

St Olave's Church - York

History Rediscovered

Church monuments and memorials



Written and researched

by

Helen Fields

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Introduction

Origins of St Olave's Churchyard and the first known burial

St Olave's church has been at the heart of Christian worship in Marygate and the surrounding parish since before 1055. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the death and burial of Earl Siward (the founder of St Olave's) in 1055 somewhere on this site. It is also known from ecclesiastical records, that George Neville (1432-1475), former Archbishop of York and brother of 'Warwick the Kingmaker,' granted land, goods and money from the estate of the once powerful Benedictine Abbey of St Mary's to St Olave's to settle a longstanding dispute between the parishioners and the Abbot (William Dalton). A portion of these grants referred to the creation of a churchyard. Early texts on the history of York (eg Drake, 1788) provide references to burials at St Olave's prior to the 15th century (John De Spawlinge, a citizen of York, 1393) but most burials are documented from the 16th century onwards. The churchyard was closed to further burials in 1854⁽¹⁾.

Since then, the churchyard has remained a sacred and largely undisturbed haven of tranquility in the midst of the city. It occupies a unique position, surrounded by medieval walls and overlooked on one side by the magnificent ruins of the abbey. It is no surprise that this ancient and beautiful churchyard is a repository of remarkable stories, some of which have only recently come to light. The lives of those buried here represent a mix of notable, highly talented people together with less well known parishioners. Each in their various ways, over many centuries, have made individual contributions to the historical, social and cultural history of York.

One gravestone in the churchyard has a headline inscription which reads: '*This stone rescues from oblivion*' ...this research attempts to do just that. Uncovering lost people, their histories, achievements, skills and experiences, and the historical context in which they lived. It is

1. Parish records Borthwick Institute – York University.

hoped the research will inspire the current congregation and visitors to remember and celebrate those from past centuries, with whom, despite the progress and pressures of the modern age, we still have much in common. It seems clear from the research that the people interred and/or memorialised here revered this church, its liturgy and its unique environment, just as much as successive generations. In most cases, their desire to be buried in this wonderful place is testament to that.

The research is ongoing.

Helen Fields
St Olave's Church
June 2019

Contents

11th Century

1. Earl Siward of Northumbria 9

17th Century

2. Benefactions Tables 10
3. Coat of Arms – Prince Henry Stuart 13
4. Henry Darcy Lieutenant Colonel English Civil War 14
5. Four Hanged Men - York Tyburn 19

18th Century

6. William Thornton - Architect and carpenter 21
7. Daniel Harvey – Sculptor 28
8. Alatheia Jordan (Fishers of York monuments) 33
9. Abel Taylor - Apothecary and surgeon 34
10. Michael Loftus - Servant to Duke of Ormonde 36
11. Thomas Gilbank – Sheriff of York 38
12. Scott Family – Realities of infant death 41

19th Century

13. Charlotte Pick – Infant 43
14. Joseph Halfpenny – Engraver 45
15. Thomas Hardisty – Carpenter 50
16. William and Ann Leng – Actors (Theatre Royal) 52
17. John Agar – Watch and clockmaker 55
18. Daniel Isaac - Itinerant Wesleyan Minister and author 57
19. Shepherd Family – A portrait of maternal and infant mortality 61
20. Frances Worsley of Hovingham 63
21. James Lindow Brockbank – Headmaster and Inspector of schools 64
22. Littledale Infants 66
23. Henry Cooper – Innkeeper -White Horse, Bootham 68
24. William Ety RA – Artist 70
25. Richard Nicholson Esq – Brother-in-Law of George Hudson 75
26. John Brook – Solicitor and friend of Ety 88

27. Edward and Henry Grimes – York Asylum & other asylum burials	92
28. Henry Russell – Surgeon, York County Hospital	99
29. Camidge Family – Organists and composers	102
30. Wolstenholme Family – Carvers, sculptors and businessmen	108

20th Century

31. Helga Wilson (Organ memorial)	118
32. The Great War Memorial	119
33. Ann and Adrienne Wilson (pews, Transfiguration Chapel)	120
34. James Hervey Rutherford – architect (memorial window)	121
Map showing locations of memorials inside church	126
Map showing location of graves in churchyard	128

NOTE

The people commemorated in this book are listed in historical date order. Some are buried in the churchyard while others are remembered on memorials, fixtures and fittings within St Olave's Church.

Internal memorials are listed as



M

Churchyard graves are listed as



C

11th Century

1055 Earl Siward of Northumbria

1

Location unknown

Earl Siward of Northumbria, ordained that a church dedicated to St Olave should be established on this site. Siward, of Scandinavian origin, was the powerful ruler of the North of England during 1040-1055 under King's Harthacnut and Edward the Confessor. It was usual for such rulers to establish and build churches. The dedication of this church to Olaf, former King of Norway, who had died in battle only 30 years before (1030) was unique. This was the first church in the world to be dedicated to the new Saint Olaf (Olave). Siward died in 1055, soon after St Olave's was established. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Siward was buried in the grounds of the site of the church he had founded. The area around Marygate was then known as Galmanho and the area of the current Museum Gardens, as Earlsborough. Siward was thus the first known burial, somewhere in or around the current site of St Olave's and the (now ruined) St Mary's Abbey, the walls of which still form a boundary around the churchyard and much of the Museum Gardens.

