

Who were the Trustees of the Primitive Methodist Church?

The Trustees oversaw the fundraising and building of the 'new' Primitive Methodist Chapel. Some of Trustees names are inscribed on the stones at the front of the Chapel.

The indenture was signed by *Henry Philip Dawson, Rev John William Lancaster and the Trustees were George Yeomans, John Hardy, Christopher Pratt, Abner Bennett, Joseph Smales, Tom Oakden, Thomas Henry Heelis, Richard Mason.*

Name	Indenture 1902	Charity 1909	Foundation Stones
George Yeomans	1	1	1
Christopher Pratt	1		1
Joseph Smales	1	1	
Thomas Oakden	1	1	1
Robert Atkinson		1	
Henry Wright		1	
Alfred/Albert Edward Cracknell		1	
John Hardy	1	1	
Abner Bennett	1	1	1
Richard Mason	1	1	
Thomas Henry Heelis	1	1	
Robert Bulcock		1	
Charles Frederick Robinson		1	
Mrs Wycherley			1
Thomas Fletcher			1
Richard Fletcher			1
Alderman Brearley			1
Mrs Calvert			1
Elsie Brock			(1)

The Charity Commission submission was signed by *George Yeomans, Joseph Smales, Abner Bennett, Richard Mason, Tom Oakden, John Hardy* and some new Trustees, *Robert Atkinson, Albert Edward Cracknell, Henry Wright, Robert Bulcock, Thomas Henry Heelis, Charles Frederick Robinson*

The Foundation Stones at the front of the church are dedicated to *T Fletcher Esq, Miss Wycherley for sewing committee, Miss Pratt for family, R Fletcher Esq, Mrs T Oakden for family, Doris Bennett for family, Ald Brearley, Mrs Robinson, Mrs Yeomans, Mrs Calvert.*

Inevitably the Trustees changed over time as some moved or passed away. The average age of the Trustees when the Chapel opened was 54. Compared to many other indentures

of the time, including those within the established church, this one stands out because several of the Trustees, true to the Primitive Methodist cause, are ordinary working class folk rather than the landed gentry and upper middle classes. Of the 13 Trustees seven were quarrymen working at the Langcliffe quarries and limeworks, one of whom signed with 'his mark' on one document rather than his signature. Other Trustee occupations included a builder, draper, grocer, insurance agent, mill engineer and stationmaster. Interestingly, all but one of the Trustees moved to Settle/Langcliffe to find work from other parts of the country.

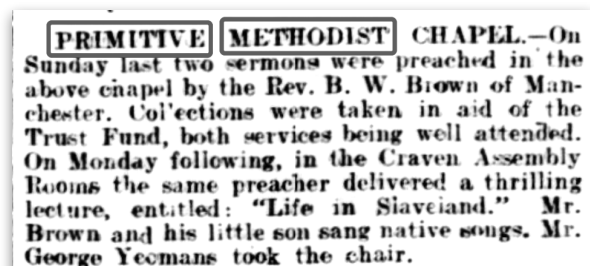
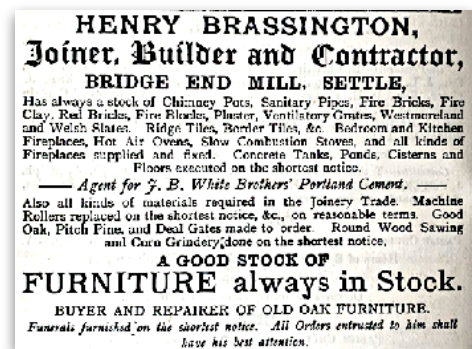
Research shows that groups of Trustees lived near each other and so will have known each other outside the church too. As well as the Langcliffe quarrymen who lived at Willywood and Ribble Bank, several lived near each other in Craven Cottages and Craven Terrace. Five of the Trustees moved house to an address close to the new Church once it was built, to the newly constructed High Hill Grove, Halsteads Cottages, West View and Higher Halsteads. The Settle Primitive Methodist Church was part of the Skipton circuit so there are several links to Skipton too. There was a marriage between the offspring of two of the Trustees. Two were sons of Primitive Methodist ministers. In this account we'll find out about the trustees who were Limestone Quarrymen.

