

Richard Duckett, a successful businessman

The Ducketts were in this area as far back as the 16th century when **John Duckit** married **Elizabeth Carr** of Wigglesworth Hall in 1795 at Long Preston church. Following that marriage, several generations of Ducketts lived at Wigglesworth Hall and in the 1850s we find Richard Duckett lived in Wigglesworth village just down the road from Long Preston. Richard Duckett was the eldest son of **Charles Duckett** [ph1] and his wife **Sarah Armistead** who ran the King William IV beerhouse on High Street in Settle for decades. Richard will have learned the trade.



In 1848, just three weeks before Richard's brother, **Edward Duckett**, set off for Australia, Richard married a widow, **Ann (Abbotson) Clark** whose first husband, **Thomas Clark**, had been the innkeeper of the Plough Inn at Wigglesworth. Unfortunately, Thomas died in 1845, aged just 32, but Ann seemed to have no problem running the inn herself – it was acceptable for widows to continue their deceased husband's businesses and this included running inns. At the time of their wedding, Richard [ph2] described his occupation as a 'common carrier,' an 1840s 'man with a van'! Richard joined Ann to run the Plough Inn and farm 200 acres while raising three sons and Ann's surviving daughter from her first marriage, **Mary Abbotson Clark**. They had to cope with all the usual drunk and disorderlies at the inn and hosted meetings of the North Ribblesdale Agricultural Association and local hunting groups [ph3].



Richard's brother Edward had emigrated to Australia at the beginning of the Gold Rush and, by 1856, had established an incredibly successful ironmongery business called '*The Golden Horseshoe*'. He wrote to Richard explaining his success [1]. He was '*doing very well*' and '*worth*

last few days, by Mr R. Duckett, Innkeeper, Wigglesworth. The writer is a blacksmith, a native of Settle, and a son of Mr Charles Duckett of the same town:—

"Melbourne, November 20th, 1852.
"Dear brother,—I received your letter, dated August 16th, by the Great Britain, and likewise a newspaper.

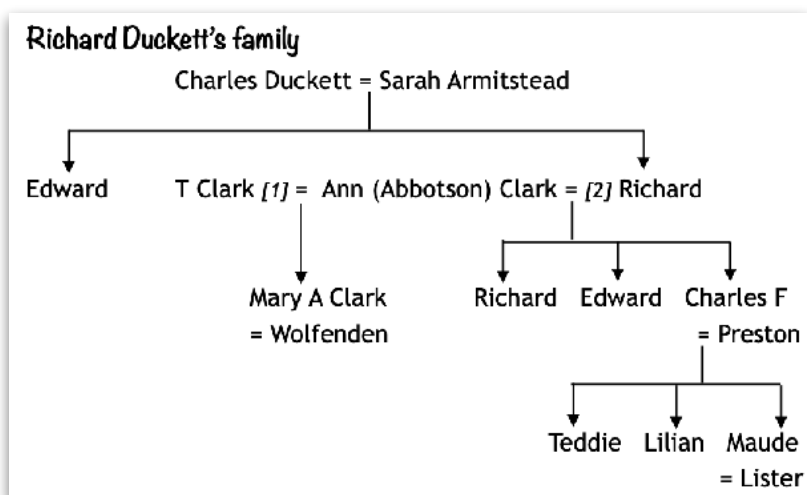
"I have not seen Henry Hartley yet. I have had Mr Atkinson stopping with me a bit; he has gone down to Geelong. I have seen a great many people from that quarter, but I am so busy now that I have scarcely got time to talk to them. I have got six men at work, and pay them each £6 per week wages; they wanted £7 but I would not give it. There are a great many people coming here now, which will make wages come down very much before long. I am afraid. Accounts from the diggings are not very favourable at present. I have nothing particularly fresh at present, except that I have bought myself a house, which cost me about £400; we are now living in it. Rents are very high. I could let my house for £3 per week. I can scarcely tell you what things will come to yet, but they cannot long remain as they are. Provisions are very dear. I am doing well at present. I don't think much of making £50 per week. I am making that now. I am worth about £2,000; I have got land and property but it cost me 12 or 13 hundred pounds.

