responsibility in local groups — the Settle Bible Society, the Choral Society, the Church of England Temperance Society and the Settle Gospel Temperance Union. Living in High Society, it's hard to imagine he would have maintained a life of total abstinence.



The Late Mr. C. H. CHARLESWORTH, Settle.

In 1888 Charles Henry was authorised a licence to use armorial bearings or crests on jewellery, china etc. By an Act of 1869, fees had to be paid by anyone using armorial bearings [ph3]. To display crests on a carriage cost twice as much! In 1889-1892 Charles Henry was the treasurer alongside **Hector Christie** (chair), **Rev Swale** (vice chair) **Thomas Brayshaw** (secretary) **Walter Morrison**, **John Lister** and the vicar, **Rev George Style** in the planning for the major renovations to St Alkelda's Church in Giggleswick. The whole church was stripped bare, its layout altered, the ceiling and roof rebuilt and new oak pews (rather than box pews), organ and heating apparatus installed. It was an enormous project.

Wife Sarah didn't enjoy the colder climates of the north and, once their sons had qualified and could take over the business, Charles Henry and Sarah relocated to Queensborough Terrace, Bayswater, north of Hyde Park in London and just around the corner from Yorkshire MP Walter Morrison's London residence when he was not at Malham Tarn Hall.

Charles Henry died in February 1900 leaving an estate worth £3.5 million in today's value with provision for his wife Sarah Georgina who outlived him by 31 years, various donations to Christian

Settle Graveyard Project

charities, £500 to son George Kenneth and the rest split between his other children except Mary — what had gone wrong there? [1]

and the British and Foreign Bible Society; £500 to his son George Kenneth, and the ultimate residue between his children, except his daughter Mary.

Charles Henry and Sarah Georgina had three sons and two daughters who all continued to live life in high social circles. Eldest twin sons **Thomas Beedham Charlesworth** and **Charles Percy Charlesworth** were born on 26 May 1866. Thomas took the Holy Orders after an education in Sedbergh and Cambridge. He served in London, Long Eaton in Nottinghamshire, and Wirksworth in Derbyshire. He married **Emily Anderson Green**, the eldest daughter of Settle surgeon **Edwin Septimus Green** who was tragically killed at the age of 27 after being dragged to death by his horse. Thomas Beedham Charlesworth [2] died suddenly aged 51 and had a glowing obituary in the paper describing him as *'an example of the very best type of English clergyman. Into his upright, sincere and courteous nature entered not an atom of pettiness'* [2]. Thomas and Emily had three children. Their only son, **John Needham Charlesworth** had a good life ahead of him after a Research Scholarship in anthropology from Cambridge University. Tragically he contracted blackwater fever in Tanganyika, East Africa and died on the ship home, buried at sea [3].



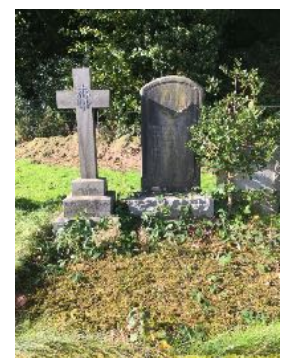
Mr. Charlesworth will be very deeply regretted and missed the most so by those who know him best. He may be described as an example of the very best type of English clergyman, and perhaps it may be said of north countryman. Into his upright, sincere, and courteous nature entered not an atom of pettiness. He was ever kindly and willing to help, any assistance given by him having been always thoroughly done. He was an excellent musician, and was devoted to outdoor life, deriving considerable enjoyment alike from shooting, fishing, and gardening.

The other twin **Charles Percy Charlesworth** and younger brother **George Kenneth Charlesworth** continued the family business. Charles Percy Charlesworth was articled to George Wright, a Skipton solicitor and eventually acquired the practice, known as Wright Charlesworth & Co. and there were later partnerships with Stephen Brown and Edgar Wood with several changes of name. The Charlesworth name was retained even after Charles has left in 1923 and still operates to this day. As well as numerous property transactions one of their more notable cases was representing **Mrs Mabel Tottie** in her divorce case against her husband **Colonel James Braithwaite Garforth Tottie**. Charles Percy married a surgeon's daughter, **Agnes Elizabeth Wilson**. Charles Percy was County Court Registrar at Bradford, Keighley and Skipton for 42 years [4].

