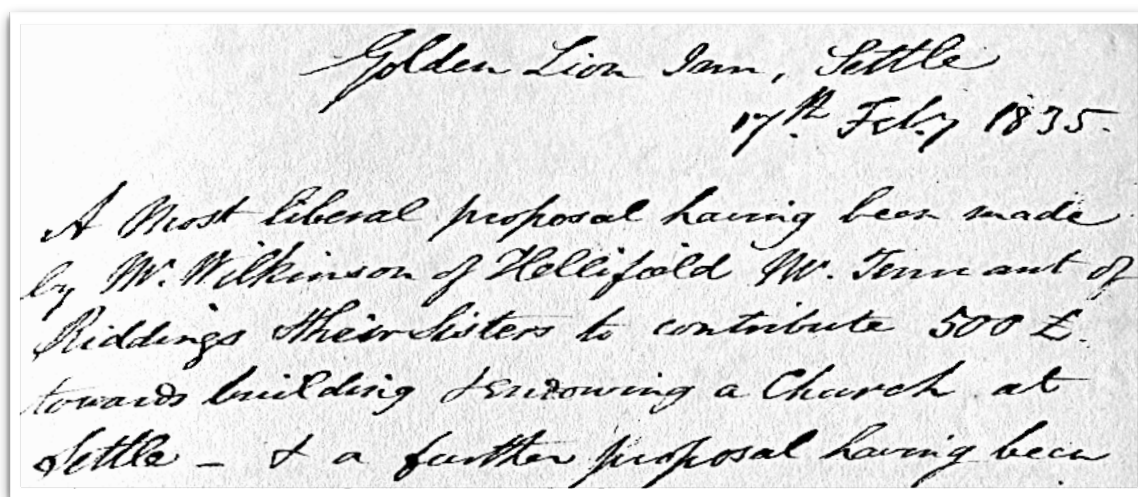


## Secrets of a rusty box!

The Church Trustees oversee legal and financial issues and the appointment of clergy . . . and records show they had quite a few arguments too. Sarah Lister of Settle Graveyard Project has been discovering the secrets of a rusty Deed Box, found in 2019, which covered the Trustees activities from 1838-1908. Lives of people with names in *italics* have been researched as part of the Graveyard Project.

## Let's build a church!

It all started on 17 February 1835 at the Golden Lion Inn. *Mr William Wilkinson* of Hellifield Green, *Mr John Tennant* of Riddings (on the way to Long Preston) and their sisters had made '*a most liberal proposal*' to contribute £500 towards building a Church at Settle. This was in response to King William IV's Act of 1831: '*An act to amend the Acts for building (or enlarging) and promoting the building of additional churches in populous parishes*'. Mr Wilkinson also offered to provide a site in Upper Settle. (This was the site on Commercial Street, used instead for the Primitive Methodist Chapel)



Golden Lion Inn, Settle  
17<sup>th</sup> Feb 1835.  
A most liberal proposal having been made  
by Mr. Wilkinson of Hellifield Mr. Tennant of  
Riddings their sisters to contribute 500 £.  
towards building & endowing a Church at  
Settle - & a further proposal having been

'A public meeting has been this day to take the subject into consideration and to consult upon the measures to be adopted for enabling the inhabitants to avail themselves of these munificent offers without delay.'

