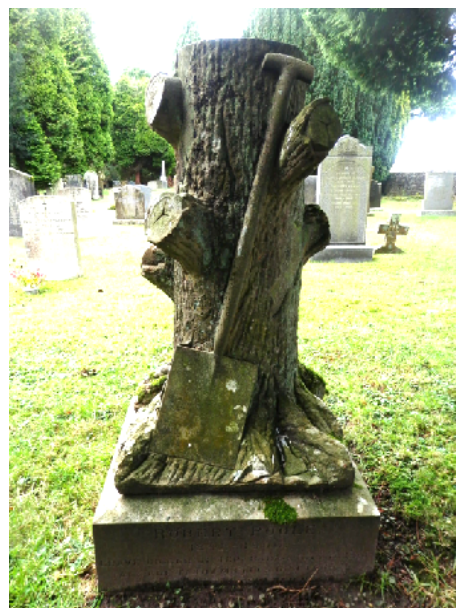


Robert Poole and his hardworking daughters

This fantastic monumental stone of a spade in front of a tree is in St John the Baptist Churchyard in Low Bentham commemorates the life of **Robert Poole**. What a fantastic stone!

Robert was born in 1842, one of seven children of **John Poole** and **Elizabeth Lambert** of Bentham, a family of agricultural labourers. As was typical for a lad with that background, Robert started his working life as a farm labourer. His employer was **John Hodgson**, the farmer at Robert Hall, the ancient manor house in Tatham. In earlier days Robert Hall had been owned by **John** and **Grace Armistead**, some of whose descendants found their way into Settle graveyard. Whilst at Robert Hall, in 1859, Robert won 7sh 6d as second prize in Bentham Prize ploughing competition. When he was 23 Robert married **Eliza Johnson** who had found her way to Bentham from County Down in Ireland. Over the next twenty years they had six daughters and three sons, the youngest being son **Johnson Poole**. Just one child, a daughter **Margaret Poole**, died in infancy. This was still a lot of mouths to feed and, at the time of the 1881 census, the family were living in the Baynes Charity Houses. At the time of each census return Robert described himself as a labourer and, in later years, a gardener.



Gruesomely, in 1899 Robert was involved in retrieving the body of 74 year old **Charles Emmott** of Low Bentham who accidentally drowned in a pond whilst finding his way home on a stormy night after an evening at The Punch Bowl Inn. *'His hat could just be seen above the water. He had a stick in one hand and a lantern in the other.'* It sounded quite a complicated procedure requiring a raft and a rope [1].

Alfred Emmot, youngest son of the deceased, was the first witness called, and stated that his father was 74 years of age and resided at the Ridding Farm. He was present shortly after he was found and discovered that he was standing up in the mud at the bottom of the pond. His hat could just be seen above the water. He had his stick in one hand and a lantern in the other. They got the body out by means of a raft and a rope, with the help of **Robert Poole** and Swindlehurst.

In 1904, when Robert was 62, the papers reported that *'Probably many are not aware that Mr Robert Poole, sexton of the Parish Church, Bentham, has held this position for the past 29 years, and during this time has made 484 graves at the above churchyard and 150 at Lowgill, a full total of 634'*[1]. The date of Robert's commencement as sexton coincides with the death of his father and it's likely John was the sexton before him — it was often passed on through families in those days. The fact that he worked as the church sexton was probably helpful in securing a place at Baynes Charity Houses and may explain why he helped out with recovering the body of Charles Emmott — he knew a thing or two about corpses. It certainly explains that fantastic memorial stone which was probably erected with the help of the church and the community.

CHURCHYARD NOTES.—Probably many are not aware that **Mr. Robert Poole**, sexton of the Parish Church, **Bentham**, has held this position for the past 29 years, and during this time has made 484 graves at the above churchyard and 150 at Lowgill, a full total of 634.