The Limestone Quarrymen

George Yeomans of Craven Lime Works

George came from a farming family in Denby in Derbyshire. Unfortunately, both his parents died by the time he was six so he was brought up by his aunt. Tempted by the abundance of labouring work related to the construction of the railway, George found his way to Settle during the 1860s and married **Fanny Brassington**, the sister of **Henry Brassington** who had submitted the paperwork to the Charity Commission and built the Chapel. The Brassingtons were also from Derbyshire and their timber works at Bridge End were one of Settle's most successful businesses, spanning nearly 100 years [LSA]. Soon after marrying, George became the foreman of Langcliffe's Craven Lime Works. Lime had been produced in small kilns in the area for centuries but the new industrialised lime works were built as demand rose. They were positioned right next to the new railway to provide efficient transport. George worked as the foreman for the rest of his life, even living at the limeworks.

In 1901 George chaired a 'thrilling lecture', entitled '*Life in Slaveland*' by a preacher, **Rev BW Brown**, who advertised his talks as an '*ex-slave*' and '*coloured preacher*' while touring the country. He also sang '*native songs with his little son*'. This evangelical preacher was **Benjamin William Brown** who was born on Kent Island in Maryland, USA and was, allegedly, enslaved in the Southern States of America. He married **Jane Jackson** of Liverpool with whom he had 12 children although five



died in infancy. He performed his native songs with his wife and two of his sons, **Charles Haddon Spurgeon Brown** and **Robert Moffat Brown** [1,2].



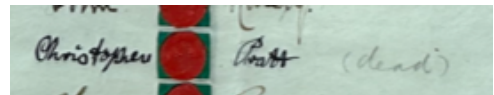
Meanwhile, back in Langcliffe, George Yeomans died in 1910, aged 65, just after the Chapel was built! Fanny then moved to live with her widowed brother, Henry Brassington, at Craven Terrace in Settle and it was from here that she made a donation to have her name inscribed on one of the Foundation Stones at the front of the Chapel. After her brother died in 1916 Fanny moved to 17 Craven Cottages. George and Fanny are buried in a very overgrown corner of Giggleswick churchyard, B8/55.



In loving memory of George Yeomans of Craven Lime Works who died June 19th 1910 aged 65 years. He was called to a higher service. Also Fanny, wife of the above who departed this life March 11th 1929 in her 86th year. Peace, perfect peace

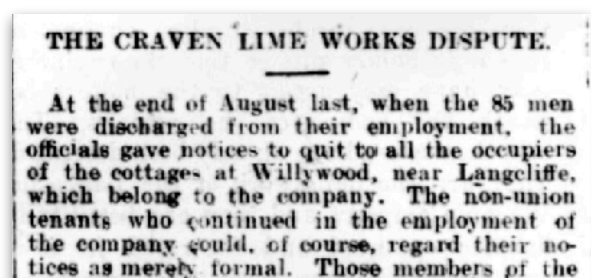
Christopher Pratt, quarryman

Christopher Pratt signed the original indenture but close inspection reveals that, by the side of his signature someone wrote '(dead)'. Indeed he was. He had died at the end of 1902, just months after the indenture was signed. Christopher and his wife **Mary (Brunskill) Pratt** were farmers from Hawes but, during the 1890s, brought the youngest four of six children to work at Springfield Farm, just above Upper Settle. There were no sons available to take over the farm — sons **Robert** and **John Pratt** both became quarrymen, so Mary retired to a small abode in Victoria Street. Son Robert became another resident of Craven Cottages — it became quite a Primitive Methodist community down there. It was Christopher and Mary's daughter, **Rose Mary Pratt**, who donated funds to have a Foundation Stone inscribed 'Miss Pratt for family'. Before marrying she worked in domestic service for **Susannah Harwood** on the Market Place. In 1917 she became the first wife of **William Preston**, a local labourer but died a year later, aged 30, which could have been related to childbirth.



Joseph Smales, quarryman

Joseph Smales was the son of an agricultural labourer, born in Barlby, near Selby. He was drawn to Langcliffe during the 1870s for the work in the quarry. He married **Eliza Ann Maddern** whose family had moved to Langcliffe from Cornwall. Her father was a tin miner and she worked as a 'mine girl', aged 14, but, as the Cornish mines became less viable workers were made redundant and so moved away. Joseph initially lived at Willywood cottages which were owned by Craven Lime Works for their employees. However, in 1901 there was a dispute at Craven Lime Works during which 85



men were discharged from their jobs and all the residents of Willywood, were told to vacate their homes within seven days [3]. The men affected were all members of the Gas Workers and General Labourers' Union. The Primitive Methodist faith was known to be closely aligned with the trade unions so how did this affect our quarrymen? Funnily enough, Joseph had moved to live at Ribble Bank for the remaining census returns.