Siward's actual grave site has been lost to history, but there are fragments of 11th Century inscribed stone in the Yorkshire Museum considered to be associated with his grave.



Death of Earl Siward by James Smetham 1861

Tate/Wikipedia

17th Century

2

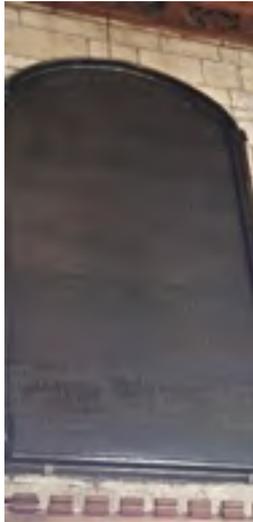
Early 17th C Memorial Benefactions Tables *One on the wall over main entrance and another on the wall at rear of tower*

Two old, (and now rather faded) benefactions tables are placed high up on two walls of the church.

One over the main north entrance door, the other on the rear wall of the tower.

Their age is uncertain, but the first benefactor mentioned (Fabian Farley 1607), gives an indication.

York possessed many charitable endowments over the centuries. Several churches in the city display such boards or books, which recorded the names and particulars of individual charitable giving in the parish. Parochial charities



Two Benefactions Tables: St Olaves's Church

were vested in trustees consisting of the Minster, churchwardens, overseers of the poor and elected or co-opted feoffees⁽¹⁾. Some of the endowments given to the church and parish of St Olave's included:

- 1607⁽²⁾. Fabian Farley – gave land at Lastingham, with one cottage barne, for '*Ye poor, forever*'. This was sold in 1752 for £21. Farley

1. 'Feoffee' is a historical term (still in use) to denote a trustee invested with freehold estate for a purpose, typically, a charitable one. In some churches feoffees can be used to support restoration work.

2. The date 1607 on the board is over 30 years after Fabian's recorded death. Possibly the Board was erected, or his endowment activated, some years later.

also left 20s for the poor of the parish '*to be paid out of his estate at Flaxton every Christmas Day*';

- In the mid-1700s, Revd Thomas Mosley and Benjamin Legg gave generous sums; these were eventually combined and used to purchase new bells for the church. Thomas Mosley also stipulated that the interest on his endowment should be given every 'plow-day/Christmas' to the parish poor;
- In 1822, the main endowment of St Olave's was £100 in stock, given by William Bowes in 1766, for the poor of Gillygate, Bootham and Marygate.
- In 1866, Martha Webb gave £500 for the poor of the parish.

Most of these gifts of money (or in some cases provision for coals, bread or other goods for the poor), were granted through wills and legacies. Two of the individuals on the tables, who are buried at St Olave's have been researched:

- **Fabian Farley:** Born in 1540 in York. A record exists of his baptism at St Olave's. That year Henry VIII divorced Anne of Cleves and married Catherine Howard. Fabian was the son of a Merchant. It seems he inherited and continued his father's role. During the reign of Elizabeth I, Fabian Farley was recorded as a Merchant on the register of Freemen of York (1561). He married Joan Procter (apparently from Laukeland Hall in Settle) in 1573. They had several children. Drake's '*History of York*' (1736) refers to the burials of both Joan and Fabian at St Olave's. It is not known whether this was within the church or elsewhere in the churchyard. Fabian died in 1570 (according to Drake) and Joan in 1602. From the inscription cited by Drake, Fabian was a wayfarer and philanthropist, uncorrupted by his fortune and who took utmost care of the needy. Other records of his charitable giving exist in the city. He also features on the benefaction board of St Helen's church. There are several male Farleys interred within St Olave's churchyard indicating it was a Farley family place of worship: Michael, buried October 1550; Tristamus, buried 1561; Richard (probably Fabian's father), buried Sept 1569; Thomas, buried November 1569, and two

more.

- Revd **Thomas Moseley** (sometimes spelled Mosley): Born 1663 in York, during the reign of Charles II. The son of Richard Mosely, a church verger, Thomas was descended from a leading Yorkshire family. He was admitted to St John's College, Cambridge, aged 18 in 1681. The date he was ordained Priest is unknown. Thomas married Bridget Fryer in 1692 and became Curate at St Olave's in 1695. The couple had four children, Nicholas (born 1693, who became a priest), Thomas (born 1695), Richard (born 1699 – also became a priest) and Bridget (born 1701). The size of St Olave's parish at that time was considerable, but this did not prevent Thomas also being appointed Rector of Skelton, the same year his daughter was born. Drake records Thomas and Bridget dying in the same year (Bridget in September 1732, aged 59 and Thomas in November 1732 aged 69). They are both interred at St Olave's but the site of their grave is unknown. Two other female Moseley's are buried in two vaults in the Nave, it is not known if they were from the same family. (Anne died 1782 and Elizabeth died 1787).
- Churchwardens: Former churchwardens mentioned on the benefactions board include *Francis Wolstenholme, John Wolstenholme and Richard Cattley*. Francis and Richard are interred in the churchyard. Details of them are included in the entry concerning the Wolstenholme family. **Richard Cattley** (born 1755 in York), married Mary Stainforth in 1783 at St Olave's. They had two children: a son James, and daughter Dorothy. Richard died on 3rd June 1819 and Mary in 1844. He inherited a significant timber merchant business and left a generous will. The Cattley grave in the churchyard occupies a large (fenced off) plot at the north east end against the ruined abbey wall. It has become very dilapidated and the main stone (with inscription) has long since collapsed. The only visible identification is the surname: 'CATTLEY' etched on the stone surround. Richard and his family must have been regular worshippers and keen supporters of St Olave's.

