

Edward Thomas Foster, Neddy Tea

Edward Thomas Foster was a tea dealer, hence his nickname. He was the son of **William Foster** and **Margaret Thomas** who farmed 70 acres at Green Close Farm, to the west of Clapham, now positioned alongside the railway. Edward's eldest brother, **William Foster**, an 'eminent grazier and cattle dealer' died in 1839, aged just 32 [6].

Edward Thomas Foster decided against farming and undertook an apprenticeship with Mr Bailey in Clitheroe to become a grocer and tea dealer. From there he returned closer to home to set up his business in Constitution Hill [SC].

In January 1839 Edward Thomas got into some trouble in Kirkby Lonsdale. Edward accused **Mr R Fawcett**, a beerseller and **William Procter** of striking and kicking him. It was a very long story [8]. Edward had been selling tea at Tatham and then went to a gentleman's house 'where he had the whisky bottle at his mercy'. Then he went to Wray and drank some more and then to the Royal Oak in Hornby where he 'had four glasses of spirit'(!) He was refused any more alcohol so decided to walk to Cloughton. Mr Procter and Mr Fawcett of the Royal Oak decided to go and bring him back 'by the desire of Foster's boy' but had to use force to bring him back. They got Edward Thomas back to the inn 'but he soon commenced his outrageous behaviour, by striking the daughter and endeavouring to break the bar door open. Then he knocked Mr Richardson down, who lay insensible on the floor for some time, and then turned on Fawcett and attempted to choke him, but by the exertions of Procter was rescued from his grasp.' Then he left and found a police constable and ordered him to take the staff of the Royal Oak into custody. The landlord asked the policeman not to arrest Edward and decided not to press charges 'to protect his reputation'. The next day Edward woke up, paid his bill and went on his way.

However, about a week later, Edward had the audacity to return with **Mr John Gibbins**, the Settle postmaster and bank manager to demand an apology from the innkeepers for their behaviour and financial compensation 'for being attacked.' The paper made it clear they didn't think the behaviour the staff of the Royal Oak had been unreasonable. In the end, Edward took Fawcett and Procter to court. William Procter was found not guilty but Fawcett was fined 5 shillings. A week later the paper had to apologise to Edward and Mr Gibbins for commenting about the behaviour! Dear, oh dear.

In Settle Edward lived with his maternal aunt, **Nancy (Thomas) Leeming** at Underwood, the large house at the bottom of the hill. He had an apprentice, **William Brown**, aged 15, who could have

On the 15th inst., aged 32 years, at Poulton-le-Sands, near Lancaster, (where he had gone for the benefit of his health,) Mr. William Foster, of Gargrave, near Skipton, Yorkshire, and late of Green Close, near Clapham, in the same county, an eminent grazier and cattle dealer, — deservedly esteemed by a numerous acquaintance; by whom, together with his relatives, his memory will be long cherished in respectful remembrance, and his demise with sorrow and regret.

TAR AND BUTTER FOR SHEEP SALVE.

TO THE GRAZIER AND FARMERS OF CRAVEN, &c.

EDWARD THOMAS FOSTER,

Tea Dealer, Constitution Hill, Settle,

Begs to announce that he has just received a large quantity of thick Roney Archangel Tar, which he is desirous to offer on as reasonable terms as he possibly can afford. Also he has on sale a large quantity of good Grease Butter at the following prices, Best fine 6½d., second best, 6d., and a little inferior at 5½d. per lb. An early call will oblige.

Settle, October 1st, 1882.

came near. With some trouble they got him into the house, when he was pretty quiet for some time, but soon commenced his outrageous behaviour, by striking the daughter, and endeavouring to break the bar door open (to get more whiskey, we suppose). He then, without any provocation, knocked the witness Richardson down, who lay insensible on the floor for some time. He then turned to Fawcett, and got him down on the floor, and attempted to choke him, but by the exertions of Procter, he was rescued from his grasp. After knocking the chairs, tables, &c. about, he made his exit from the house. About

assault was committed. We regret that we should have been made the instrument of thus injuring the complainant and his witness, and gladly take advantage of the opportunity afforded us of freeing the character of those gentlemen from any aspersion which our former report may have subjected them to.