Despite living in a variety of locations around the UK Charles Henry and Sarah Georgina Charlesworth were buried in a large family plot in the *Old Graveyard E67/68* with stones commemorating Thomas Beedham Charlesworth and his wife Emily on the left, and son Charles Percy Charlesworth and his wife Agnes Elizabeth on the right.

In Deo Fides Charles Henry Charlesworth born 22nd Feb 1833 died 7th Feb 1900. Sarah Georgina Charlesworth widow of the above born 18th October 1841 died 16th June 1932

In Loving Memory of Thomas Beedham Charlesworth, priest vicar and rural dean of Wirksworth Derbyshire who entered into the fuller life June 9th 1917 in his 52nd year. "The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God R I P" And of his wife Emily Anderson Charlesworth died 26th April 1948, aged 77. May light perpetual shine upon them. And of the only son John Beedham Charlesworth Died at sea March 11th 1932, aged 34 RIP. With loving kindness have I drawn thee In Loving Memory of Charles Percy Charlesworth Died 17th Feb 1947 aged 80 years and Agnes Elizabeth Charlesworth his wife died 17th May 1948 aged 78 years



Settle Graveyard Project

Third son **George Kenneth Charlesworth**, always known as 'GK' also became a solicitor running the Settle business on Duke Street [LSA] and was clerk to the Settle Magistrates. He was known as *'hearty, genial and unpolished'* and relied on **Arthur Parker** to keep the office work in order.' At the time of the 1891 census his housekeeper was **Elizabeth Garner**. After that he moved to Lawkland Green. He was known for driving his horse and gig at speed and frightening other road users! It was at Lawkland that he met **Hope Watkins**, the daughter of **Reverend Bernard Watkins**, a clergyman who lived at Lawkland Hall. They married in 1900, a few months after GK's father had died [ph3]. GK was presented with a Case of Cutlery and an Illuminated Address at a Farewell Supper and Social (a civilised stag do) two days before the wedding. GK was one of several well respected gentlemen of the town who were managers at Craven Savings Bank.

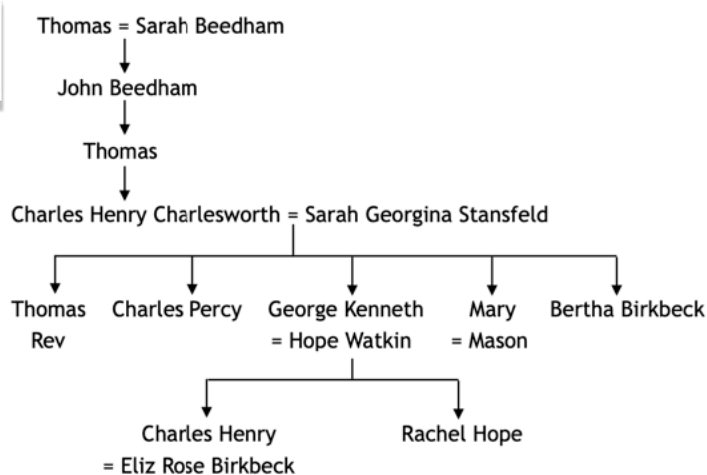


Hope was very tall, 6 foot 2 inches and very athletic. She was at one time ranked as 8th in the country for her archery skills and so would have been well acquainted with **Susannah (Clayton) Edgar** [LSA]. After the wedding GK and Hope first lived at The Glebe House on Church Street in Settle, now the 'Little House' just above the church. By 1909 they had built and moved into Barnstead on Stackhouse Lane, Giggleswick.



at Settle.—At the series of Competitions promoted by the Northern Archery Club, at Nantwich, Mrs. Geo. K. Charlesworth, of Settle, won the special club prize at the sixty yards range.