3

1612 Royal Coat of Arms of Prince Henry Stuart: Prince of Wales (1594-1612)

Upper left interior church wall adjacent to organ casing and Requiem Altar

After the Dissolution of St Mary's Abbey in 1539, the status of St Olave's grew because it became the parish church of the President of the Council of the North. The Council was an administrative body established by Edward I in 1472. Focused on improving government control and economic prosperity in the north of England, Richard Duke of Gloucester, Edward III's brother (later Richard III), was appointed as the first President. The Council's initial headquarters were at Sheriff Hutton Castle.

Nearly 70 years later, following Dissolution, the Abbot's house at St Mary's was retained by Henry VIII. It was renamed 'The King's Manor' becoming the headquarters of the newly revived Council, led by a succession of influential nobles and archbishops. Whilst not confirmed,

the old stone plaque depicting the Royal coat of arms (differentiated for the Prince of Wales⁽³⁾), was probably positioned above the designated pew seat of the president, when he attended services at St Olave's. It is understood to show the arms of Prince Frederick Henry, first born son of James I of England and VI of Scotland and Anne of Denmark. Prince Henry was born at Stirling in 1594. He was named after his grandfather, Lord Darnley (husband of Mary Queen of Scots) and he was the elder brother of Charles I.

Henry, brilliant and accomplished, showed great leadership promise. His brother Charles, a sickly and delicate child, was devoted to, but overshadowed by, him. It was devastating when Henry died in 1612



*Stone memorial to
Henry
(top left-hand side
of the nave)*

3. Stapleton, Henry E.C. *A History of St Olave's Church* 1958/9 (re-printed 2002). Page 6. Corporate Creations.

aged eighteen, of Typhoid Fever. 1,000 people processed behind his funeral cortege when he was buried at Westminster Abbey. Charles was only 11 at the time and had to act as chief mourner because his father hated funerals. Henry's death was considered a national tragedy, prompting a succession crisis because the sickly Charles now became heir to the throne. His parents had to make provision should Charles die. His newly married sister Elizabeth would become heir. In the event, Charles lived and became King. His fate was to be executed after the English Civil War. The monarchy was abolished, and the country became a Commonwealth under the rule of Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell.



Wikipedia

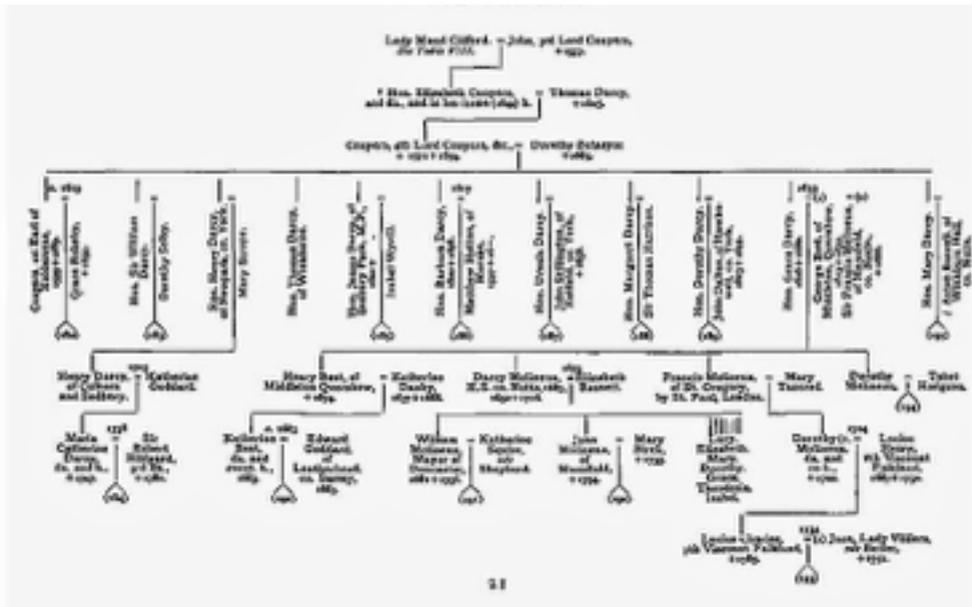
*Prince Henry Stuart
(circa 1610)*

English history might have been different had Prince Henry survived to become King instead of Charles. At the time of Prince Henry's death, Edmund Sheffield, (3rd Baron Sheffield) was President of the Council of the North. The Earl may have sat in his pew at St Olave's during a service to mourn the loss of the Prince. Such services were held in many churches across the country. By 1640, the Council of the North had declined in significance. It was abolished after the English Civil War.

4

1662 Henry Darcy Esq (and his wife Mary) buried at St Olave's *Location - unknown*

Henry Darcy Esq was born circa 1605/6, the third son of Conyers Darcy (4th Baron Conyers of Hornby/Baron Darcy of Knaith, who was baptised at St Michael-le-Belfry, in 1570). The seat of the 4th Baron Darcy of Knaith was at Hornby Castle, situated between Bedale and Leyburn. Henry's mother was Dorothy Belasyse (Bellasis). She was the daughter of a Catholic noble, Sir Henry Belasyse (1st Baron



Darcy Family Tree

Fauconberg). The Belasyse family seat was at Newburgh Priory, nr Coxwold (a former Augustinian Priory). Conyers Darcy and Dorothy Belasyse married in 1594. The Darcy family had strong Catholic leanings but as Conyers Darcy's grandfather, Lord Thomas Darcy, had been attainted in 1538 for treason and executed for his part in supporting the Pilgrimage of Grace during the reign of Henry VIII, the family were careful of maintaining their newly restored titles and estates through showing loyalty to the Crown.