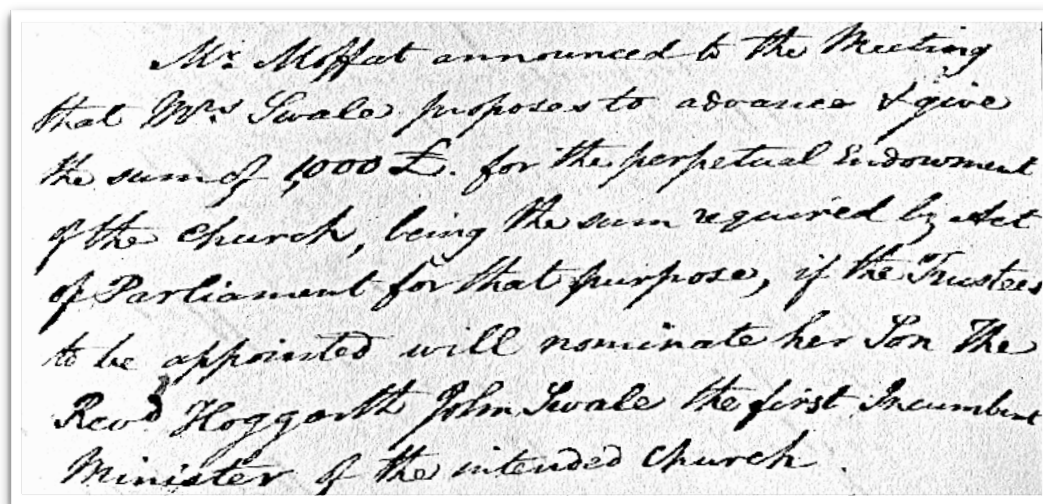
Rev Rowland Ingram, the headmaster of Giggleswick School, was in the Chair. Messrs Wilkinson and Tennant and sisters were thanked for their very liberal offer. A committee was set up to collect subscriptions for the rest of the money required and look for a proper site *'in case the one offered by Mr Wilkinson was not approved of'* which it obviously wasn't. The committee collected subscriptions which were paid into the Craven Bank.

**3 March 1835** – *'In the opinion of this meeting the most desirable site for the proposed church would be the Southwest part of the land lately purchased by Mr William Bolland from the late John Bowskill'* (who had previously built Bowskills Yard).

**14 April 1835** – William Bolland was too ill to inspect the proposed site, so the meeting was adjourned to 22 April. (William Bolland died 17 Feb 1839 and was buried in Giggleswick graveyard)

**21 April 1835** – *'The secretaries are authorised to pay £250 (deposit) to Mr Bolland on account of the land intended to be taken for the site. A letter to be written by this day's post to Mr Webster the architect requesting him to come hither the first vacant day (except Monday next) in order to view the proposed site, and that the committee may consult him on the subject.'* Mr Webster visited on 6 May and went off to prepare a plan for a church to contain 700 people, with 200 in the Gallery, and the cost not exceeding £1500.

**27 October 1835** – With no regard for any hint of equal opportunities recruitment, *'Mr Moffatt announced at the meeting that Mrs Swale proposes to advance the sum of £1000 for the perpetual endowment of the church, being the sum required by act of Parliament for that purpose, if the Trustees to be appointed will nominate her Son The Revd Hoggarth John Swale the first Incumbent Minister of the intended Church.'*



*Mr Moffatt announced to the Meeting that Mrs Swale proposes to advance & give the sum of 1000 £. for the perpetual endowment of the Church, being the sum required by act of Parliament for that purpose, if the Trustees to be appointed will nominate her Son The Revd Hoggarth John Swale the first Incumbent Minister of the intended Church.*

*Act of Parliament for that purpose, if the Trustees to be appointed will nominate her son the Rev Hoggarth John Swale the first incumbent minister of the intended church.'* This was met with the *'unanimous approbation of this meeting'* and, sure enough, **Rev Hoggarth John Swale** became the first incumbent.

**12 January 1836** – Mr Rickman's first external plan with tower, spire and internal arrangement for the Body of the Church and the Gallery was adopted for the proposed church. The church would be placed lengthways in the field being built nearly North-South (rather than the traditional East-West, due to shape of the land available). The plans were approved 9 to 6. Why do you think it wasn't unanimous?

In March and April 1836, at the Golden Lion, the Trustees appointed the contractors:

**Thomas Bateson** was appointed to obtain the stone and do the mason's work for the sum of £1045 having proposed **Eli Harger** and **Joseph Harger** (his wife's uncles and innkeepers of the Naked Man and Royal Oak) as his sureties. **Robert Harger**, a brother of Eli and Joseph, was appointed to obtain timber and do the carpentry, with his brother **William Harger** as a surety. A real family business! **John Bullock** was declared the contractor for cutting the yard wall at the sum of £2 15 shillings per rood. (He died in 1845 and is buried in the graveyard behind the altar). **Mr Silverwood** was appointed to do the plumbing for £67, *'his tender being much the lowest'*, with **Mr Thomas Nixon** as his surety.

