

William Marshall Watts, an exceptionally clever man

William Marshall Watts was a very bright lad. Born in Lincolnshire, the son of an independent minister, William was educated at Owens College, Manchester obtaining first class Honours in Chemistry and Natural Philosophy. Whilst there he was the secretary to the revamped Owen College Union, renamed the Student Debating Society '*for the discussion of controversial subjects, which must exclude politics and religion*'. It had 62 members. William studied at the University of Heidelberg for his doctorate. He won numerous scholarships in a wide range of subjects along the way; Maths, Language and Literature of Greece and Rome, History, Chemistry (Lecture and Laboratory). However, his main passion was Chemistry, known as '*the great authority on Spectrum Analysis*'[4,5]. Watts returned to Owens College in 1864 to work as an assistant and then became an assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Glasgow in 1866. Dr Watts had several papers published in *Philosophical Magazine* and the *Journal of the Chemical Society* and a 'An Essay on Lighthouses' appeared in *Boys' Own Magazine* that same year. His books included *Index to Spectra*, *Organic Chemistry*, *A School Flora for the use of elementary botanists*, *A Practical Introduction to the Elements of Chemistry* and *An Introduction to the Study of Spectrum Analysis*.

"Some interesting observations on the spectrum of the Bessemer furnace flame have recently been made at the works of the Barrow Hematite Steel Company, by Dr. W. M. Watts. He finds that certain lines in the spectrum, not coincident with known lines of any elementary substance, and hitherto an enigma to the spectroscopist, are due to the presence of manganese.—*Athenaeum*."

After all this, it says much about the academic rigour of staff appointed to private schools in those days, as in 1868, he became First Science Master at Manchester Grammar School before being promoted to the Master of Natural Science at Giggleswick School in 1872. He was appointed by **Rev George Style** who had recently taken over the reins of the school and was in the process of making significant improvements to the school. As such, William supervised the planning and building of a brand new Chemical Laboratory which will probably bring back memories for many readers! It cost £1500 and was '*excellently adapted to its purpose*' [A]. Giggleswick School were certainly aiming for the best! Dr Watts was such a strong selling point that his name was included in pupil recruitment adverts for the school from the moment of his appointment [8].

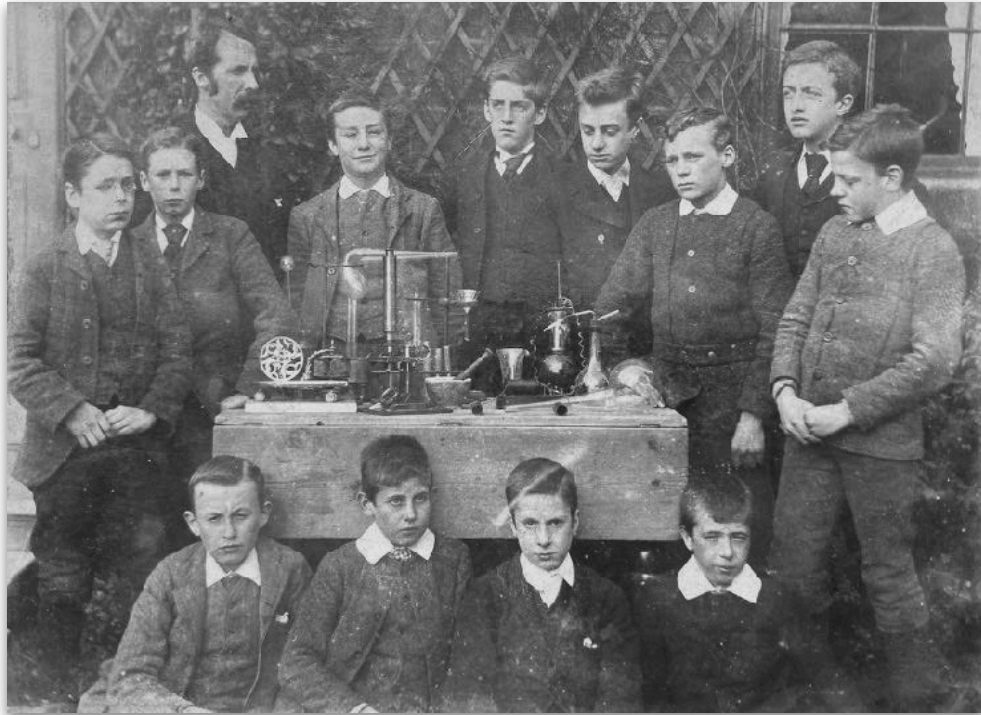


GIGGLESWICK GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
SETTLE, YORKSHIRE.
Head Master—The Rev. **GEORGE STYLE, M.A.**, Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge.
Science Master—**W. MARSHALL WATTS, Esq., D.Sc.**, London University.
There is an admirable new boarding house for 50 boys, containing studies, dormitories, with separate compartments, &c.
Terms, £60 and £50.