Henry's parents had sixteen to eighteen children, many of whom (unusually), survived to adulthood and married. Henry's eldest brother (confusingly also Conyers Darcy) became the 1st Earl of Holderness. Two of his brothers were Members of Parliament. The Hon Marmaduke Darcy (1615-1687), MP for Windsor and the Hon James Darcy (1617-1673), MP for Richmond. Henry's great nephew, the Hon John Darcy (1659-1688) became MP for York.

Henry's full title (relative to his estates), was Henry Darcy Esq of Newpark and Colburne cum Ebor. His main residence in later life, was

Colburn Hall in Richmondshire. The English Heritage entry, regarding the Hall, describes it as a substantial mansion house dating from 1621. The Darcy coat of arms is still displayed on the front of the building. The Hall was sold to Henry Darcy Esq in 1648. He and his family may also have had a residence in York.



Darcy family crest

Henry married Mary Scrope, the heiress of William Scrope Esq of Highley in the County of Durham, in 1628. The Scrope family came from Masham and Bolton Castle, in Wensleydale. Henry and Mary had ten children, but little has been discovered about them other than that on his death, Henry passed the estate to his son Phillip and then to Phillip's brother (Henry Darcy Jr). The record indicates that the second Henry Darcy passed the estate to his daughter Maria. The Hall is still apparently in the possession of Darcy descendants⁽⁴⁾. No portraits of Henry and Mary Darcy have been found. There are however records of Henry and his brother Marmaduke Darcy fighting alongside their maternal cousin, Lord John Belasyse, a Royalist General in the English Civil War. Belasyse, born at Newburgh and baptised at Coxwold Parish Church in 1614, fought courageously at Naseby and Edge Hill. Henry and Marmaduke were both Royalist Lieutenant Colonels in Belasyse's Regiment of Foot⁽⁵⁾. Although not confirmed, it is possible they fought with their cousin and commander at these significant battles. It is also likely that they participated in defending the City during skirmishes against Lord Fairfax's parliamentary forces, which preceded the Siege of York (April-July 1644). Belasyse was wounded in one of these skirmishes, taken prisoner and transferred to the Tower of London in April 1644. Interestingly, St Olave's and St Mary's Tower (at the top of Marygate) were badly damaged during the actual siege. The church tower and roof were used as gun embattlements. St Olave's still bears the scars

4. Source: *A History of the County of York North Riding: Vol 1*. Originally published by Victoria County History. London 1914. British History On-line, a not-for-profit digital library based at the Institute for Historical Research, University of London.

5. Regimental Wiki – *Officer lists – Lord Belasyse's Regiment of Foot* (Royalist Regiment of Foot of the Oxford Army).

of the conflict but escaped further ruin because Lord Fairfax compelled parliamentary forces not to destroy or loot York's historic churches, including the Minster.

Nothing more is known of Henry's Civil War service but subsequently, his younger brother, Marmaduke Darcy was prominent in helping Charles II regain the throne (after the execution of Charles I and Cromwell's tenure as Lord Protector⁶) Marmaduke was a member of the exiled court of Charles II in France and the Dutch Republic. Following the restoration of the monarchy he became a Gentleman Usher to the new King, as well as an MP. Marmaduke died unmarried in 1687.

The post war career of Henry Darcy's cousin, General John Belasyse, was equally interesting.

Belasyse was appointed Governor of York and Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire by Charles II. He was raised to the peerage as 1st Baron Belasyse of Worlaby in Lincolnshire. An MP for Thirsk, he married three times and had at least sixteen children. Contemporary anecdotes about him were recorded in the diary of Samuel Pepys. There were later accusations of him being implicated in the 'Rye House plot' of 1678. As a result, Belasyse was subjected to three further spells of imprisonment in the Tower. His last incarceration lasted six years. He was never brought to trial. Hopper suggests⁷ that Charles II laughed uproariously when informed that Belasyse was involved in the plot, because by then, he was infirm and crippled with gout. Certainly, the evidence



*Belasyse (Darcy's Cousin)
Newburgh Priory*

6. Oliver Cromwell's body was exhumed from Westminster Abbey in 1661 and subjected to a posthumous execution. His body was hanged in chains at Tyburn, then thrown in a pit and his severed head was displayed on a pole outside Westminster Hall until 1685. His daughter Mary Cromwell, who became Countess of Fauconburg, eventually had his remains (minus his head) brought to Newburgh Priory. The stone tomb supposedly containing his body has never been opened, so the contents are still a mystery..

7. Hopper A J. *John Belasyse, 1st Baron Worlaby, biography*. Oxford 2004.

8. Titus Oates, a notorious perjurer, fabricated a Catholic plot by Jesuits against the King's life with plans to bring his Catholic brother James (later James II) to the Throne. Between 1678 -1681 Catholics were persecuted, executed and/or imprisoned, several Catholic peers such as Belasyse were implicated.

against him was spurious⁽⁸⁾ and he was eventually released to live out his life. He died in 1689 and is buried at St Giles-in-the Fields, Holborn, London.