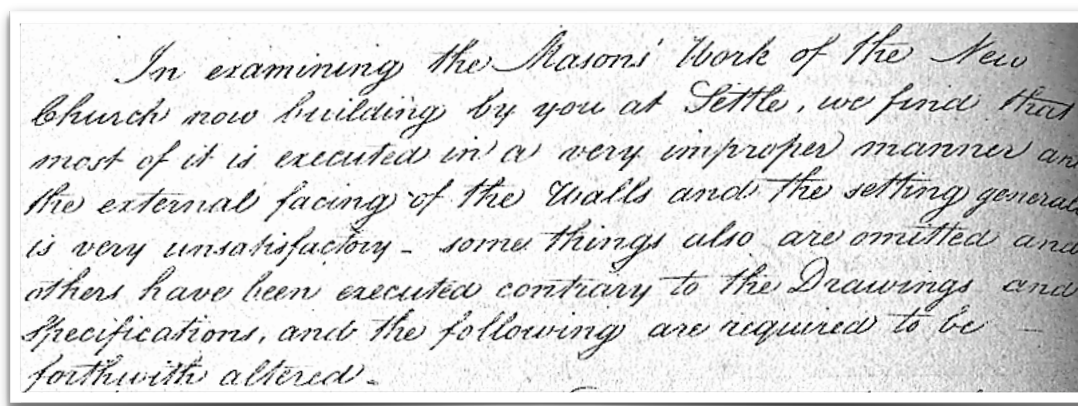
**10 June 1836** – *'A cornerstone to be laid with proper ceremonies on Wednesday next the 15th, Rev Rowland Ingram asked to officiate. A brass plate to be affixed on such stone with inscription.'* The arrangements were left to Mr Ingram and he was *'requested to grant the school boys a half holiday on that day.'*

So far 346 perches (just over 2 acres) of land had been bought for £909 but by 29 December 1836 there was a deficit of £994 15 shillings, so further subscriptions were entered into.

**9 June 1837** – a letter was written to Thomas Bateson, the mason:



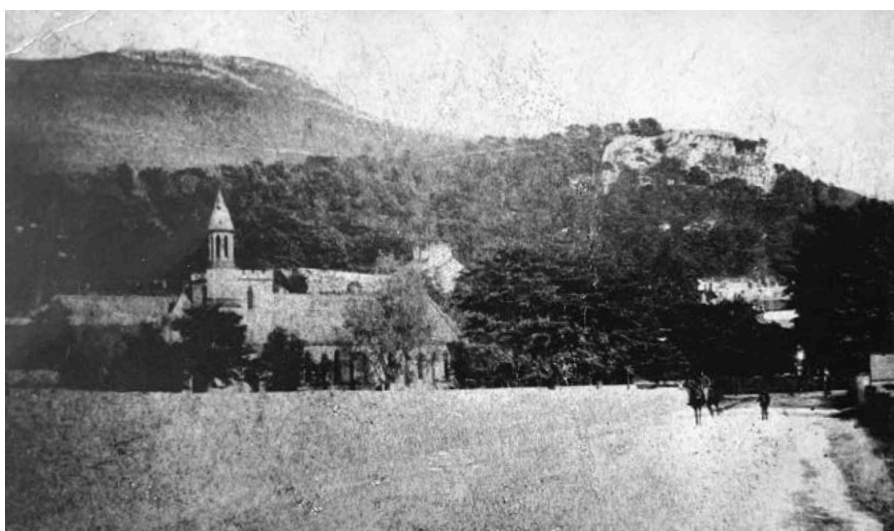
*'In examining the mason's work of the new church now building by you at Settle, we find that most of it is executed in a very improper manner and the external facing of the walls and the setting generally is very unsatisfactory. Some things are omitted and others have been executed contrary to the plans.'*



*In examining the Masons' Work of the New Church now building by you at Settle, we find that most of it is executed in a very improper manner and the external facing of the Walls and the setting generally is very unsatisfactory - some things also are omitted and others have been executed contrary to the Drawings and Specifications, and the following are required to be forthwith altered -*

A list of at least ten significant repairs followed including a complete rebuild and grouting of the slopes of the tower turret the tower walls. Oh dear. Thomas and his wife **Nancy Harger** died of typhoid within a fortnight of each other in September 1849 leaving nine orphaned children, the youngest of whom also died, aged four. They were buried in an unmarked grave next to the Robinson vault. The rest of the children survived and daughter **Agnes Bateson** married a wealthy cousin of the original benefactor, **William Wilkinson**.