Robert died on 24 June 1906, aged 64 leaving £232 to his widow, Eliza. The church burial records made sure that Robert stood out, writing his entry in much bolder ink and recording *'30 years Sexton of This Church'*. The eagle-eyed reader will have spotted that the previous burial was for

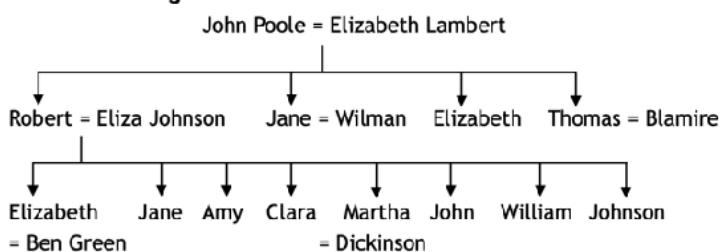
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Mary Ann (Harrison) Emmott, the widow of Charles Emmott who drowned a few years before. Eliza remained in Bentham and joined Robert in Low Bentham graveyard when she died in May 1921, aged 76.

Mary Ann Emmott.	Bentham.	May 29 th	72.	Grey Gates Rector.
No. 1134.				
Robert Poole	30 years Sexton of this Church, Bentham.	June 24 th	64.	Grey Gates Rector.
No. 1135.				

So, how have we stumbled into Robert's world when researching Settle graveyard? It was the women of this family who came to exploit the opportunities provided by our market town through domestic service and the hospitality industry. Robert's sisters **Jane** and **Elizabeth Poole** were the first

The Poole family



to arrive. By the time of the 1881 census Jane was working in service for **Thomas Dixon**, a bank clerk, and his wife **Eliza (Towler) Dixon** on Belle Hill in Giggleswick. In the first week of October 1885 Eliza and two of her sisters died of disease and the rest of the Dixons moved to live in Craven Terrace. This could be when Jane Poole left them to work for **Eleanor (Thornber) Foster**, the widow of the irascible **Edward Thomas Foster** who lived at Underwood at the foot of Constitution Hill. In 1894 Jane, aged 35, married **John Wilman** and they lived on 'private means'. John's father, another **John Wilman (Snr)**, second cousin to the other Wilmans in Settle graveyard, died when little John was just three. Being an only child, John inherited all the family wealth and Stockdale Cottage, the 'highest cottage' in the village of Feizor [2]. After John (Jnr) died in 1934, aged 79, Jane remained in the cottage and had a companion, **Amy Poole**, her niece who we shall meet soon. Meanwhile Robert and Jane's sister, **Elizabeth Poole** had also moved to Settle by the time of the 1881 census and worked in service for **Mary Shepherd**, the widow of chemist **William Shepherd**, in one of the large houses at The Terrace. By the time of the 1891 census Elizabeth had gone into partnership with **Elizabeth Blamire** to run a lodging house for professionals at 2 Penyghent View on Church Street. **George Montgomery Hansbrow**, a solicitor's clerk, was one of their lodgers. A year before the 1881 census Elizabeth Poole's brother, **Thomas Poole**, had married **Cicely Blamire**, sister of Elizabeth Blamire.

gallons of paraffin a month. When John Wilman was alive (he lived at the highest cottage in Feizor) he would sometimes look up at the sky when dark clouds hid the moon and

Cicely and Elizabeth were two of nine children of **James Blamire** and his wife **Elizabeth Bowskill** and they seemed to have a difficult childhood. When his parents married in 1852 James worked as a beerhouse keeper in Tatham. But, in 1855 he was fined £1 12sh for permitting drunkenness and disorderly conduct in his beerhouse. It transpired that James was one of the men involved! [3] James seems to have been persuaded to give up the beerhouse and return to farming but still found himself in court, on several occasions between 1861 and 1865, on a charge of being 'drunk and disorderly'. Things came to a head in 1865 when James was brought to court charged with 'unlawfully running away and leaving his wife and seven children chargeable to the township of Wray' after his wife Elizabeth had