Henry Darcy died on April 28th 1662, aged 57. He fought and lived through the Civil War, the execution of Charles I, the Commonwealth puritan rule of Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell and the early period of the restoration under Charles II. His wife Mary died in 1667. It is fortunate to have a description of their interment at St Olave's Church as cited in 'The Peerage of England, Vol 3, page 410 by Arthur Collins.1 777'. This volume also confirms that Henry's son Phillip, became his heir and they had nine other children.

The exact whereabouts of Henry and Mary's grave at St Olave's is not known for certain but it is probable they are interred in a vault below the nave, close to the Victorian chancel and Transfiguration Chapel. There is an intriguing stone slab on the front right (south) side of



Wikipedia

Marmaduke Darcy (Younger brother of Henry Conyers Darcy – 1st Lord Holderness



*Could this be the Darcy Vault?
South Nave aisle: St Olave's Church*

the nave which simply displays the initials I (? H) D and MD close to the steps of the Transfiguration Chapel. It may be the case that their grave was obscured during church re-building and restoration work undertaken either in the 1700s or in the mid/late Victorian era. An examination of restoration records at the Borthwick Institute confirms that in 1878, when a new Chancel was built, some stone grave slabs were covered over to create the chancel steps and re-position the pews and seating. Perhaps then, they had no idea which graves they were obscuring! The inscription on the memorial slab covering Henry and Mary's grave was originally described by Arthur Collins:

Here lyeth the bodies interred of R Hon Henry Darcy Esq, 3rd son of R Hon Conyers, Lord Darcy of Meynill and Conyers, who departed this life on the 28th day of April 1662 Anno Aetatis Fueb, 57 and Mary Darcy his wife, daughter and heiress of William Scrope of Highley Hall, who departed this life April 17th 1667, who had issue 10 children.

'Now they both rest in Christ, waiting for the resurrection of the dead'

Henry's maternal grandparents, Sir Henry and Lady Ursula Belaysye and one of his sisters, Grace Darcy (buried in 1680, with second husband Francis Molineux), are all interred in York Minster.

5

1615-1662 Four men – hanged at the York Tyburn

The gallows at York Tyburn were built around 1370. The site known as Knavesmire is now the York Racecourse. Tyburn was one of four execution sites in York. Three were run by the church, near the Minster, St Mary's Abbey and the hospital. Tyburn was the place of administering Crown, rather than ecclesiastical justice. The gallows there consisted of a wooden triangular scaffold, standing on wooden pillars. It was dubbed the 'three-legged mare' and executions took place there for over 400 years. Public execution days were rowdy events, with condemned prisoners, to the jeers of crowds, driven in a cart from the

prison (York Castle), along Castlegate, over Ouse Bridge to Micklegate, past the Mount and finally to the Knavesmere. The coffin in which the prisoner was to be buried was placed in the cart.

The last hanging took place at Tyburn in 1801, after which executions were undertaken at York Castle, largely to avoid the streets and roads being blocked by people wanting to watch the spectacle. Other gallows existed in parishes, for example Burton Stone Lane, governed by the Abbot of St Mary's; another at the junction of Haxby Road and Wigginton Road, controlled by the Dean and Chapter of



Execution Day in York: Circa 1820
(Henry Rowlandson).

the Minster; and a third at Garrow Hill, approached by the aptly named 'Thief Lane'. The Archbishop also had gallows erected at Fossgate. More individuals were hanged by the church than by the Crown. In 1801, these multiple sites were dismantled in favour of a single place of execution at York Castle. From

then onwards all executions happened there. On the day of execution, a black flag was raised above the castle. The last execution in York was undertaken in 1896.

St Olave's churchyard is the final resting place of four men hanged at Tyburn. They have no headstones and the whereabouts of their graves is unknown. Prior to 1700, condemned men (and women) were buried in churchyards across York. After this time and when the place of execution was moved to York Castle, their bodies were buried in the castle grounds or sent to the hospital for dissection. The men buried at St Olave's and the 'crimes' they committed are illustrated in the table

9. Depositions from the Castle of York relating to offences committed in the Northern Counties in the 17th Century. Knipe W: *Criminal Chronology of York Castle*. 1867

below:⁽⁹⁾

- 1615 Mark Trimble (aged 25 from Ripon)
- Robert Martinson (aged 26, from Haxby). Jointly imprisoned at York Castle for committing highway robbery in the Forest of Galtres, near Shipton. Hanged 29th March 1615. Their bodies buried at St Olave's churchyard.
- 1685 John Mortimer (aged 27 from Thirsk). Broke into a house and stole 150 guineas. Hanged 12th April 1685. Buried St Olave's
- 1692 Charles Dimmley (aged 27 from Halifax) Forged a will belonging to William Robinson Esq. Hanged Monday 29th July 1662. Buried at St Olave's.

18th Century

6

William Thornton (1670-1721) – Brilliant Joiner and Architect

Wall at the rear of the nave close to the main church entrance door.

William Thornton was a highly regarded Joiner and Architect⁽¹⁰⁾. According to parish records and after confirmation in his last Will and Testament⁽¹¹⁾, William lived with his family in a house in Marygate. It is very likely he worshipped at St Olave's and may have been involved in restoration work here, although no records of this exist. Research relating to William's personal life, wife and family has been challenging; records about him are sparse. Despite this, it has been discovered that he was born on 11th September 1670, in the village of Thornhill (between Wakefield and Dewsbury). His father's name was John. No further parish records have been found regarding his parents. He married Ann Prince on 19th April

10. The term 'architect' was in use for centuries, but the academically qualified profession known today only became established in the late 19th century.