Joseph and Eliza's eldest daughter, **Eliza Ann Smales**, aged 19, gave birth to an illegitimate son who she decided to call '**Prince Albert Smales**'. Sadly, he became another casualty of the war, by then just known as 'Albert', after going missing in action on 3 September 1916, aged just 20, but looking much younger [ph1], serving with the Duke of Wellington's regiment. The *Craven Herald* reported: '*His parents have hoped against hope that news would come during nearly twelve months of suspense that he was a prisoner in Germany, but the fatal news has at last arrived that it is to be presumed that he was killed. Much sympathy is extended to the parents and family. Prior to the war Private Smales worked at the Craven Lime Works, Langcliffe, and was greatly respected by all who knew him.*' He will have worked for our trustee George Yeomans before the war and is remembered on the Langcliffe War Memorial.



A year after Prince Albert's birth Eliza Ann became the second wife of **Henry Denmark Soames** and had a son, **Edward Victor Denmark Soames** on Boxing Day 1900. Henry died in May 1901 — Eliza Ann was not a lucky woman. She remarried and Edward was brought up by his Soames grandparents. Edward was the father of **Derek Victor Soames** [ph2] who became a local legend of the railway.



Thomas Oakden, quarryman

Thomas Henry Oakden signed both the indenture and also the Charity Commission application but signed with 'his mark' on the latter. Thomas was from Leek, Staffordshire, his father, **William Oakden**, being a farmer and another Primitive Methodist Minister. William, '*a sincere spiritual worker*' had been a founder of Waterhouses Primitive Methodist Chapel, north-west of Ashbourne in 1835 — Thomas had a good background for his work at the Chapel in Settle. He moved to the North Peak of Derbyshire for farm work and there he met and married **Mary Hallam**, a farmer's daughter and they had eight children, although one died in infancy. In the 1881 census return the young family's surname was transcribed as 'Ogden' which is easily Oakden spoken with a Derbyshire accent! Thomas was already working in limestone quarries.

Thomas Henry Ogden	Head	all	26
Mary	Wife	all	24
Ann Elizabeth	do	do	3
Hannah	do	do	3
William	do	do	1
William	do	do	1

During the mid 1880s the family moved to live in Willywood Langcliffe, tempted by the work in the quarries. Like the Smales family, following the dispute at the Lime Works the family had moved. Their new home was High Hill Grove, just below the new Chapel, although Thomas still



worked at the Langcliffe limeworks. Mary made a donation for one of the Foundation Stones: *'Mrs T Oakden for family'*. Around 1920 Thomas and Mary moved to Todmorden to live with their youngest daughter, **Lily (Oakden) Rigg** and family and they all worked at the mills there. Lily was the organist during the opening ceremonies of the new Chapel.

Thomas and Mary's son **Frank Oakden** lived with his family in Craven Cottages, near some of our other families. Their son, another **William Oakden**, aged 34, was killed in France in WW1. He left a widow and a daughter in Nelson. In the small world of the Primitive Methodist Trustees, Thomas and Mary's daughter, **Martha Oakden**, married **Robert Pratt**, the son of Christopher Pratt, above and they lived in Craven Cottages.

Robert Atkinson, quarryman

Robert was rather elusive! Robert must have been in Settle/Langcliffe in 1909 to sign the Charity Commission submission, listed as 'quarryman of Langcliffe'. Unfortunately, there was no Robert Atkinson living in Langcliffe at the times of the 1901/1911 census returns. However, electoral registers tell us that a Robert Atkinson lived in Ribble Bank from 1905 - 1909 and, at that address, he would have been a quarryman. Intriguingly, there was a young **James Atkinson** living at Ribble Bank at the time of the 1911 census! Could this be his son? It's a very common name but, after plenty of detective work, we find a Robert Atkinson with a story that fits!

Robert was born into a mining family in Ingleton and so, inevitably, Robert became a miner too. When he was 21 he married **Agnes Mary Dobson**, an agricultural labourer's daughter from just outside Kirkby Lonsdale and they had two sons, **John Dobson Atkinson** and **James Atkinson**. Sadly, Agnes Mary died in 1900 and her memorial stone in Ingleton church yard reveals their eldest son had died as well [ph9]. This would have been quite an expense for Robert's pay packet.



In memory of Agnes Mary, beloved wife of Robert Atkinson, born Feby 4th 1848, died April 26th 1900. Also John Dobson, son of the above, born Aug 9th 1871, died May 25th 1885.

By the time of the 1901 census return widow Robert still lived in Ingleton but was working as a 'labourer at limeworks' and also had his eight year old daughter, **Lily Atkinson**, living with him. It seems very likely that in 1902 Robert moved to live at Ribble Bank in Langcliffe with son James and daughter Lily and joined the Primitive Methodist Trustees. Joseph Smales would have been a neighbour. Robert's son, James, appeared to follow him at Ribble Bank from 1909. After signing the charity commission document, Robert and Lily moved to Nelson with Robert's second wife, **Ellen Congden**. Ellen was the illegitimate daughter of **Mary Jane Congden** who moved from Cornwall to Langcliffe to find work with her second husband, **Thomas Lyne**, and five other children from both marriages. Robert died before 1921.