ingly to the 28th inst.—James Blamire, beerhouse-keeper in Tatham, appeared to answer a similar charge, and pleaded not guilty. The charge was fully proved by the testimony of George Parkinson and three others, who stated that they had met at the defendant's house on the 27th ult., and after getting drunk, quarrelled and fought one against another, the landlord himself being one of the combatants. Fined, including costs, £1 12s.—Thomas

taken out.—The prisoner said he had no intention of deserting his wife and family, and had no idea that she would become chargeable to the parish, for he left her in possession of a good cow, and a pig which when killed would weigh about 12 score.—Mr. Kayss said he

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tried to claim poor relief as she was *'quite destitute'*[4]. James said he had no intention of deserting his wife and family and had left her with a good cow and a pig. Elizabeth said she had had to sell the cow but all the proceeds had gone to pay James' debts. It transpired that *'it was solely to his drunken habits that he had lost his situation on the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway'*. Fortunately, James' father agreed to pay off his debts and so he returned to his family, temporarily. By the time of the 1881 census Elizabeth lived with the children and James lived with his own parents and siblings.

Back in the boarding house in Penyghent View, the two Elizabeths had a busy house with some 12 visitors from all over the country at the time of the 1891 census. Unfortunately, Elizabeth Blamire died in 1895, aged 36 and Elizabeth Poole continued the business alone. At the time of the following census she was helped by a niece, **Clara Poole**, and looked after three boarders. One of these was **John Goddard Barker**, a music teacher and church organist (at both Giggleswick and Settle churches) who remained living with Elizabeth in the same house until she retired in about 1920. At the time of the 1911 census Elizabeth was assisted by a servant, **Mary Ann Lyne**, whose family had come to Settle from Cornwall.

Robert's daughters also made their mark in Settle. Perhaps inspired by aunt Elizabeth, daughters **Elizabeth**, **Jane** and **Amy** ran a boarding house at Halsteads on Duke Street for a while. Then daughters Elizabeth and Jane ran a *'high class confectioners'* business on the site now occupied by Wholesome Bee next to Linton Court [LSA]. They also provided *'Market dinners on Tuesdays'*. Not long before the Pooles moved into this building it had been part of the Joiner's Arms which was later renamed the Commercial Inn. Not to be outdone by their sisters, **Amy** and **Clara** set up a business as bakers and confectioners in Low Bentham. When the sisters left the Duke Street business **Richard** and **Martha (Danson) Lord** took it over.



We know that Amy Poole was a companion for Robert's widowed sister, Jane (Poole) Wilman in Feizor after working with her sister. Amy remained in Feizor with aunt Jane until she died in 1940, aged 58. She was buried with a memorial stone in the new Austwick graveyard, perhaps paid for by aunt Jane Wilman who outlived her.

In loving memory of our beloved sister, Amy Poole, died June 18th 1940.

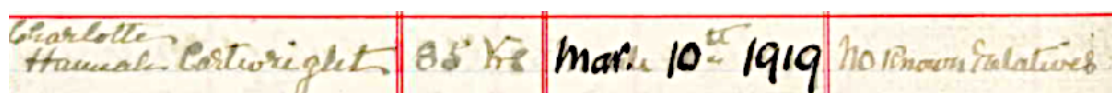


Before working with her sister in the bakery business Clara had followed her aunt Jane to work in service for Mary Shepherd before helping out aunt Elizabeth Poole in the lodging house. Then she worked in service for **Dr Edward Henry Marsh** in Long Preston. When Amy went to live with aunt Jane Wilman, Clara continued to work as a baker in Austwick. She died there in 1946, aged 71 and was also buried in Austwick graveyard.