11. William Thornton's Last Will and Testament dated September 1721. Borthwick Institute York University.

Leeds), and the couple were married at Rothwell Holy Trinity Church. They had seven children, Robert, their eldest son (born 1703), William, John, Christiana (born 1715 in Wakefield), George (born 1717), Sarah, and Ann (born 1718). William and Ann Thornton lived through the reigns of Charles II, James II, William and Mary, Queen Anne and George I.

In 1687 William was apprenticed to Mr. M Gilburn in York, presumably to learn his trade as a carpenter/joiner⁽¹²⁾. Prior to the early 19th century carpenters were trained through a long apprenticeship, and after completion they usually styled themselves as Masters. This was probably the route William followed. The apprentice, effectively bound contractually in exchange for a sum of money, was assigned to a master, who agreed to instruct the apprentice for a set term, usually providing food, clothing and lodging for the duration. Little further has been uncovered about his early career, but a second record⁽¹³⁾ relates to a young apprentice named John Johnson, who in 1719 was indentured⁽¹⁴⁾ to William Thornton, then a 'Master Joiner'. The cost of John's indenture was £14.10. William's place of work was Rufforth (document states 'Tulforth' - probably a transcription error), indicating he may have owned or rented a workshop there.

Undoubtedly, William was possessed of natural gifts from an early stage, rising in status to become a talented, inventive and much in-demand craftsman. He soon made a name for himself in his field, evidenced by his impressive legacy of work. Skills and success brought William to the notice of celebrated contemporaries in building and architecture, with whom he collaborated on significant projects. His most notable achievements included:

- Designing a means of repairing Beverley Minster which was deteriorating from the early 18th century. The north transept wall of the Minster was leaning precariously four feet into the street. William had been appointed to work with a leading Architect of

12. *City of York Apprentices and Freemen 1272-1930*

13. *Transcription of British Apprenticeships 1710-1808*

14. An Indenture relates to an ancient system (originating from the Medieval Guilds) which bound an apprentice to a Master for seven years, learning skills on the job. It was a legal contract which could only be broken by a Justice of the Peace. For the term of the contract, the apprentice was not allowed to marry, gamble or visit public houses. Some apprentices were mistreated and ran away, risking imprisonment.

the Baroque style, Nicholas Hawksmoor (1661-1736) to plan and execute repairs. Hawksmoor, amongst other partnerships, assisted Christopher Wren in the construction of St Paul's Cathedral, and Vanburgh with Castle Howard and Blenheim Palace. This appointment must



Wikipedia

Beverley Minster

have been a great boost for William's career. He came up with an inventive solution to return the transept wall to its correct position.



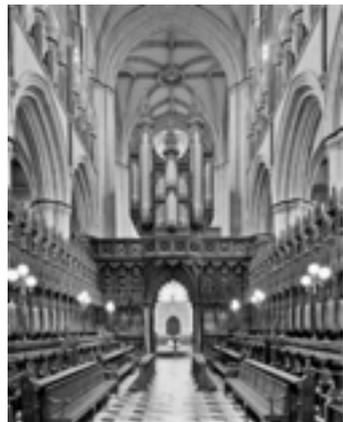
RIBA

Thornton's Frame

The plan involved removing the transept roof and erecting a massive wooden cradle to be placed on both sides of the Minster. Accepted by Hawksmoor, the approach demonstrated great engineering as well as constructional skills. Over a period of 11 days, using ropes and pulleys, the cradle was raised and pulled, allowing the wall to gradually resume an upright position. Thornton was also responsible

for designing and crafting the beautiful choir stalls at Beverley Minster.

- Working as a joiner and architect for Sir Christopher Wren, probably at the instigation of Hawksmoor. The exact nature of his work with Wren has not



RIBA

Choir Stalls at Beverley Minster

been discovered.

- Working with Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor on Castle Howard. In 1708, Thornton agreed with Hawksmoor to: *‘Wainscot the rooms called saloon, dining rooms and ante-room. The saloon with a good cornice and collours according to ye draft at a price of 2s.6d. Superficial Yarde being girt measure. The dining room was to be: ‘thoroughly wainscoted with a good cornich, base, sub-base and bolection, after the best and usual way, at a price of 2s.2d per yard⁽¹⁵⁾’* Whilst undertaking subsequent carpentry work at the castle, he submitted a bill in August 1711 (shown below):

William Thornton’s bill for work undertaken at Castle Howard.

‘Mr Thornton, 1 day, making patterns for doore joynts: £0.01.08’.