William's appointment certainly paid off as pupils were awarded record numbers of scholarships to the most prestigious higher education establishments in Maths and Science during William's tenure. During the early hours of a night in November 1896 a fire was discovered in the Chemistry Room and it spread to the rest of the building. It destroyed several classrooms and some boarding accommodation before it was put out by 6am. It was enough for the Headmaster and Dr Watts to draw up plans for replacing what was already an excellent Laboratory into an even better one. The Chemistry and Lecture rooms were

rebuilt and new classrooms, a Physical Laboratory and Science Library were designed and built from scratch.

At the time of William's appointment the Settle to Carlisle was just about to commence construction and the Craven caves were being explored enabling Rev Style and Dr Watts to inspire students with the very best of contemporary geologists and engineers. Dr Bell, who wrote 'This History of Giggleswick School in 1912 wrote that, *'at that period no school in England could approach Giggleswick in the practical teaching of Science.'* That's quite a claim!



William was assisted by **James Butler**. It's possible the photo [ph4] pictures William himself, or his assistant James Butler alongside the students. William still continued to lecture and research alongside his teaching responsibilities [4].

Five years after his appointment to Giggleswick School, in 1877, William married a widow **Ida Henrietta (Massey) Tamblyn who was born in Canada**. Her father, **Daniel Massey** was the founder of Massey-Harris of Toronto which manufactured farming equipment [ph2]. In 1871 Ida had married **John Tamblyn**, an assistant bank manager, whose parents had emigrated to Canada from Cornwall. John and Ida had a son, **Thomas Massey Fisher Tamblyn** before John died of tuberculosis, aged 28. Two years later, in 1877 Ida and her son were in Chorlton, Manchester, probably visiting her sister, and that's where she married William Marshall Watts. William was quite happy to bring up his wife's child as his own and, more than that, young Thomas wrote additional material for one of his step-father's books and shared an interest in both spectroscopy and botany.



William and Ida lived first in Stackhouse, where they had their first daughter **Dora Mannock Watts** (who may have picked up her middle name from fellow schoolmaster **Gifford Bromley Mannock**).

At the time of the 1881 census, at Stackhouse, their niece, **Ida Frances Maud Watts**, lived with them.

William and Ida moved to 7 Prospect Terrace, a very desirable address at the time, and could afford a servant at the time of each census return. Unfortunately, in 1887, one of their servants, **Mary Annie Woolerton**, was burnt to death when her (voluminous) skirt caught fire in front of the stove. She ran from room to room which probably made it burn faster. She died after 40 hours' agony [6]. This may have prompted their move back to Stackhouse where **Sally Anne Moore** worked as their servant. Sally Anne became an immensely successful leader in the local nursing profession. In 1894 William submitted a letter to the 1894 *Settle Chronicle* newspaper [SL] The *Settle Chronicle* was published from 1854-66 and **Thomas Brayshaw** had tried to relaunch it, unsuccessfully as it transpired. William's letter was about the occurrence of *Asarum Europaeum*, more commonly known as European Wild Ginger.

William remained at Giggleswick School as the Master of Natural Science for an incredible 32 years, the majority under the headship of Rev George Style. He retired in 1904 when he was 60. Why? Rev George Style had just retired and was replaced by **William Wyamar Vaughan** who immediately changed the curriculum to focus on subjects using the English Language: Scripture, History, Geography, Literature and Grammar. It is understandable that William decided this was the right time to retire. The family moved to Kent, naming their house 'Ingleboro'. William died in Kent, aged 74 followed ten years later by Ida, aged 82. Their children?

On his application for the Institute of Electrical Engineers in 1899 Thomas Massey Fisher Tamblyn Watts explained he had an apprenticeship with **Mr William McWhirter** 'latterly of the *Faraday Electrical Engineering Company*' in Glasgow followed by a placement as an assistant electrical engineer in Troutbeck, Windermere. Alongside this he had done eight years' clerical work for the British Association Committee on 'wavelength tables of the spectra of the elements and compounds' and began working as an electrician and apparatus maker in 1896, when he was 24. That's quite a lot packed in to his young life.

Whilst in Glasgow Thomas met and married **Marion Joan McWhinnie**. They returned to live on Prospect Terrace, taking over the house from his parents who returned to Stackhouse. The adverts for his business as an electrician and maker of Scientific Apparatus and Instruments would have seemed very progressive for Settle! [LSA] Perhaps too progressive? By the

A DOMESTIC SERVANT BURNT TO DEATH AT SETTLE.