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Robert and Eliza's eldest daughter, **Elizabeth Poole** began working in service for widow **Ellen Whittam** at the tannery in Upper Settle before working at the boarding house and confectionery with her sisters. In 1910, aged 42, Elizabeth married **Ben Green** from Colne who had come to Settle to work as a corn merchant, perhaps with the **Thornber family** on Castle Hill. Ben moved into the property with Elizabeth and Jane. The sisters continued to work as confectioners and provided for lodgers — at the time of the 1911 census they had an 'artist and drawing teacher', **Charlotte Hannah Cartwright**, living with them.

Charlotte Hannah Cartwright came from Norwich and was the spinster daughter of a gunmaker. She had been an artist for most of her long life and had moved to Settle, for some reason, by 1891. Charlotte died in 1919, aged 85 and was buried in grave *Old H48*. Sadly, burial records tell us that at the time of her burial there were 'no known relatives'. How sad. Charlotte outlived all her eight siblings, some of whom had moved to the States. She still got a bit of a gravestone erected though.



Charlotte Hannah Cartwright 85 Yrs Mar. 10th 1919 No known relatives



In memoriam Charlotte Hannah Cartwright died March 7 1919

In the meantime, Ben Green seemed to develop a liking for the hospitality trade and in 1915 took over the tenancy of the Ashfield Hotel after the passing of **John William Dugdale** [ph1]. It didn't last long though. By the time of the 1921 census Ben and wife Elizabeth, aunt Elizabeth Poole (from the boarding house) and sister Jane Poole were living at Townhead, Stainforth as 'retired hotel proprietors'.



The four of them were buried together in Settle graveyard in plot *Old J40* when they died. Aunt Elizabeth was 78, Ben was 66, Elizabeth was 86 and sister Jane Poole was 53 when they died. Elizabeth (Poole) Green was the last of the siblings to die.



In Memoriam Elizabeth Poole 1923 Jane Poole 1932. Ben Green 1937 Elizabeth Green 1953

The remaining sister, **Martha Poole**, worked in service in Ingleton before marrying **John Robinson Dickinson**, a grocer's son who descended from the farming family at Cow Bridge, near Long Preston, in 1914. By the age of 17 John worked as a 'footman at a hotel' in Settle. He must have been good at his job as, at the time of the 1911 census John was serving as the footman to **Walter Morrison, MP** at his London residence. He was photographed with other servants at Malham Tarn



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Hall [ph5, left] and they included **William** and **Martha (Duxbury) Skirrow**, housekeeper and butler, [right middle and front rows] and **Robert Battersby**, coachman [with the beard]. During the war John served in the RAF. In 1915 Dickinson's Temperance Hotel was advertised in the property behind the Poole sisters' 'high class confectioners' [LSA]. It's likely Martha took over the property from her sisters when they moved to the Ashfield and ran the Temperance Hotel while her husband was serving in the war. Temperance hotels were very popular at the time with several in Settle, just as we have coffee shops now. The Dickinsons offered 'good accommodation for commercial gentlemen, motorists and cyclists' and had a 'large assembly room for meetings, parties and dances'. The Commercial Temperance Hotel [ph4] was run by a variety of people over the years. John and Martha had one daughter, **Elizabeth Bevin Dickinson**, who died an infant in 1917. After the war John and Martha became a double act working as cook and butler for **WA Sutcliffe** at his estate in Sowerby Bridge and then for **Harold Moffatt** at Hamptworth Lodge in Salisbury.

Coincidentally, Harold Moffatt was the nephew of Walter Morrison MP and this is another heartening example of how the Morrison family cared for their employees. John's youngest brother (of five) was **Ernest Dickinson** [ph2]. Ernest worked as a gardener at Anley Hall, owned by the **Birkbeck** family, and so would have been encouraged by the Birkbecks to do his duty and sign up for service in the war. Ernest went missing, presumed killed on the Western Front on 29 April 1918, aged 25.