Source: A Constructional History of Sash Windows 1670-1725. Google books

- Overseeing the design and building of the Grade I listed Beningbrough Hall, North Yorkshire. He was appointed as supervising architect and chief craftsman for building work, to implement the ideas of the owner, John Bouchier. Bouchier had inherited the estate and after being influenced by a grand tour of Europe, his ambition was to incorporate Baroque themes into plans for re-modelling the house. Bouchier approached Thornton after hearing of his work at Bramham Park, Wentworth Castle and Beverley Minster. At Beningbrough, one of William’s notable achievements was the cantilevered staircase, which appears suspended. When in use, the staircase would have been climbed in formal procession on special occasions. His decorative Italianate woodwork in the dining



*Beningbrough Hall,
North Yorkshire*

15. Four Yorkshire Houses: Editorial: *York Art Calendar* 1960. Page 11. Taken from original correspondence between Thornton and Hawksmoor.

room (reflecting Bouchier's tastes), appears identical in appearance to plaster, providing further evidence of William's craftsmanship. The Hall was completed in 1716. Sir Nicholas Pevsner⁽¹⁶⁾ described the hall thus: *'It is plain externally but has interiors indubitably indebted to Castle Howard'*.



Wikipedia

*Cantilevered staircase:
Beningbrough*

- Work on remodeling the windows at Wentworth Castle, nr Barnsley, South Yorkshire. This building (known originally as Stainbrough House) was first constructed in 1670 and sold in 1708 to Thomas Wentworth, Baron Raby and later 1st Earl of Strafford (2nd creation). Strafford had a career in the Army serving William III and later was appointed Ambassador to Prussia by Queen Anne. Amongst other prestigious appointments, he became High Sheriff of Yorkshire. Like Bouchier, Strafford began re-modelling his newly acquired house after returning from a visit to Italy. He had a reputation for wanting to outshine his aristocratic rivals, prompting author, satirist, clergyman and contemporary, Jonathan Swift, to remark: *'he had the devil's own pride'*. The Earl contracted William Thornton to design the windows for the east front of the house. Correspondence between Strafford and Thornton about the work survives⁽¹⁷⁾. The letters concerned the deposition of panes in the window sashes. The options proposed were outlined thus: *'windows four panes wide'*, as *'done in the best houses'* Thornton assured the Earl, *'for which crown glass would do, or for larger panes, three panes across, these might require plate glass'*. The Earl chose the latter.

The resulting windows, (negotiated largely by letter) are considered unique in Britain. The re-modelled building was completed between 1714-15 and, not surprisingly, the Earl renamed

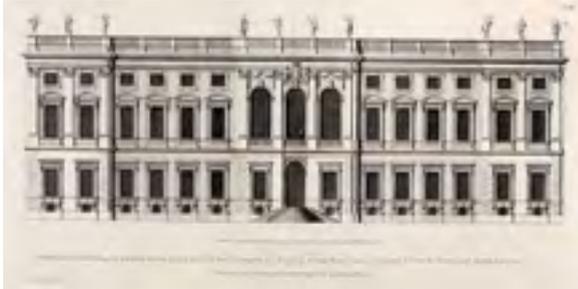
16. Nicholas Pevsner: *Yorkshire and the North Riding*, 1981. Google Books.

17. Citation: From Henti Louw and Robert Crayford. A History of the Sash Window 1670-1725. *Architectural History Journal* 42 (1999:173-239, page 188).



Wikimedia

Wentworth Castle South front



Contemporary engraving of Wentworth Castle (then Stainbrough House) by Jan Kip 1714 showing the windows designed by William Thornton

it Wentworth Castle in 1731. Pevsner, writing in the 20th century, described Thornton's windows as of '*Palatial splendor, uncommon in England*'.

- Work on Gilling Castle (formerly Ampleforth Preparatory School) North Yorkshire. The building dates from the 1570s. At the beginning of the 18th century it was owned by Viscount Fairfax who re-modelled it. Wings were added in the style of Vanbrugh, to enclose the front west court. These are attributed to William Thornton (source: RIBA).

William Thornton died on September 23rd, 1721 aged 51. He was buried at St Olave's. His son Robert, who died April 12th, 1724 aged



Wikimedia

Thomas Wentworth (1672-1739) 1st Earl Strafford and 3rd Baron Raby

21, was interred with him. In his Will⁽¹⁸⁾, (written 1720) William indicated that he either owned or had endowment mortgages on houses in Wakefield and Derbyshire, as well as his residence in Marygate. The Will made financial provision, through annuities, for his eldest son, his wife and each of his younger children, demonstrating concern for their *‘welfare and tuition’*. He *‘ordered’ that Ann ‘shall judiciously, after my death, have profits to enjoy so long as she continues my widow’*. The Will is detailed regarding provisions for all his children even relating to their beds



William Thornton Memorial Plaque – St Olave’s

and bedding! Robert died just three years after William.

The vault containing the remains of William and Robert Thornton is located to the left of the Transfiguration Chapel, below the first pillar of the south aisle and close to the nave altar. An impressive memorial plaque, depicting a shield with the measuring compasses of a carpenter (coat of arms derived from the Joiners Company or Guild) is positioned on the wall at the rear of the nave close to



18th Century Carpentry/Joiner workshop

the main church entrance door. Historical accounts (confirmed by England and Wales death records) suggest Ann Thornton died Oct 15th, 1760/1, aged 84 at York and is buried at St Olave’s⁽¹⁹⁾. It is not known whether she is interred in the vault with her husband and son or elsewhere in the churchyard. Information about the subsequent lives of William’s children has



18th Century Carpenter/Joiner

P. Interest

18. William Thornton original Will transcript (1720): Borthwick Institute, York University.

19. Record cited in Wilson and Spence: A History of York 1788. York Family History Society.

not been found. A quote by Christopher Wren⁽²⁰⁾ although not dedicated to William seems a fitting tribute to this man's remarkable work:

'There are natural causes of beauty. Beauty is the harmony of objects, begetting pleasure by the eye. Natural beauty from geometry and geometrical figures are universally agreed 'as to the law of nature' to be the most beautiful.'