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been Foster's boy in the fight. Nancy Leeming was the widow of **Richard Leeming**, a lawyer who had been articled to, and then worked for the Hartley firm of solicitors. Richard, and then Nancy, owned all the properties on the south side of Constitution Hill and lived in Underwood, the large one at the bottom. As Nancy didn't have children of her own it's likely she left the house to Edward when she died in 1847. Over the years Edward made a decent income from them [SC]. Upon his brother William's death, Edward became the eldest son and so may also have inherited when his father died in 1839 — his mother had died in 1838. This may account for renovations in Constitution Hill dated 1853.

TO BE LET,
A COTTAGE or DWELLING HOUSE situate on the top of the south side of Constitution Hill, Settle. Apply to Mr. E. T. FOSTER, Tea dealer, Settle.

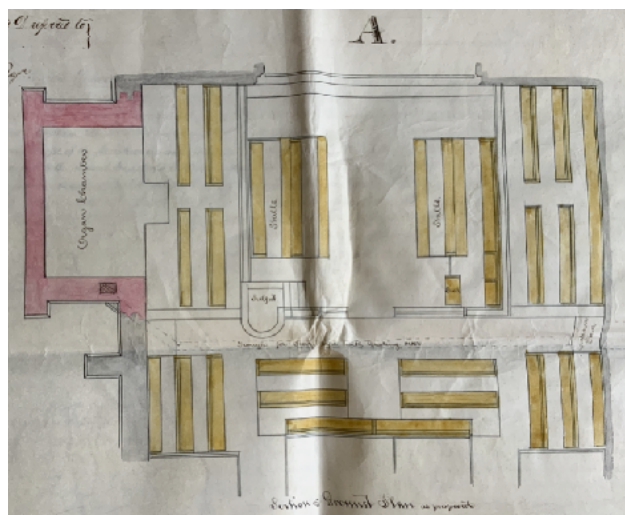


In October 1844, diarist **William Lodge Paley** reported that Edward broke his thigh and some ribs falling out of a hayloft [WLP]. We can only speculate on what he was doing in the hayloft but on 16 July the following year he married **Eleanor Lorimer Thornber**. Edward's marriage to Eleanor may have helped to settle Edward to a certain extent as there are no

Oct. 4.—Eli Harger's daughter died of a series of strokes and E. T. Foster broke his thigh and some ribs, falling out of hayloft.

further reports of drunkenness. However, Edward made his voice heard in 1865 when **Rev William Frederick Pierson** put forward proposals to renovate the church. In those days the church had a large congregation with seats for 600 downstairs and 200 on the balcony, squeezed in beside the organ. The pulpit was right at the front of the church, where the altar is now. Richard and Nancy Leeming, being wealthy, paid for a pew in a good position, downstairs of course, which had passed to Edward.

Rev Pierson was concerned that 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. In addition, *'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'*, and *'The gallery is obstructed by the Organ as to both light and sound; and the approach to it is very inconvenient.'* Rev Pierson proposed bringing the pulpit forward and moving the organ downstairs — he even planned an extension out the side of the church, specifically for the organ (which, obviously, never materialised).



Parishioners were asked for their thoughts on the designs. Not everyone was happy, including Edward Thomas Foster. He wrote to both the Trustees and Rev Pierson, in no uncertain terms, saying no alterations were needed. The letter was full of scribbles and alterations. He argued that the church had only been erected for 35 years. He suggested to the vicar, *'if your voice is unequal to forereaching from the present pulpit'* he would have no objections to a temporary relocation,

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however 'I decidedly object to any more alterations. I am one of the original subscribers to the building of this church and ever since then have accepted the pew that was allotted. I think that more respect should be shown to the memory of the original subscribers who are dead but took such a deep interest in the erection of the church'. Edward would not have been happy that his opinions were ignored and the alterations went through, albeit without the organ extension. Rev Pierson purchased the pulpit and matching font, made of fine alabaster, as part of the alterations.

I am one of the original subscribers to the building of the church & since that time I have occupied the Pew which was then allotted to me & I think it is a great respect to the memory of those original subscribers who are dead & who took such a deep interest in the erection of the Church.

I am yours sincerely
Edw. Tho. Foster

Edward and Eleanor didn't have children of their own but brought up a niece, **Eleanor Margaret Bryning**. In 1866 another niece, **Elizabeth Foster**, came to visit, the eldest daughter of Edward's brother **John Foster** who had stayed at Green Close Farm. Elizabeth died, aged 20 during her visit [9].