GK and Hope had a son and two daughters. Son **Charles Henry Charlesworth** continued the family business which was topped up by a couple bequests from their clients *'in remembrance of services to my family rendered by his grandfather and father'* [5]. Charles also ran a business in Skipton, 'Walker, Charlesworth and Jefferson'. He followed his father to become the clerk to the Magistrates and was a founder of the North Ribblesdale Football Club. In 1935 Charles Henry married *'the glamorous Elizabeth Rose Carr Birkbeck'* [6], a distant cousin through the Stansfeld family. Charles Henry took on assistant, **Horace Jordan**, presuming he would become a partner, which he did soon after. In 1964 Charles Henry left the business in Horace's capable hands and became the Clerk to the Justices of Otley, Wetherby and Tadcaster. He had a passion for improving social housing, establishing the Leeds and Yorkshire Housing Association. Charles Henry retired and travelled with Rose. They spent their last years in Australia.

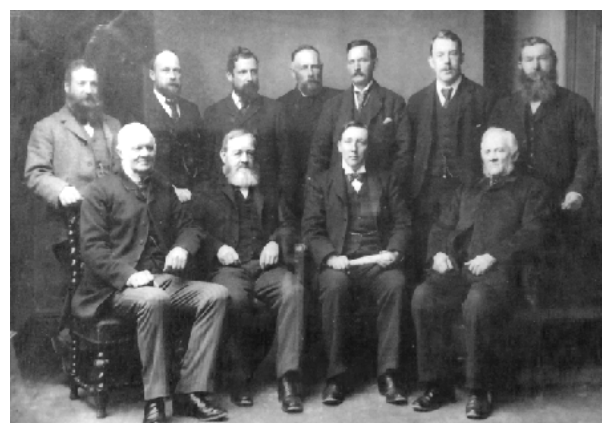


Settle Graveyard Project

GK and Hope's daughter **Betty Charlesworth** married **John Percival Hannam**, a solicitor's son and motor dealer from Leeds. Their remaining daughter **Rachel Hope Charlesworth** was born nine years after Betty, in 1917. She was just old enough to join the Women's Royal Naval Service in time for the war and, moving in the right social circles was photographed in 1940 by the Tatler [7]. Just 18 months later when she was a 2nd Officer, Rachel died, aged 24, from ruptured lungs and liver after a traffic accident in Alexandria in Egypt. Her short life is commemorated with a Commonwealth War Gravestone in Alexandria, on the Settle War Memorial and on a bench nearby. At the other side of the war memorial another bench commemorates the life of George Kenneth Charlesworth 'First Chairman of Settle Parish Council' and his wife.



This wonderful photo of the first Settle Parish Council has George Kenneth (holding the scroll) [ph5] with **William Dugdale, Thomas Clark, John Lord, Thomas Holmes, Thomas Harger, John and Joseph Parker Charles John Lord and John Delaney.** GK and Hope were buried in Austwick cemetery with a stone commemorating the lives of their children too. Why were they buried at Austwick rather than Settle? Perhaps it was partly because, from the early 1900s, George had left Settle Parish Council to become the clerk to Austwick Parish Council [LSA]. Local politics!



In memory of George Kenneth Charlesworth 1868 - 1946, Hope Charlesworth 1874 - 1928, Charles Henry Charlesworth 1908 - 1992, Betty Hannam 1908 - 1969, Rachel Hope Charlesworth 1917 - 1942

AUSTWICK.
PARISH COUNCIL.—Rev. A. Ingilby (Chairman). Mr. G. K. Charlesworth (Clerk). Meeting on 2nd Monday in each month.



Going back a generation Charles Henry and Sarah Georgina's youngest child was **Bertha Birkbeck Charlesworth**, born in 1873, who remained a spinster, living with her mother, Sarah, in London after Charles Henry died. They travelled all over the world, holidaying in Nice, Cannes, Switzerland. Very nice.

Bertha had a generous heart and gave generously to people and many causes. During the 1900s she unofficially adopted an orphan **Ivy Fagge Tayler** [ph4], the daughter of a seamstress, **Isabella Tayler**, who had previously worked for Bertha and her mother. Bertha ensured Ivy received an education at St. Michael's Domestic Training School in Wantage. (Coincidentally, Settle's **Kitchener** family also had links with Wantage workhouse!) Then Bertha arranged



Settle Graveyard Project

posts for Ivy as an au-pair and companion in Jersey and, later, Germany. Ivy returned to London to work with Bertha assisting with the war effort and returning troops. Bertha gave Ivy's daughter, **Christine Drayton**, a silver porridge bowl and spoon on her 21st birthday. It was inscribed 'BBC', nothing to do with broadcasting but Bertha's initials. Christine is about to pass it on to her daughter on the occasion of her 60th birthday.



