

Isabella Dalzell, providing a glimpse into another world

John Dalzell, from Ulverston, spent a life in service to **William Gale**, a military man who was a magistrate and High Sheriff. William and John Dalzell and family lived at Lightburn House, near Ulverston. John was William's coachman. In 1850 William decided to sell a 'handsome chariot with barouche box' and 'a landau for 6 persons with barouche box and rumble behind to hold 4 more' and enquiries had to be directed to John [1].

The reason for this sale was that William was moving to the 12th century Bardsea Castle, just south of Ulverston on the coast. The castle [ph1], owned by the Bardsea family, was a Catholic stronghold during the 17th century wars. William descended from the Bardseas and so it was fitting that he should return there, complete with a huge number of servants, including the Dalzells. The castle stayed in the family until 1919 but is now a ruin.



John and his wife **Eleanor Lewis** had four daughters and three sons. Two sons, **William**, a postman and **John**, a waiter, remained single and died in their forties. Son **James** became a plumber in Barrow-in-Furness. Daughter **Eleanor** married **Henry Brotherton**, the Haslingden stationmaster and when Henry died, married **John Ward**, a Lancaster blacksmith. Daughter **Annie** worked as a housemaid at Wray Castle before marrying **Richard Robinson**, a vet, although in those days there were no veterinary qualifications, nor regulation of the job.

Eldest daughter **Isabella Dalzell** and youngest daughter **Agnes Dalzell** remained single and spent their whole lives in the service of the Starkie family. Typically, as working class girls, there are hardly any records for the sisters, although there are plenty about their wealthy employers. We shall pay tribute to the girls' long hard lives in service by using their insight into how the top echelons of society lived, warts and all. The events in the Starkies' lives were a world away from the opportunities available to the Dalzells.

In her twenties Isabella became a lady's maid, one of 14 servants to **LeGendre Nicholas Starkie**, his wife **Ann Chamberlain** and their four children. With a name like that he must have been well off? The Starkies were direct descendants of Edward I and had moved in aristocratic circles since then. LeGendre was a gentleman, obviously and, as such was able to become MP for Pontefract, magistrate and High Sheriff. They lived at Huntroyde at Simonstone near Padiham [ph2] which had been their ancestral home since 1464. There had been several renovations and modernisations along the way but it still in the family today.



LeGendre and Ann's eldest son, **Colonel LeGendre Nicholas Starkie**, was also a liberal MP (for Clitheroe), magistrate and High Sherriff and took over Huntroyde from his father. He was a prominent figure in the Freemasons. 'Right Worshipful Brother Starkie's outstanding service to the Province was the development of the East Lancashire Masonic

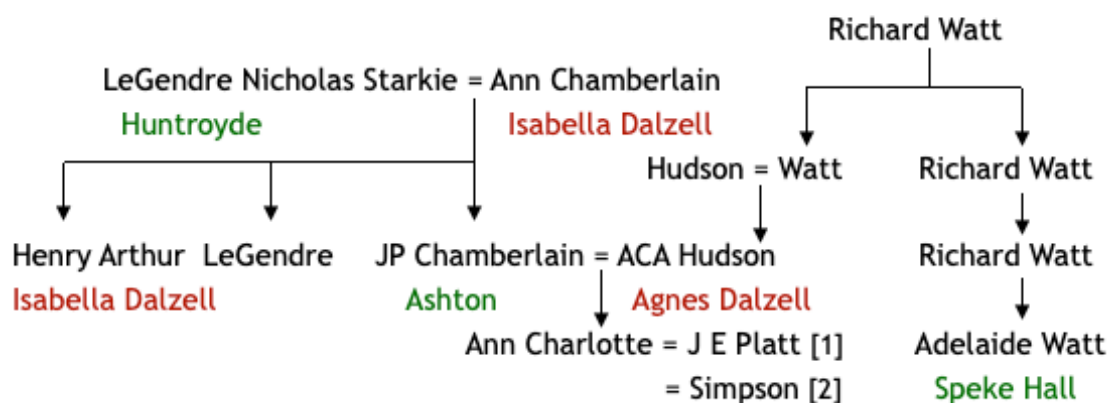
Benevolent Institution. He was affectionately known as the 'Father of the Institution' and presided over 28 consecutive Annual General Meetings of the Institution.'[ph3]



In 1853 Le Gendre (Snr) bought Ashton Hall, a 14th-century mansion in Thurnham, south of Lancaster on the east bank of the River Lune. LeGendre and Ann's second son, **John Pierce Chamberlain Starkie**, known as Chamberlain, lived there with his family and largely rebuilt it. Ashton Hall has now been designated a Grade I listed building by English Heritage and is owned by Lancashire Golf Club [ph4]. Chamberlain, another gentleman, and magistrate married **Ann Charlotte Amelia Hudson** and they had two daughters. A life long servant of this family was none other than **Agnes Dalzell**, in post for the best part of 50 years.