DEATH.—On Monday last, at **Settle**, in the 21st year of her age, whilst on a visit at her uncle's, **Mr E. T. Foster**, Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of **Mr John Foster**, of Green Close, Clapham. — Her demeanour and amiable disposition endeared her to all who knew her, and her demise will be long regretted by her sorrowing relatives and friends.

In 1864, Edward retired after nearly 40 years in business and sold his business to **Matthias Nowell** [SC] from Austwick. It's possible the Fosters and Nowells had previous links as 81 year old **Mary Nowell** had died at Green Close farm in 1833 [1]. 'Her pilgrimage thro' life (in a humble station) was reputable, and industrious' — a servant perhaps?

On the 26th ult. at Green Close, near Clapham, **Mary Nowell**, aged 81. — Her long pilgrimage thro' life (in a humble station) was reputable, and industrious.

Edward died in August 1878, aged 69 after a protracted illness. 'Mr Foster was known for his uncompromising political opinions, which were those of Tory and the real old-fashioned school. It was a pleasure even to those who entirely opposed him in politics to witness his zeal for his party, and at election times he was in a fever of excitement.' [1] Edward was buried with Eleanor in Giggleswick graveyard B6/4 next to his aunt and uncle Nancy and Richard Leeming.

THE LATE MR E. T. FOSTER.—Few persons have been better known in the district than the gentleman who was removed by death after a protracted illness a few days ago. Mr **Foster** came of a good old Craven family, and was born near Clapham, when the present century was young. He served his apprenticeship to Mr Bailey, of Clitheroe, and then commenced business in Settle as grocer and tea-dealer, and after an honourable business career of nearly forty years he retired on a well-earned competency, which he enjoyed for about ten years. Mr **Foster** was noted for his uncompromising political opinions, which were those of a Tory of the real old-fashioned school. It was a pleasure to those even who were entirely opposed to him in politics to witness his zeal in working for his party, and at election times he was in a fever of excitement. The deceased was very much respected for his honest straightforward character, and his memory will be held in esteem by a numerous circle of friends.

Sacred to the memory of Edward Thomas Foster of Settle who died June 28th 1878 aged 70 years. Also of Eleanor Lorimer wife of the above who died Aug. 3rd 1892 aged 77 years.

In memory of Richard Leeming of Settle, solicitor, who died January 23rd 1830 aged 48 years. Also of Nancy his wife who died at Settle May 27th 1847 aged 69 years. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Rev. XIV.13.1

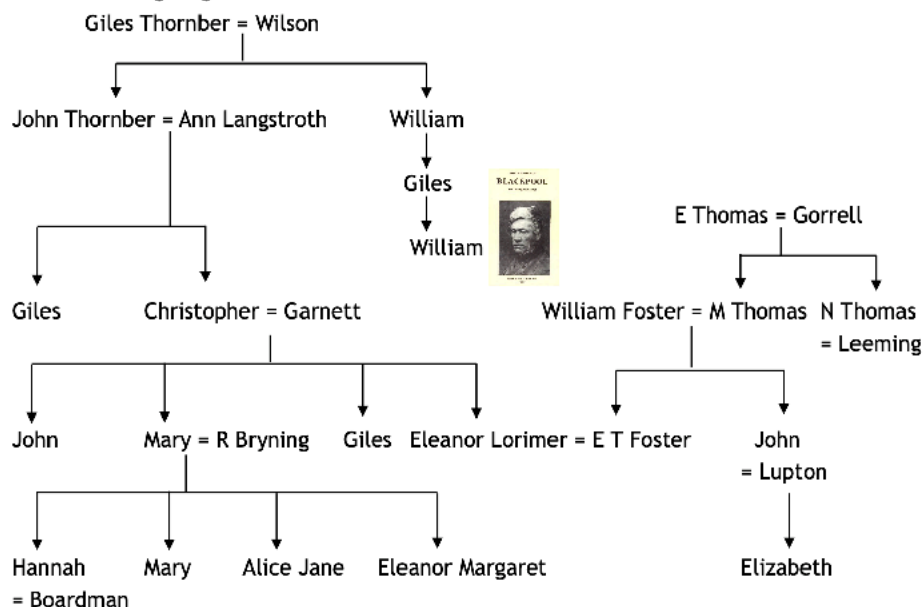


Edward Thomas was distantly related to **TD Smith**, via the Gorrell line. TD Smith's company ran the corner grocery shop on Cheapside/Duke Street for decades.