Robert and Eliza's sons had very different lives to their sisters. **John Thomas Poole** and **William Poole** left home as teenagers to work as gardeners in Derbyshire, living near uncle **Thomas Poole**, who had married **Cicely Blamire**, and also worked as a gardener there. William later became a club steward in Torquay.

And then there was the youngest son, **Johnson/Johnstone Poole**, born in 1884. It's difficult being the youngest, isn't it? Johnson started life as a painting and plumbing apprentice. In November 1910 he signed up to the West Riding Police Force — his appearance was described as 6 foot ¼ inches, incredibly tall for those days, with grey eyes and brown hair. It's not clear what happened but by 1918 he was back in Bentham, working as a painter. Unfortunately, in both 1920 and 1930 Johnson was recorded in St Pancras workhouse in London and he died in 1932, aged 47 and was buried in Hendon cemetery and crematorium. One has to wonder how much his siblings were aware of his life?

It has been suggested that Poole's Row in Upper Settle could have been named after Robert Poole, but this is unlikely as he was just 26 and fathering children in Bentham at the time and was more of a gardener and gravedigger than a builder. Poole's Row is first mentioned in a newspaper article in 1868 — an old woman (aged 76), **Jane (Airey) Wilkinson** of Poole's



SINGULARLY FATAL OCCURRENCE.—On Wednesday last, the 8th inst., an old woman of the name of Jane Wilkinson, wife of John Wilkinson, labourer, Poole's Row, Settle, was blown down by a gust of wind whilst fetching water from a well, the back of her head coming in contact with a stone in the road. She was immediately lifted up by some one at hand, and died instantly. Mr. Green, surgeon, who was sent for directly after the occurrence, said the immediate cause of death was the injury to the head caused by the fall.

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Row died when a gust of wind blew her over whilst she was fetching water from a well and her head hit the road [4].

There were two other unrelated 'Poole' sisters who lived in Settle for a while and performed with the Settle Amateur Operatic Society [ph1]. **Dora Alice Poole** and her sister **Gladys Mary Elizabeth Poole** were from London, the daughters of a currier/leather dresser. They came to Settle, for some



Master Sydney Smith, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)

reason, after their parents died. At the time of the 1911 census Dora Alice Poole lived on Banks View with spinster **Martha Langhorne**. Martha was perhaps feeling a bit out of sorts — her mother had died in 1901 and her father, **William Langhorne**, a farmer and churchwarden, married again three years later. William was 60 and his new wife Charlotte Elizabeth Clarkson from Berkshire, was 39. Martha was almost as old as her stepmother. William died three years after this second wedding. Months after the 1911 census return, in September 1911, Dora Alice married **Sydney Smith**, a grocer and grandson of **John Preston** who had previously been the innkeeper of the Joiner's Arms, on the same site as the sisters' 'high class confectioners'. Sydney had his photo taken at the Horner studios when he was four [ph3]. No wonder she fell for him! Sydney was also a fine cricketer. Sydney and Dora Alice relocated to Nottinghamshire where Sydney ran a poultry farm. We can presume that Gladys Mary Elizabeth Poole lived with her sister in Settle before marrying **Herbert James Anderson**, an insurance man in 1910. They relocated to Surrey.



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'.

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Thanks to Sue Luton for her help with this account.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Lancaster Standard, 2 – Bradford Observer, 3 – Kendal Mercury, 4 – Lancaster Gazette. Burial documentation via ancestry.co.uk, courtesy of The National Archives.

LSA - Lambert's Settle Almanac with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life

ph1 – photo kindly provided by John Reid, ph2 – credited to Craven's Part in the Great War, ph3 – Image 2022.10.68.128 from the Horner Photographic Studio Collection provided courtesy of the Museum of North Craven Life, ph4 – credited to the Back in Settle Facebook site, submitted by Pam Jordan, ph5 – ph8 – photo credited to the DalesCommunityArchives.org.uk website, North Craven Historical Research Group collection, source unknown



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