About nine o'clock on Friday morning a domestic servant named Annie Woolerton (17), in the service of Dr Watt, at Prospect Terrace, Settle, whilst engaged upon her household duties had her back turned for the moment to a gas stove. Her dress caught fire, and she ran from room to room, the flames being fanned by the rapid progression, the apartments being set on fire. The barking and demonstrations of a dog attracted the attention of the neighbours, who found the girl in the attic dreadfully burnt. Dr Edgar was soon in attendance. The girl died yesterday morning, after enduring great pain for forty hours. The fires in the rooms were extinguished by the neighbours.

To the Editor of The Chronicle.

Sir,

I shall be glad if you can spare me a few lines of your valuable space to place on record the occurrence of an interesting and somewhat rare plant at Feizor. The plant is *Asarum Europaeum*, of which a specimen, in flower, was found by Mr. John Wilman, on May 8rd. The plant is described by Dr. Arnold Lees, in the "Flora of West Yorkshire," as an extinct alien. That it is not yet extinct is evident, and Mr. Wilman tells me that he has noticed the plant at various times during the last twenty years, though he did not know that any particular interest attached to it. The late Mr. John Tatham had a single specimen in his herbarium, which he found many years ago in an old hedge and deep dry ditch, between Grain House and Fieldgate, 2 miles West of Settle, a station long since destroyed, but the fact that it has been growing at Feizor all the time does not seem to have been recorded before. No doubt it was originally planted there. The plant is not mentioned in Windsor's "Flora Craveniensis."

Yours truly,

W. MARSHALL WATTS.

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Settle Graveyard Project

time of the 1911 census Thomas and his expanding family had moved to London, at around the same time as his mother and step-father moved south. Whilst there Thomas wrote numerous books including *The Home Electrician* series, *A Handbook for the Student and Householder*, *Some notes on the Natural Features of Southend-on-Sea and District*, *Wonderful Plants*, *A botanical book for students*. Thomas' success is an interesting case study into the nature versus nurture debate!

Meanwhile, in 1909, William and Ida's eldest daughter, **Dora Mannoek Watts** married **Hermann Joseph Feith**, a toy maker and engineer and the son of a German father, **Franz Joseph Hermann**, and a French mother, **Louise Duhart-Fauvet** who had arrived in England in the 1880s. Hermann's brothers were named **Adolphe** and **Franz**. Hermann was a driver with the British Expeditionary Force in France, despite being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Hermann and his two brothers all seemed to have successful careers and families travelling all over the world but, at that period in history, there must have been some interesting conversations over the dinner table!



William and Ida's son, **William Francis Muther Watts**, [ph5] emigrated to Canada, where he had numerous maternal relations, obviously, and worked as a chauffeur. In 1915, aged 34, he joined the Canadian Infantry as a Private. His records show that he was just 5 foot 1 inch tall with grey eyes and brown hair. William was reported missing on 26 September 1916 during the battle of Thiepval Ridge during the Somme offensive in which the Canadian forces had a major role. None of

his comrades knew any of the circumstances of his death. The Canadians suffered approximately 3,500 casualties (killed, injured and missing) and more than 700 Canadians killed in action during that battle have no known grave. William was 35.

Name	Watts Frank	Rank	Private	Reg. No.	180330
Unit	29th Battalion	Age	34	174	1860
Next of Kin	Mr William Watts	199	Venue	1st	London
Date		Movement	Place	Cause	Notified N/K.O.
26-9-16.	MISSING AFTER ACTION	A354	0.5563	24-10	25-10
26-9-16.	MISSING BELIEVED KILLED	A442	0.8809	12-2.	14-2
26-9-16.	Now for Official Purposes presumed to have DIED.	A490.	12-4-17		
26-9-16	Now Killed in Action				

William and Ida had another daughter called **Dorothy Watts**. The only evidence of her existence is a newspaper article about her marriage to **Claude Nicholson**, an electrical engineer in 1913 [7]. Dorothy doesn't appear to have been brought up by her parents and so was, perhaps, was brought up by relations in Canada? She and her husband were equally elusive after their marriage.

Mr Claude Nicholson, son of Dr. Frank Nicholson, of Tickton Grange, was married on Monday to Dorothy, youngest daughter of Mr **William Marshall Watts** of Loughborough. The ceremony took place at All Saints' Church, Southend-on-Sea.