So, what is the story of Edward's wife and nieces? They descended from **Giles Thornber** and his wife **Hannah Wilson** of Hornby. The Thornbers were a wealthy and well regarded family, owning

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Thorner, Bryning and Foster families



property and land in Hornby, Bentham, Tatham and Poulton-le-Fyle (Blackpool). They also owned a public house called Banthorn in Bispham (Blackpool) and a pew in the church at Bentham. Several of the men were Justices of the Peace and magistrates. A **Rev William Thornber** wrote the well regarded *'History of Blackpool and its neighbourhood.'*[ph1]

In 1770, Giles and Hannah's son, **John Thornber** of Melling, married **Ann Langstroth** and they had two sons, **Giles** and **Christopher**, and two daughters, **Hannah** and **Ann**. When he died in 1820, John Thornber's will included an interesting clause, *'executors should place out at interest into the hands of my son Giles Thornber £250 and pay and apply the interest to my son Christopher Thornber during his life and after his death to pay the sum to John Thornber, the eldest son of Christopher...'* [A] Basically, John's son Christopher could not be trusted with the family wealth, for some reason and left the family finances in the capable hands of his son Giles. This could be something to do with a notice in 1811 declaring the business partnership between Giles and Christopher Thornber, both tallow chandlers (candle makers), was dissolved, by mutual consent, with Christopher running the business alone. Families have fallen out over less! Giles died in 1836, without any children, but before he died he made arrangements for Christopher's son, another **Giles Thornber**, to continue payments to his father.

In the same year as the partnership with his brother was dissolved, Christopher married **Margaret Garnett** and they had three sons, **John**, **William** and **Giles** and two daughters, **Mary** and **Eleanor**, living in Bentham. Son Giles was the one to take over Digham house, the family seat in Bispham, Blackpool. Giles made money from farming and property, was a magistrate and *'land agent to Bold Fleetwood Hesketh'*, — that family founded the town of Fleetwood, north of Blackpool, during the 1830s as a thriving deep sea fishing port with railway links. Despite his status, in 1871 Giles was taken to court for failure to pay £49 to a builder, for repairs to the pub he owned. Giles died

THE PUBLIC HOUSE DISPUTE.—"SMITH V. THORNER."—It will be remembered that this case came on for hearing at the last court day, and in which John Smith, joiner and builder, Bispham, sued the defendant, Giles Thornber, gentleman, residing in the neighbourhood of Bispham, for £49 4s 2d, the amount alleged to be due to plaintiff for repairs done to a public-house belonging to the defendant. The case was ad-

On Wednesday last, very much respected, aged 63, at Digham House, Bispham, near Poulton-le-Fylde, Giles Thornber, Esq. a magistrate of this county, formerly steward and land agent to the late Bold Fleetwood Hesketh, Esq. of Rossall Hall.

three years later, aged 63, 'very much respected' [2].

Christopher and Margaret's eldest son **John Thornber** was an attorney in Bentham, having been articled to **Robert William Hopkins** of Preston. At the time of the 1841 census he lived with Mary, his first wife (of three), his sisters **Eleanor Thornber** and **Mary (Thornber) Bryning** and her infant daughter and a servant, of course. Christopher and Margaret's daughter Mary Thornber had married **Richard Bryning**, a grocer and brewer from Flintshire, Wales and they had a son and four daughters.

Richard and Mary's daughter **Alice Jane Bryning** became a schoolmistress. In 1865 she obtained a first class Queen's scholarship, having worked at St Thomas' Girls' School in Lancaster [3]. During the 1870s she worked in Methley, south Leeds but in 1874 came to Settle to perform in a concert with her music teacher **Mr Tattersall**. 'By her clever rendering of *Ronde Brilliante* by Weber, and by her finished style and precision of fingering, proved herself one of the highest recommendations her teacher could wish for.'[1]

SETTLE.
GRAND CONCERT.—Mr. Tattersall, teacher of music from Accrington, whose musical attainments have only hitherto been known to a few beyond his own pupils in this neighbourhood, gave the public a good opportunity of judging of his skill at his concert on Thursday evening, the 19th inst., when he provided a bill of fare,

