

John Hardy & son, & grandson, monumental masons

John Hardy was born in 1841 in Tissington, Derbyshire, the son of another **John Hardy** and his wife **Sarah Hitchcock**. Both these Johns and subsequent generations of John Hardy made their living as stonemasons. Tissington, along with many other Derbyshire villages, is well known for the tradition of well dressing, made entirely out of petals, every May [ph1]. They are worth a visit to this day. In 1865 the elder John Hardy designed the Tissington well dressing. Judges commented that the Town Well was more delicately and better worked than they could ever expect with flowers, with an 'orthodox arch, a central lyre and panelled pillars presenting a surface approaching velvet in softness and purity of colour. A minute inspection could not find a petal out of place.' [1]



The ambition of the designer (Mr. John Hardy) was partially successful. The "Town Well" we certainly found more delicately and better worked than we could ever expect to meet with in flowers. The design was much the same as visitors to Tissington have seen before—there was the orthodox arch; the top crowned, the centre lyre and the panelled pillars all exquisitely decorated and presenting a surface approaching velvet in softness and purity of colour. A minute inspection could not detect a petal out of place. Sycamore blossoms, blue bell, moss, varied

John Hardy, born in 1841, married a local farmer's daughter, **Elizabeth Ann Handley** in 1863 and they had two sons and four daughters although little **George Henry Hardy** and **Bertha Annie Hardy** died as infants. From the children's birth locations we can see the family moved to Buxton by 1868 and, by 1872 to Settle, most likely finding work on the Settle and Carlisle railway — stonemasons were in great demand and the number living in the area tripled during the building of the railway. In 1875 John had his photo taken in his Sunday best at the Horner Studios — what an incredible photo [ph2]. Initially the family lived in Commercial Street in Upper Settle, then to Craven Cottages [LSA] and finally to 8 Craven Terrace around the corner.



John Hardy, photograph by the Horner Studio.
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During the 1880s John went into partnership with **Edward Redmayne Morphet** to install hot air ovens which had extra flues to improve efficiency. By the 1890s John was working by himself again and had diversified into 'all kinds of jobbing masonry' including gravestones, 'the largest and choicest selection in Craven', chimneys, hearths and ranges [LSA].

Elizabeth Ann died in 1905, aged 72 and John moved to 9 PenyGent View on Church Street with a showroom in the single storey buildings alongside and a workshop and yard behind. In 1912, John,
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aged 71, married again. John's second wife was 57 year old **Clara Fell** who had been the Post Mistress at Giggleswick with her own confectionery business.

By now, John and Elizabeth Ann's son **John Hardy (Jnr)**, an established stonemason in his own right had married **Ellen Frankland**, one of the nine children of the wonderfully named Rathmell farmer **Thirston Frankland**. There were many grandchildren also called Thirston Frankland! John and Ellen had a son, another **John Hardy**. John and Ellen lived on Banks View, the other side of the showroom and they ran the business together, complete with an impressive array of monuments in front of the shop! They used a yard at the back of the property as a workshop. John (Snr) died in 1922, aged 81 and his widow, Clara, in 1935, aged 80. The buildings were replaced with modern housing in 2002.

John (Jnr) died in 1936, aged 68 and Ellen lived until 1955 when she was 86. Their son **John Hardy (Jnr, jnr)**,

Hardys

John Hardy = Sarah Hitchcock



John = Elizabeth Ann Handley [1]

= Clara Fell [2]

John = Ellen Frankland



John = Elsie Hodgson

pictured with employee **Vincent Wright** at Slaidburn graveyard [ph3], who remembered John Hardy as 'not authoritarian' but usually left the hands-on work to his employees. John continued the business with his wife **Elsie Hodgson**, daughter of **Richard Samuel Hodgson**, one of the Castle Hill blacksmiths. Just like his father, this John employed several men and regularly worked with the **Parker family** of joiners for more substantial jobs. He continued to build ranges, replacing marble fireplaces with tile surrounds, roofing contracts and was involved in building the petrol station in the grounds of Whitefriars in the 1950s. He was thought to be involved

in building the Non Conformist Chapel on Skipton Road in 1909 and the extension to the Kingdom Hall on Kirkgate. The Hardys had regular contracts with with the Langcliffe Hall estate and with the Coop, maintaining their shops in various locations around town. The youngest John Hardy retired in



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1961 and **Jimmy Thompson**, auctioneer, took over the premises. Jimmy also bought John Hardy's Land Rover from him!

The gravestone commemorates the lives of three generations of John Hardys and their wives but only contains the bodies of Elizabeth Ann (Handley) Hardy, John Hardy (Jnr) and his wife Ellen (Frankland) Hardy. Perhaps the others were cremated? The Hardys were responsible for engraving many of the gravestones in our graveyard. It is therefore not at all surprising that the gravestone to commemorate their lives should be magnificent and one of the most intricately engraved.

In loving remembrance of Elizabeth Ann wife of John Hardy died Dec 22 1905 aged 72 years, also the above John Hardy died Dec 1922 aged 81 years. Also John their son Died Dec 27th 1936 aged 69 years Also Ellen his wife Died Sep 3rd 1955 aged 86 years. Also their grandson John Died Feb 20th 1975 aged 80, also Elsie Hardy died 20th October 1984 aged 88 years, Old F16



The gravestone is very similar to that of our international pioneer, **Anthony Close**, (right) who died in 1900 — the Hardys engraved that one too and perhaps inspired the design for their own stone. John Hardy (Snr) and Elizabeth Ann's daughter **Fanny Hardy** remained a spinster and worked as a schoolmistress in Sydenham, Kent. She was brought back to Settle for burial in the unmarked grave *New FX31*. Their daughter **Sarah Ann Hardy** married a chemist, **James Fothergill** and they lived in Perry Vale, Kent, just a couple of miles away from Fanny. John Hardy (Jnr, jnr) and Elsie had one daughter, **Mary Jessica Hardy**, who married **Derek Denton** and they lived in his home town, Doncaster.

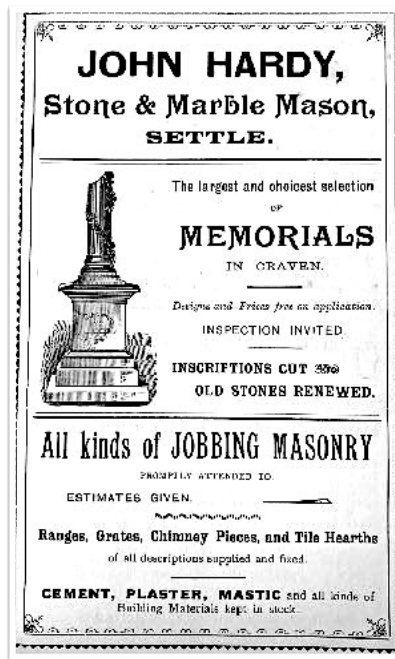


This account has been compiled by Sarah Lister as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. It has been written in good faith with no offence intended. If I have inadvertently included errors or breached 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 includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on settlerearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.

Thanks to John Reid and employee George Wright for their help with this account.

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ph1 — credited to Tissingtonhall.co.uk, ph2 — Image 2022.1.68.6 from the Horner Photographic Studio Collection provided courtesy of the Museum of North Craven Life/North Craven Building Preservation Trust. ph3 — kindly provided by George Wright



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