"Brother Charles and sister Sarah and her husband are at the diggings, but doing nothing of any moment. We are all very well at present, thank God for it, and hope you are the same. I shall be very glad when I get your pot of butter, which I shall think more of than the value of it. I am very sorry now that you did not come with me, for if you had I know you would have done well; I have not the least doubt but you would have been worth your thousands. But I don't like to persuade any one to emigrate: I say let all persons please themselves, for a volunteer is worth 20 press-men. Let things be ever so bad here, when once you get established in business it is far better here than in England. Give my kind love to father who I hope will keep his health. You can let him see this letter, and tell him I received all his newspapers, but have scarcely had time to read them. I will send two newspapers with this letter; one for you and one for father. You must excuse my saying more, and except our kind love.

"Your affectionate brother and sister,
"EDWARD AND ELLEN DUCKETT."

We should have mentioned that the writer emigrated about 4 years ago. His relatives and friends have had several letters from him, no less favourable than the one we now publish.

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about £2000', a fortune in those days, plus property that cost him £1200 but was looking forward to the arrival of a pot of butter from home!

During the 1860s the business was doing so well that Edward was able to trade internationally. He chose Richard to manage the English side of The Golden Horseshoe business and he was well rewarded with a salary of £100. Richard will have been a busy man – by 1885 he was managing 149 ships and 579 suppliers, generating £53,600. Richard had fingers in many other pies back in Wigglesworth too, being the land agent for the owners of the Wigglesworth Estate. He had several dealings with Rathmell's joiner, **James Mansergh**, paying him 19 shillings for various jobs in 1871. Richard was doing so well that, in 1866, Richard and Ann handed over the Plough Inn business to Ann's daughter, Mary Abbotson Clark and her husband, the wonderfully named **Pickles Wolfenden**. Richard and Ann moved a few doors away and concentrated on their other business concerns.

Pickles and Mary Wolfenden had four children before his horrific death. Pickles was driving some guests of the Plough Inn to Long Preston station with a horse and trap. He was crossing Mill Bridge on the way to Long Preston, an accident black spot, when his horse shied and caused the trap to overturn. The guests were unhurt but Pickles' ankle was seriously dislocated. **Dr Buck** set the ankle and sent him home but Pickles died three days later from shock, infection and internal injuries [CH]. At the

FATAL TERMINATION OF A TRAP ACCIDENT. — It is our painful duty to have to record the fatal termination of the accident to Mr. Pickles Wolfenden, particulars of which were given in our im-

1879. DEATHS in the District of Long Preston in the County of York

When and Where Died.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Cause of Death.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.
Tenth March 1879 Wigglesworth	Pickles Wolfenden	Male	45 years	Innkeeper and Farmer	Compound Fracture 14 days Pyæmia 10 days Certified by G. W. Bilch M.R.C.S. &c.	Henry Wolfenden Brother Present at Death Kildwick

Plough Inn a 'Pickles Bar' was named in his memory but, sadly, it no longer exists. Pickles was buried in Long Preston churchyard with his son **George William Henry Wolfenden** who died aged 13. They share a beautifully engraved stone.

In Affectionate Remembrance of Pickles Wolfenden of the Plough Inn Wigglesworth who died March 10th 1879 aged 45 years "Be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh". And of George W H Wolfenden son of the above who died April 21st 1887 in his 13th year.



Pickles will never have met his fifth child, **Pickles Hartley Wolfenden** who was born soon after his death. Following in her mother's footsteps, widowed Mary continued to run the inn and later married one of her servants at the inn, **George Rhodes**.

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Meanwhile, Richard and Ann's second son, **Richard Duckett**, died an infant leaving the other two sons, **Edward** and **Charles Francis Duckett** [ph4]. Around the time of his 21st birthday, eldest son Edward [left] sailed for Australia to work in his uncle's business as one of the company's first travelling salesmen. He married and had four children but was killed in a buggy accident during a business trip to America, aged just 34.



Richard and Ann's youngest son **Charles Francis Duckett** [right], known locally as 'Bob', stayed in Long Preston and helped his father with the business as a 'clerk to Australian hardware company'. Charles [ph5, in black] and Richard were also involved in building projects with a yard on the site of Long Preston's Ribble Terrace, which they are thought to have built.

In 1886 Richard and Ann moved to Long Preston, living at Riversdale [ph6], just outside Long Preston on the Gisburn Road, a suitably grand place for Richard's retirement. It had been built in 1865 for the Holgate family as 'a detached gothic villa with three entertaining rooms, seven bedrooms, numerous other rooms, outbuildings and pleasure gardens and 'well supplied with water, fitted up with gas pipes and other modern conveniences' – it even had its own gasworks. During the early 1880s Riversdale was a boarding school for five young ladies. In 1888 the benevolent 'Richard Duckett Esq of Riversdale presented the lime and sycamore trees' on the Green outside the Maypole Inn, some of which still survive today [ph7].