Tattersall's pupils at Settle, Miss Bryning, made a most favourable impression by her clever rendering of the *Ronde Brilliante* by Weber, and by her finished style and precision of fingering, proved herself one of the highest recommendations her teacher could wish for. Mr. Marsden, of Clitheroe, has a most wonderful

By the 1890s Alice Jane was working in Millom in the South Lakes and living with her elder sister **Mary Bryning**. Mary Bryning made a name for herself raising funds for the RNLI. Despite being 35 miles from the nearest coast, between 1868 and 1912 the Settle Branch of the RNLI, established in 1862, raised enough money to buy six life-boats which were thought to have saved 148 lives in all. The driving force behind the fundraising was **Christopher Brown** of Lawkland, after whom the first boat was named. In 1885 Mary wrote a poem called 'An appeal for the sailor' which she sent to Christopher Brown, enquiring if they would be of use? He printed off copies and sold them to raise money, So, Mary wrote another poem, 'The thought for the sailor'. The poems raised £162 2s for Settle branch. Mary decided to set up a Millom branch of the RNLI and worked as its secretary raising a further £586. In December 1892 the RNLI presented her with 'a large, beautiful photograph of one of their lifeboats', 'presented by the Institution to Miss Mary Bryning in acknowledgement of her valuable cooperation'[4]. Mary died almost exactly a year later.

PRESENTATION.—The Royal National Life-boat Institution has presented Miss Mary Bryning with a large, beautiful photograph, handsomely framed, of one of their life-boats going out to a vessel in distress. The picture bears the following inscription:—“Presented by the Institution to Miss Mary Bryning, in acknowledgement of her valuable cooperation.”—December 23rd, 1892.

After Mary's death, Alice Jane came to live with her youngest sister **Eleanor Margaret Bryning** in Settle. Eleanor Margaret had come to Settle as a child to be brought up by her aunt, Mary's sister, **Eleanor Lorimer (Thornber) Foster** and **Edward Thomas Foster**. When her aunt and uncle died Eleanor Margaret's sisters came to live at the same property until they had all died.

Alice Jane died in 1918, aged 71, leaving over £3,000 to her sister Eleanor Margaret. At the time of the 1921 census Eleanor lived with her widowed eldest sister **Hannah (Bryning) Boardman** at Underwood, together with a servant **Nora Jeffrey Bell**. When she was 43, in 1884, Hannah became the second wife of a

Eleanor Margaret Bryning	Head	71	6	F	Single	Lancashire Preston
Hannah Boardman	Sister	50	6	F	Widow	Lancashire Lancaster
Nora Jeffrey Bell	Servant	28	7	F	Single	Yorkshire Settle

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successful Lancashire cotton manufacturer, **Joseph Boardman**. Hannah helped to bring up Joseph's son from his first marriage. Hannah's death, aged 83, was registered in Settle in 1924 but she was buried back in Cheshire with her husband and his first wife, **Emily Wemyss**, who had died at the birth of their son.

Eleanor Margaret died in 1918 aged 78 and was buried with Lucy Alice in Settle graveyard. She left an estate of over £7,000, including a bequest of £250 towards providing a

The late Miss E. M. Bryning, of Constitution Hill, Settle, bequeathed provisionally £250 towards providing a modern fire engine for the district. Settle Rural Council last night referred the matter to a committee.

modern fire engine for the district [5]. On the basis of this Settle Rural Council were granted permission to borrow £1000 for the purchase of the engine. Interestingly, at the time of the 1939 pre-war register Underwood was inhabited by **Thomas Bell** and family — Thomas was the father of the Brynings' servant, Nora Jeffrey Bell.

In loving memory of Alice Jane Bryning died 1st June 1918 aged 72 years Also Eleanor Margaret Bryning died 26th May 1928 aged 78 years, Old G57.



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'.

A – credited to thornber.net

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Gazette, 2 – Preston Herald, 3 – Preston Chronicle, 4 – Millom Gazette, 5 – Yorkshire Post, 6 Blackburn Standard, 7 – Westmorland Gazette, 8 – Kendal Mercury, 9 – Lancaster Guardian

ph1 – photo credited to family descendants username Usamah Ward

SC – Settle Chronicle, WLP – the diaries of William Lodge Paley, with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life