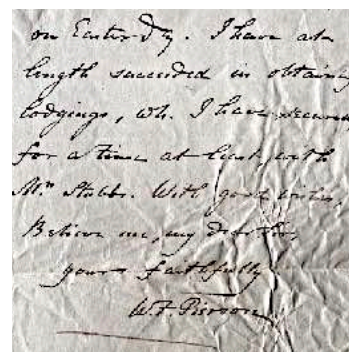
The church was eventually consecrated on 26 October 1838. In the end the church cost £3328 9sh 9d, over twice the original estimate. Isn't that always the way?



## The New Holy Ascension Church

The new church was very popular in its early years, causing a noticeable decrease in the attendance at St Alkelda's in Giggleswick. Two-thirds of the pews were rented out those who could afford to them, paid half-yearly. One-third of the pews were decreed to be free for those who couldn't but they were expected to contribute to the weekly offertory. Once bills and repairs were taken out, the remainder became the vicar's salary, 'The Living'.

**Reverend William Frederick Pierson** took over in 1848. He wrote to say that he intended to commence his duties on Easter Day and had 'at length' found lodgings, for a time at least, with **Mrs Stubbs** (at The Terrace). It's obvious he didn't think it was a very satisfactory arrangement! William married **Margaret Birkbeck**, daughter of **John Birkbeck** at Anley in 1850. The Birkbecks were wealthy landowners, ran the Craven Bank and were JPs. In 1856 William purchased 4 acres of land '*formerly known as Chamberlain Croft, or the Great Croft*' in Station Road from Margaret's relation **Thomas Birkbeck**. Here, with the help of the usual subscribers, he built the Parsonage, completed in 1857.



### SETTLE PARSONAGE.

THE following Subscriptions have been already received towards the purchase of a site, and building of a Parsonage House for this town. The amount subscribed is still below the estimated cost, and further subscriptions will be thankfully received by the Churchwardens, Mr. Richard Greenwood, and Mr. Thomas Stackhouse, or at the Craven Bank.

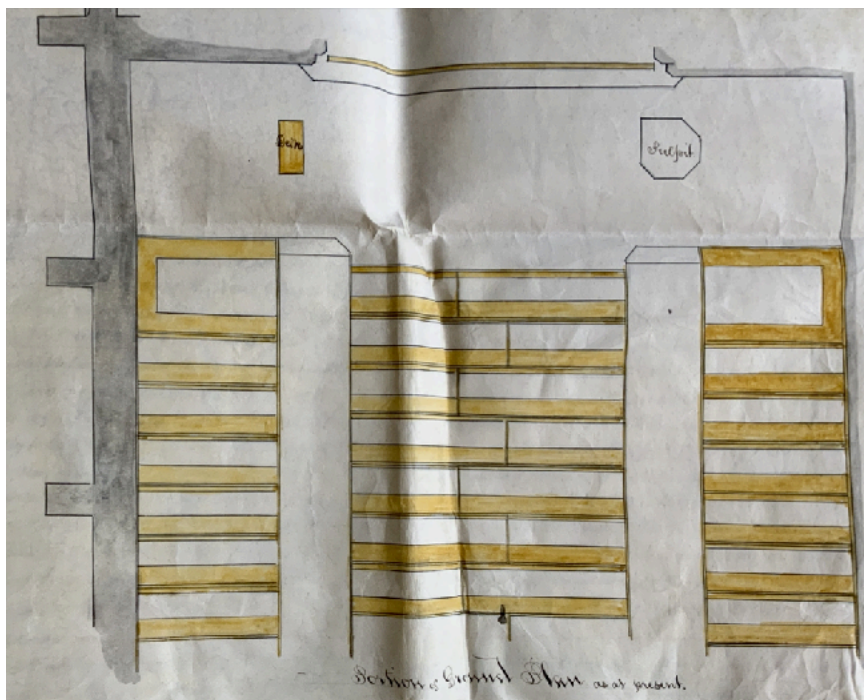
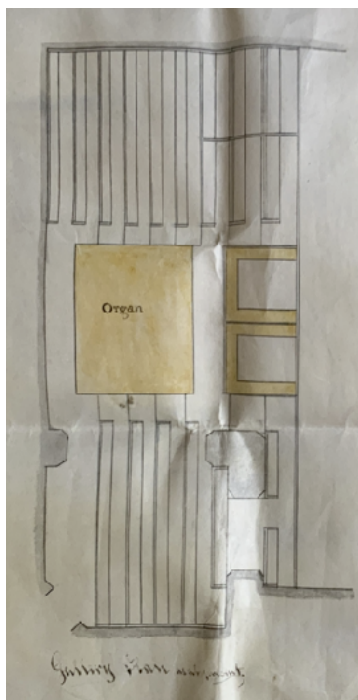
	£		£
The Craven Bank . . . .	100	Miss Robinson . . . . .	10
Wm. Robinson, Esq. . .	100	Rev. J. Robinson . . . . .	10
John Birkbeck, Esq. . .	100	Miss Bolland . . . . .	10
Rev. W. F. Pierson . . .	200	S. Hargraves, Esq. . . . .	10
Miss Lambert . . . . .	50	Mrs. Henlock, Ousburn	10
John Preston, Esq. . . .	40	F. Dawson, Esq. . . . .	10
Thomas Birkbeck, Esq. .	30	Rev. H. Dawson . . . . .	10
Thomas Clapham, Esq. .	25	A. Stackhouse, Esq.,	
Miss Dawson . . . . .	20	(Stainforth) . . . . .	10
George Hartley, Esq. . .	20	Anonymous . . . . .	5
Wm. Robinson, Junior,		Mr. Geo. Wilkinson . . .	1
Esq. . . . .	20	Rev. R. Procter . . . . .	1