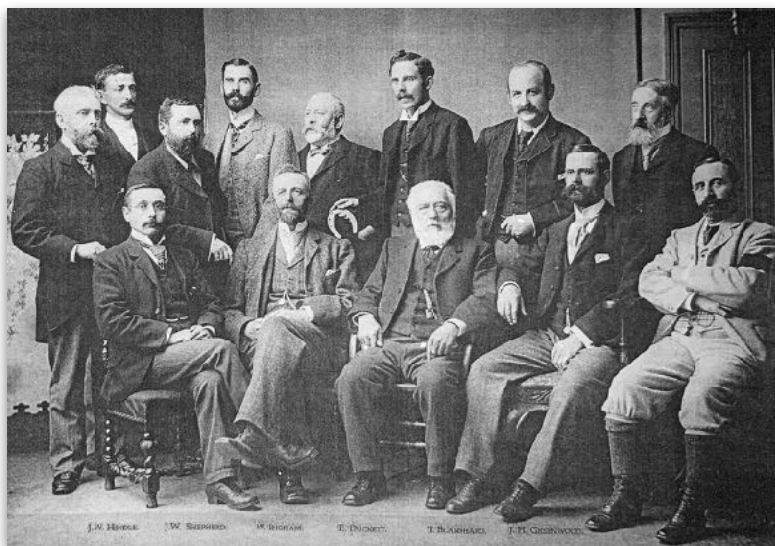


In 1876, son Charles Francis Duckett married a local butcher's daughter, **Ann Preston**, and they had a son and two daughters. Unfortunately, son **Richard Edward (Teddie) Preston Duckett** died aged seven. Daughter **Lilian Duckett** remained a spinster but daughter **Annie**



Maude Duckett married **Frederick Handel Lister**. Frederick's family had come to Long Preston from Arncliffe and he was, unsurprisingly, was the son of a music teacher! Frederick worked as a bank clerk and then as manager at the Craven Bank in Settle. As such, it was Frederick who was asked to keep an eye on the finances of The Golden Horseshoe's trade in England after Richard Duckett died. At the time of the 1911 census, Annie Maude's sister Lilian lived with them and described her occupation as a coal dealer – most unusual for a woman. Perhaps she had inherited part of her father's business? At the time of the 1939 pre-war register Annie and Lilian were treating themselves to a break at a private boarding house on the seafront at Morecambe and Lilian's occupation was a bank clerk. At the same time, Frederick was one of 15 people living at the Ashfield Hotel, next to the bank in Settle.

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Charles Francis Duckett died in 1894, aged just 41. His mum, Ann, had died in 1891 aged 80 and then Richard moved back to Settle, living at Halsteads which is where he caught a bad cold which killed him, aged 75, in 1897. As Charles and Richard both had instrumental roles in the Duckett business this triggered uncle Edward Duckett to make a trip back to Yorkshire from Australia. He had his photo taken with several 'Settle worthies' who had connections to the business [ph8].

Charles Frederick's family, Ann, Ann's brother, **William Beecroft Abbotson**, an unmarried cattle dealer and Richard have an impressive row of gravestones in Long Preston churchyard. It was a definite sign of wealth that they each had their own, well-preserved memorial stone of exceptional quality, left to right:

In loving memory of Teddie, our dear son of Chas F and Ann Duckett, born 10th June 1877, died 26th September 1884. Also of Charles Francis Duckett born 1st March 1853, died 16th Aug 1894. Also of the above Ann Duckett, born 12th October 1856, died 7th January 1911.

In loving memory of Ann Duckett born July 2nd 1809, died Feb 3rd 1891

In loving memory of William Abbotson, died January 14th 1895, aged 80 years

In loving memory of Richard Duckett born Dec 4th 1822, died March 21st 1897



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

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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 lives of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project

ph1 – photo credited to descendants via ancestry.co.uk, username chrisorpen, ph2,4,8 – credited to The Golden Horseshoe, Edward Duckett and sons, a Victorian Pioneer Hardware Firm, thanks to North Craven Heritage Trust with permissions from descendant John Maidment, ph3 – photo credited to descendants via ancestry.co.uk, username Chris Ward, ph5,6,7 – Long Preston Heritage Group

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Kendal Mercury' CH with thanks to the Craven Herald

Some of the material in this account has been published by YDMT in the book 'Meandering down the Ribble, Born and Bred in the Long Preston Floodplain' who have given permission for it to be included in this account