Bertha trained to become a midwife, a physiotherapist and State Registered Nurse, working for some time at Guys Hospital [ph4]. She will have been very busy during both wars. After Sarah died, Bertha spent a year in India living with friends and enjoying lavish dinners and balls. Without her mother's support Bertha's income depleted to £5 per week and found it difficult to live upon her return. Her nephews would not increase her allowance, instead suggesting she moved to Yorkshire as the cost of living was less in the north.



However, Bertha decided to stay in London making ends meet working in a cafe. Bertha died in 1960 aged an impressive 86. Bertha was buried in Lewisham Graveyard with a gravestone which reads:



In loving memory of Susan Ellis, at rest June 29th 1902 and of Bertha Birkbeck Charlesworth died January 27th 1960

Who was Susan Ellis and why was Bertha buried with her? Susan/Susannah's probate documentation tells us that her address was 6 Queensborough Terrace which just happened to be the Charlesworth London residence. Death records tell us Susan was 50 years of age and newspapers said that Susan was a lady's maid who died from burns while she attempted to replenish the meths in a lamp while it was still alight [8]. Susan, 'a loved friend and servant' had been working for the Charlesworth family for 34 years when this tragic accident happened and so began employment with them at the age of 16. Susan's death merited a mention in the Settle Almanac indicating she was well known to Settle folk [LSA]. Susan and her sister **Matilda Ellis** were both working for the Charlesworth family at the time of the 1881 census when the family were in Bank Well in Giggleswick. Matilda's employment terminated once she became pregnant with a son, Thomas. It's possible that 28 year old Bertha was in the house at the time of Susan's accident and this could even have prompted her to take up nursing. Perhaps the Charlesworth family also paid for the gravestone? Susan was one of nine children of a Gloucestershire agricultural labourer and left £141 and 16 shillings to her brother Joseph Ellis, a gardener, so it's not very likely that her family could afford a stone.

EXPLOSION OF A SPIRIT LAMP.
A DANGEROUS PRACTICE.
At an inquest held at Paddington, yesterday, on **Susan Ellis**, a lady's maid, who died from burns, it was stated that she attempted to replenish a methylated-spirit lamp from a tin can while the lamp was burning. The volatile spirit exploded, blowing out the bottom of the can and setting her on fire. It was stated that had the flame been extinguished before the can was brought near the lamp the explosion would not have occurred. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

29. Death of Miss Susan Ellis, 6, Queensbury Terrace, London (for 34 years the loved friend and servant of the family of the late Mr. C. H. Charlesworth, of Settle).

Charles Henry and Sarah Georgina's Charlesworth's daughter **Mary Charlesworth** married the **Rev William Vavasour Mason**, the only son of Settle's third vicar, **Jackson Mason** and they lived in

Settle Graveyard Project

London. It's not clear why Mary was left out of her father's will. Their daughter **Irene Jackson Mason**, looking very much a Charlesworth, married **Rev Arthur Cornelius Hosken**, a tobacconist's son from Weston-Super-Mare. Arthur liked stamp collecting and was President of the West Cornwall Philatelic Society [9].



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 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 thanks to Christine Atkins and Pamela Jordon for their help with this account. The lives 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 – Illustrated London News, 2 – Derbyshire Advertiser, 3 – Long Easton Advertiser, 4 – Liverpool Echo, 5 – Leeds Mercury, 6 – Yorkshire Post, 7 – The Tatler, 8 – Nottingham Evening Post, 9 – Cornishman

ph1 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username hastobbs1, ph2 – credit to geography.org.uk, ph3 – photo credited to the Back in Settle Facebook site, from the Ben Mackenzie collection, ph4 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username chrisatkins196, ph5 – with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust, ph6 – credited to St Alkelda Parish Records

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