Starkie Family Tree



Generally, this branch of the Starkies led a quiet life but this was disrupted by the antics of daughter **Ann Charlotte LeGendre Starkie**. When she was 23 Ann Charlotte became the second wife of **James Edward Platt**, a gentleman and horse-breeder from Oldham who traded under the name 'Winter'. They were married by Ann Charlotte's uncle **Rev Henry Arthur Starkie** — more on him later. James Edward Platt's first wife had died in childbirth along with an infant daughter. James was known as *'The Galloping Major Platt'* for good reason — he spent his life hunting, shooting and playing polo, often in Scotland. He made a fortune from breeding horses and cattle [ph5]. James Edward obviously enjoyed the good things in life, so much so that in 1899 Ann Charlotte took him to the divorce courts on the grounds of adultery with cruelty. Women had to prove cruelty as well as adultery in those days where as men just had to prove adultery (which, in reality, could a statement by a witness who may have had a handsome reward for doing so!). Divorce was incredibly expensive and therefore a privilege solely for the rich. She stated, *'Between the months of July and September he wilfully communicated to me a venereal disease called syphilis. He subsequently insisted upon having marital intercourse despite the advice of doctors. On account of this he caused intense pain thereby severely injured my*

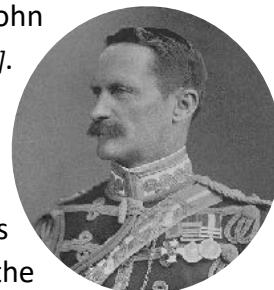


3. That between the months of July and September 1885 she said James Edward Platt wilfully communicated to your Petitioner a venereal disease called Syphilis.

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health.' In addition, she said, he refused to pay her doctor's bills and frequently committed adultery with a variety of women including **Monica Crumoundouros**, whoever she was. Ann Charlotte had become increasingly suspicious of John Edward's 'constant absence' and traced him to the Great Central Hotel. The visitor's book had entries under the name of Mr and Mrs Platt and Mrs and Mrs Winter (John Edward's trade name) 'but Ann Charlotte was not the female alluded to.' [2,3]. The papers were quite restrained in their coverage. The divorce was granted and John Edward was obliged to pay Ann Charlotte £1600 per annum, a reflection of his immense wealth. After the divorce John Edward immediately married Italian **Elsie Castelli**, 20 years his junior. Soon afterwards Ann Charlotte married **Walter Charles Smithson**, [ph6] an army Colonel in the 13th Hussars and they settled in Aberdeenshire.

DIVORCE DIVISION.
(Before the President.)
RACING STUD KEEPER DIVORCED.
Mrs. Anne [Charlotte] Legendre [Platt] née Starkey, sought a divorce by reason of the cruelty and adultery of her husband, Mr. James Edward [Platt], described as a gentleman of considerable means, and keeper of a racing stud



Meanwhile, back at Ashton hall, when John Pierce Chamberlain Starkie died in 1888, widow Ann Charlotte Amelia, and her lady's maid, Agnes Dalzell, went to live with her maternal first cousin once removed, **Adelaide Watt** [ph7] at Speke Hall [ph4]. 16th century Speke Hall had been in the Watt family since 1796, bought by **Richard Watt**, a Liverpool merchant. Before this the estate was used by tenant farmers for their livestock. Richard started out as driver of hackney carriages but moved to Jamaica in 1750 and made his fortune from 'all branches of the transatlantic slave trade.' He owned sugar, rum, and tropical hardwood plantations, ran factories and trafficked enslaved Africans. With the profits, Watt bought three estates in England, including Speke Hall, purchased just a year before his death. His estate of over £600,000 made him one of the richest men in the country. Watt's great nephew, another **Richard Watt**, inherited his estates and enslaved people.



The compensation received for the loss of slaves when the slave trade was abolished, according to the National Trust, 'was used to renovate Speke Hall to make it the best preserved Tudor building in the country.' In the window of the Oak Parlour there is an unofficial coat of arms of 'The Watts of Speke' depicting three blackamoors, possibly acknowledging the role that black people had played in establishing the family fortune. The Watts also made philanthropic donations to the city of Liverpool. Adelaide Watt was the granddaughter of the younger Richard Watt and she took over Speke Hall at the age of 21 in 1878. She was probably very grateful for Ann Charlotte Amelia Starkie's help. Adelaide donated £2000 toward the building of Liverpool's Church of England Cathedral. When she died in 1921 she left it in trust to be run by **Thomas Whatmore**, her butler. Later it was donated to the National Trust.



Back with LeGendre Nicholas Starkie (Snr) and Ann Chamberlain — when LeGendre died in 1865, aged 66, Ann went to live with their youngest son **Henry Arthur Starkie** (with servant **Isabella Dalzell** of course) and then, at the time of the 1881 census Ann and Isabella were found at Hillside on Constitution Hill in Settle.