Watts family

Isaac Watts = Dorothy Scott

Daniel Massey = Lucena Bradley

Isaac Walter Angus = Arletta Massey William Marshall [2] = Ida Massey = [1] Tambllyn

Dora = Feith William F M Dorothy = Nicholson Thomas Tambllyn = McWhinnie



William was the son of **Isaac Watts** who was born in 1812 in Market Bosworth, Leicestershire. His namesake, **Isaac Watts**, born in 1674, was a Congregational minister and prolific hymn writer, credited with some 750 hymns including '*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*'^[ph1]. The two Isaac Watts had comparable lives. Our Isaac was a stalwart of the Congregational Church and moved to Altrincham, Cheshire as an independent minister with his wife, **Dorothy Scott** and their three sons during the 1850s. In that period of history the supply of cotton for the mills had been brought to its knees by the American civil war. In 1860 there were 2650 cotton mills in Lancashire employing 440 thousand people and producing half the world's cotton and so Manchester was known as '*Cottonopolis*'. Getting a new supply was critical and political. Isaac was at the centre of this as Secretary of the Cotton Supply Association and Editor of its Journal '*The Cotton Supply Reporter*' throughout its existence from 1858 until 1872. By then a cotton supply deal had been settled with India. He wrote a paper, '*The Origin and Progress of the Cotton Supply Association*', following a visit to India for the Association.



Isaac and Dorothy's eldest son was **Walter Angus Watts**, his middle name being Dorothy's mother's maiden name. Walter completed his degree at Queen's University, Belfast in the same year that his father retired ^[1]. He even obtained a '*Science scholarship in the Faculty of Arts*' of £24, '*the only English student who has obtained a distinction in this college*' ^[2]. Soon after his 21st birthday Walter set sail for Durham, West Canada, working as a school master and congregationalist minister and lodging with none other than Daniel Massey and his family.

Funnily enough, in 1867 in Altrincham, Walter married **Arletta Desdomona Massey** ^[ph3] and ten years later, her sister, Ida, married Walter's brother, William. Walter and Arletta had two daughters and four sons including twin sons, one of whom, **William Scott Watts**, died an infant. Their third and fourth children, **Henry Herbert Watts** and **Ida Frances Maud Watts**, had their photo taken at the Horner Studios in 1880 ^[ph6]. Little Ida stayed with William and Ida at Stackhouse at the time of the 1881 census return — she remained a spinster. Hebert Henry returned to Canada and had a family, working as a merchant.



Mrs Watts' children 1880, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)



At the time of the 1871 census return Walter was employed by a '*chemical and alkali works*' in Widnes. Then Walter resorted back to teaching in Moss Side, Manchester. Any ministerial leanings seem to have been lost.

Walter's world changed completely when Arletta died in 1884, aged 40, when their youngest surviving child was just four. Arletta died of an abdominal aneurism, a swelling and rupture of the aorta which doesn't sound good. This Dr **James Walker Edgar** certified the death and **William Field Hook** was the registrar. Walter was there at her death but was resident in Widnes at the time. Arletta was buried in Giggleswick churchyard and the inscription reflected the American style, including her maiden name. What was she doing in Giggleswick? She was most likely visiting her sister.



I.H.S. In loving memory of Arletta D Massey, wife of Walter A. Watts born August 11th 1843 died June 2nd 1884. B8/39

In 1885 Walter married again. His new wife was **Emma Knight** from Brighton and Walter's eldest daughter, **Mary Arletta Watts**, was a witness. From then on Walter and Emma and their daughter **Dorothy Katherine Watts**, lived in London and Walter made a living as a '*private tutor*'. What about all those children from his first marriage? The remaining three sons, including the other twin emigrated to Canada where they had plenty of relations. They made their livings through science, engineering and farming. The two daughters remained spinsters in England making some money from work as schoolmistresses.

Isaac and Dorothy's second son **Isaac Watts** started life as a maker-up and packer at **S & J Watts** (seemingly unrelated) which was the largest single-occupancy textile warehouse in Manchester. However, Isaac inherited his father's political leanings, becoming the Secretary of the local Reform League, a full-time job, in 1887. Intriguingly he took over from **Dr John Watts**. The Reform League had been established in 1865 as a nationwide movement to campaign for male suffrage and the legal establishment of trade unions. Isaac became a Councillor in the first Altrincham District Council in 1894 and was twice elected Chairman. Isaac married **Sarah Jane Percival** in 1869. They didn't have any children of their own and so niece **Ida Frances Maud Watts**, daughter of his brother Walter Angus Watts, lived with them for many years after her time with William and Ida. Isaac died of a severe cold when he was 70 [3]. Niece Ida was the beneficiary of their estate when Isaac and Sarah Jane died and used it to retire to Devon where she lived with her older sister, **Mary Arletta Watts** who happened to be a talented pianist.



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 settleresearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.

A – A History of Giggleswick School, by EA Bell (1912)

Settle Graveyard Project

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