Henry Wright, quarryman

Wright is another difficult name to research, made more-so by his unfortunate background! He was born in Birmingham, the city of 1000 trades and indeed his father was

a glass cutter. Unfortunately, both his parents died soon after he was born so he was brought up by relations. During the 1880s he found his way to Langcliffe to work as a labourer. In 1889, at Settle Church he married **Sarah Jane Sellors** who was also brought up by relations in Milford, Derbyshire as she was an illegitimate daughter. She found her way to Settle for work at the mills. They lived in small cottages including those in Tatham's Yard, behind Cheapside, and Henry worked as a labourer. After the Primitive Methodist Chapel was built they moved to live in 8 High Hill Grove Cottages, just round the corner from the new Primitive Methodist Chapel. After Henry died Sarah Jane stayed in the house with their two spinster daughters. Their youngest daughter, **Ethel Wright**, eventually married when she was 64 becoming the second wife of a Giggleswick salesman, **Miles Leighton Mason**. They have simple flat memorial stones in Settle church yard.

In Memory of Henry Wright died 1936 aged 74 years, Also of his wife Sarah Jane died 1942 aged 78. Also of their daughter Emma died 1957 aged 64 New L29

In memory of Ethel Mason, (nee Wright) 1897 - 1977 New C25



Albert/Alfred Edward Cracknell

The Cracknells were agricultural labourers from Thetford, Norfolk. As the century progressed, industrial mechanisation had made thousands of farm labourers redundant which is why we have found many East Anglian families arriving in Langcliffe for work in the mills and the quarries, including several members of the Cracknell family. In 1906, in Settle, Albert/Alfred Edward married **Annie Patrick** who was from another Norfolk family. A year later they had a daughter, **Vera Cracknell**, while Albert worked in the quarry. Soon after signing the Charity Commission document in 1909 the young family decided to join the thousands of others who emigrated to Canada where Albert had a career as a driver, brewer and baker.

Annie's father was **John Patrick**, known as **Jack** who we are told about via the diaries of gardener **Charlie Green**; *'Jack worked as a quarrier in the limeworks but later took up gardening. I remember working for Mrs Henley of Hillside on Constitution Hill, and a dear old lady was she. I attended to the flowers and pruning etc and Mr Jack Patrick was Mrs Henley's kitchen gardener and handy man. Jack Patrick was known to most folk in Settle, a typical Norfolk man is Jack Patrick, ways of his own, which are not amiss when understood. Honest John Patrick would be a good name for him'*[ph3].



In 1894, in Norfolk, Annie's sister, **Sarah Ann Patrick**, married Albert Edward Cracknell's brother, **Robert John Shaw Cracknell** and they remained in Norfolk. However, before marrying Sarah Ann had worked as a farm servant up at Springfield Farm, later managed by fellow Trustee Christopher Pratt. What a small world.

Incredibly, honest John Patrick's sister, **Susan Patrick**, was the first wife of **Henry Denmark Soames** but died a year after marrying him, presumably with childbirth issues. His second wife was none other than Eliza Ann Smales, the daughter of Trustee Joseph Smales.

Finally, what do we know about the other Trustees who were not quarrymen? Part 3 follows.



This account has been compiled 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.

Life stories 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'. The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.

With thanks to Settle Christian Fellowship for their generosity in sharing archives and Ken and Helen Atkinson for their help with Langcliffe burial records.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1,3,4 – Lancaster Standard, 2 – Wandsworth Borough News, 3, 5 – Leeds Mercury, 6 – Lancaster Guardian, 6,7 – Halifax Daily Courier

ph1 – credited to Craven's Part in the Great War, ph2,5 – Back in Settle Facebook site, submitted by Mick Harrison, ph3 – from the diaries of Charles Green with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life, ph4,5 – from the Horner Photographic Studio Collection provided courtesy of the Museum of North Craven Life, John Hardy, Image 2022.1.68.6, Susanna Tatham – Image 2022.1.8.54.



Images from the Horner Collection are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

ph6 – with thanks to descendant Mary Robinson, ph7,8 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username rachybadger, ph9 – image and inscription credited to findagrave.com

A – thanks to descendant Mary Robinson for her information, photos and her book 'UnSettling Influences: The Calverts 1688-2004'

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

Census return via ancestry.co.uk, courtesy of The National Archives.