### A few problems

By 1865 Rev Pierson had a few concerns about the layout of the church.

1. The pulpit '*at one extreme end of the church renders it very difficult and laborious for the officiating clergyman to make himself heard at the other extremity of the building*' which would have included the balcony of course.





## Appeal for the Alteration of Settle Church.

The Minister and Churchwardens of Settle desire to appeal to the Inhabitants and others in behalf of their Church, which they consider greatly to require alteration in its internal arrangement.

The evils of the present arrangement are threefold.

- 1st. The position of the Pulpit and Reading Desk, at one extreme end of the Church, renders it very difficult and laborious for the officiating clergyman to make himself heard at the other extremity of the building.
- 2nd. The position of the Organ, in the gallery, detracts from the softness and mellowness of its sound; and its being far removed from the proper position of the Choir, renders it extremely difficult for the Organist to accompany the singing, and impossible for the clergyman, or the Choir to communicate with the Organist, in case of any difficulty or mistake arising about the tunes.
- 3rd. The Gallery is obstructed by the Organ as to both light and sound; and the approach to it is very inconvenient.

Plans have been prepared by Messrs. Healey, Architects, Bradford, by which these inconveniences may be remedied, and at the same time an additional number of sittings may be secured, and the internal appearance of the Church improved.

The Minister and Churchwardens hope that, by the liberality of the inhabitants of Settle, and of those interested in its welfare, they may be enabled to carry out these plans; and they hereby earnestly appeal for subscriptions to all who are willing to forward this good work.

It is estimated that about £500 will be required to complete the desired alterations. Subscriptions for this purpose, however small, will be thankfully received by the Clergy and the Churchwardens.

The following Subscriptions have been already received or promised.

	£	£	
Wm. Robinson, Esq. . . . .	50	Rev. J. Stangfeld. . . . .	10
John Dirkbeck, Esq. . . . .	50	Mrs. Haughton . . . . .	5
Rev. J. Robinson, . . . . .	25	The Misses Jarry . . . . .	5
Wm. Robinson, Jun., Esq. 10		Other Subscriptions . . . . .	55