How did Henry and his mum find themselves in Settle? During the 1830s Hillside was owned by **John Moffatt**, a Scottish banker and his wife **Mary Hall** having made significant money from canal investments. They died without children and left their estate to a spinster daughter of a cousin,

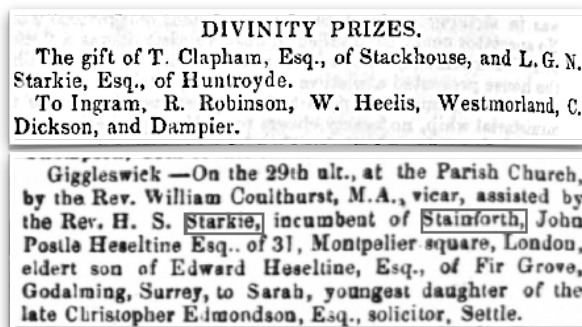
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Jane Creighton, born in 1809 and she lived at Hillside until she died in 1877. She was buried in Giggleswick graveyard in B6/1 alongside several relations.

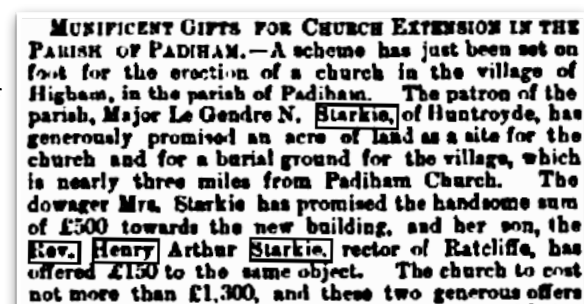


In memory of Jane Creighton of Settle who died August 9th 1877 aged 76 years. This headstone is erected by the Rev. H. A. Starkie as a token of his esteem.

Jane left her estate to several younger men of the cloth, including Henry. Presumably Henry's part of the estate included Hillside and mum Ann lived there until she died in 1888, aged 79. Being the youngest in an aristocratic family Henry Arthur Starkie, born in 1838, went to Trinity College, Cambridge before taking Holy Orders to become a clergyman. He had a curacy in Holy Trinity Church in Southport and then became a vicar in Padiham in 1863. After two years he became the perpetual curate of St Peter's at Stainforth which is probably when he crossed paths with Jane Creighton. However, the Starkies had links with Giggleswick before that too. In 1858 LeGendre donated a 'Divinity Prize' for pupils at Giggleswick School [SC]. It's definitely possible that some of the Starkies attended Giggleswick School. Henry mixed with the great and the good of the area, assisting with the wedding of solicitor's daughter **Sarah Edmondson** to **John Heseltine** also attended by the **Burrows** family.



When Henry left Stainforth in September 1867 he was presented with 'a most handsomely-bound illustrated edition of *The Christian Year* as a token of esteem and affection on his leaving Stainforth'[6]. Then he became the Rector of Radcliffe, now part of Manchester. In 1871 Henry, his mother and brother Colonel LeGendre contributed £650 and an acre of land upon which to build a new church and burial



ground at Higham near Padiham. This represented half the total cost of the church [5]. Henry was known to do his best to educate boys from poor backgrounds. After 28 years as Rector of Radcliffe Henry retired to Settle to live at 9 Ribble Terrace with Isabella Dalzell working as his housekeeper. Isabella died in 1913, aged 80 having served the Starkies for nearly 60 years. What a life she must have had at the beck and call of aristocracy for all those years? Isabella's life is commemorated with a beautifully carved gravestone in Settle graveyard — most likely Henry paid for it? Let's hope Henry and Isabella had some sort of happiness together.



In loving memory of Isabella Dalzell who died at Settle May 20th 1913, aged 80 years. At Rest, Old G34

Henry, 'Old Starkie', now retired was known in Settle as a scrounger and miser, despite his wealth. Isabella will have had her work cut out! He was often seen with a malnourished dog, a piece of string attached to its collar because Henry decided he couldn't afford a dog lead. How far the mighty have fallen! Occasionally Henry would ask people to store boxes for him. Upon his death in 1918, also aged 80, the boxes were found to contain all sorts of treasures. In addition, the banks stored huge chests of silver and cut glass. His estate was worth £263,000 which is over £16 million

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at today's value, and was left to a couple of nephews. Henry was buried back with the Starkie family in Padiham.



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'.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Soulby's Ulverston Advertiser and General Intelligencer, 2 – Daily Telegraph and Courier (London), 3 – Lakes Chronicle and Reporter, 4 – Burnley Express, 5 – Hyde and Glossop weekly news, 6 – Lancaster Gazette

ph1 – credited to lostheritage.org.uk, ph2 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username [stewartfarrant](#), ph3 – [masonichallwhalley](#), ph4 – credited to Wikipedia, ph5 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username [mrbroddy](#), ph6 – username [rosheatkinson](#), ph7 – username [Joycesnellgrove](#)

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