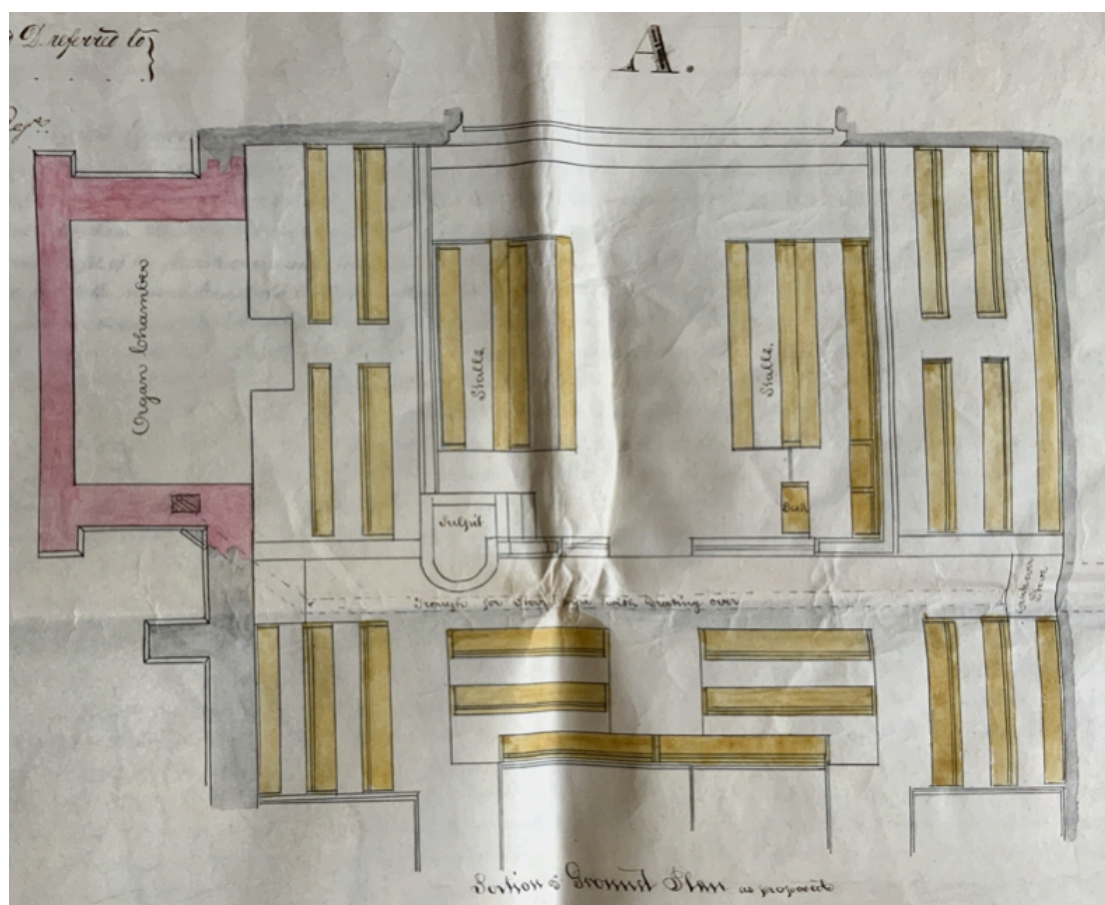
W. F. PIERSON, Perpetual Curate,  
 GEORGE WILKINSON, }  
 JOHN WINSKILL, } Churchwardens,

2. The position of the Organ, in the gallery, detracts from the softness and mellowness of its sound; and its being so far removed from the proper position of the choir, renders it

extremely difficult for the Organist to accompany the singing, and impossible for the clergyman, or the Choir to communicate with the Organist.

3. The gallery is obstructed by the Organ as to both light and sound; and the approach to it is very inconvenient.

A subscription fund was launched. It was estimated that £500 would be needed, including the £200 already received from the local gentry. Several plans were drawn up to resolve these difficulties including one which built an extension on the East side of the Church for the organ (A). Rev Pierson originally preferred this design.



Rev Pierson asked Pew Holders and Trustees to let him have their opinion on the plans. Not everyone was happy. **Edward Thomas Foster** wrote to both the Trustees and Rev Pierson, in no uncertain terms, saying no alterations were needed. He argued that the church had only been erected for 35 years. He suggested that, 'if your voice is unequal to forereaching from the present pulpit' he would have no objections to a temporary relocation, however 'I