7

Daniel Harvey (1683–1733) - French refugee, skilled sculptor and carpenter

Daniel Harvey (1683-1733) and his older brother John Harvey⁽²¹⁾ (1681-1735) were born in France, during the reign of King Louis XIV (the 'Sun King'). Records have not been found about their respective births and upbringing in France, but sources⁽²²⁾ suggest they were protestant refugees (Huguenots) who had fled to England during the years following the 'Revocation of the Treaty (Edict) of Nantes'⁽²³⁾.

The date they arrived in this country and whether they came to Yorkshire with parents and other family members, is unknown; regardless it is certain they did some projects together and individually whilst living in and working from York. Possibly they learned their skills and trades in painting, plastering, sculpting and carpentry in France, before fleeing to England. Although records are sparse about Daniel's personal life, a surprising amount is known about his work, less so regarding John. They worked intermittently on the building of Castle Howard. Daniel was the sculptor and carpenter, John the plasterer and painter. The Castle was built for the 3rd Earl Carlisle to replace the older castle of Henderskelfe, handed down to him by

20. From *'Tracts on architecture and other writings'*: Christopher Wren Edited by Lydia M Soo (1998). Cambridge University Press.

21. Daniel and John Harvey's original surname was Herve. There appear to have been many 'Herves' living in the Bretagne region during this period. Source: Family Search website.

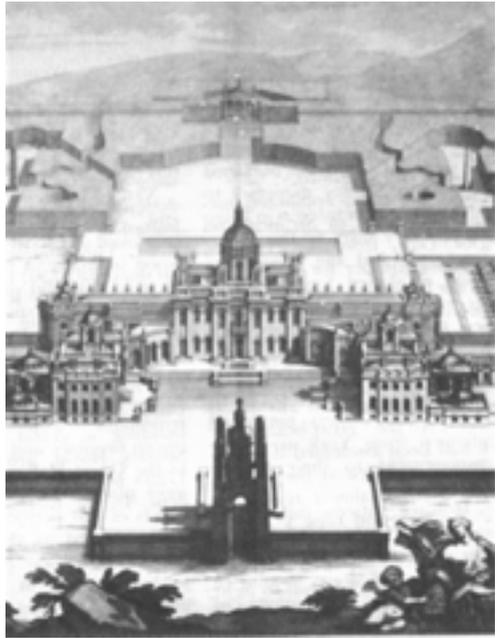
22. *Leeds Art Calendar* 1961 no 45 Editorial and article: Four Yorkshire Houses, pages 12-13.

23. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 was made by Louis XIV, aimed at rescinding the rights of protestants to practice their religion unhindered. It led to renewed persecution and a mass exodus of protestants from France.

five generations of Howard ancestors. The Earl was 30 when, in 1699, he engaged Sir John Vanbrugh as his architect. Vanbrugh in turn engaged renowned architect Nicholas Hawksmoor to manage the monumental task.

A group of talented workers was assembled to work on the enterprise, some from abroad but many of them from nearby York, which had become an important base for such skills. According to sources, Daniel Harvey carved doors, picture and chimney frames. One of his accounts for wood carving survives, written in French and signed Daniel Herve. In a letter to Lord Carlisle, Hawksmoor referred to the lettering for a

‘historical pillar’ (a 100 ft obelisk for the avenue, on which Daniel had carved some frosted pedestals). Hawksmoor considered the inscription was *‘too long with many letters.’* He suggested reducing the size of the letters *‘to get in more words.’* He went on:



Castle Howard: The perspective view from Colin Cambell's Victorious Britannicus, Vol III 1725

‘If Mr. Harvey has not yet engraved them upon ye marble, I will send him downe ye alphabet and ye true bigness they may be of’

In 1730, Hawksmoor consulted John Harvey regarding paintings in the Mausoleum (begun circa 1729) and the *‘Temple of the Four Winds’*. According to Webb⁽²⁴⁾ in correspondence, John Harvey had begged Hawksmoor to: *‘stick to Hannibal Carrats⁽²⁵⁾ in the manner of painting,*

24. Webb, Geoffrey. The Letters and Drawings of Nicholas Hawksmoor Relating to the Building of the Mausoleum at Castle Howard. 1726-1742. Walpole Society. Vol 19. 1930-31. Page 127.

25. The term *‘Hannibal Carrats’* is probably a humorous reference to baroque artist Annibale Carracci.

as you can do no better.’ John was employed on painting the walls and ceilings of the Mausoleum, but his work was swept away in further reconstruction during the mid-18th century. Like William Thornton, Daniel also did work for the Earl of Strafford, during the building of Wentworth Castle, specifically stone carving on some Corinthian columns for the gallery, and a further four carved in wood. Although the respective contributions of Thornton and Harvey differed by a decade or more (at Castle Howard), it could have coincided at Wentworth. If they were working and moving in similar craftsmen circles in Yorkshire, they may have known each other and possibly collaborated on projects.



Charles Howard 3rd Earl Carlisle

Wikipedia

At a date unknown Daniel married Rebeccah or Deborah Whitely. The legibility of the writing of her name in Daniel’s Will is frustratingly



Bust of Nicholas Hawksmoor

Wikipedia National Portrait Gallery

poor and despite extensive searching it has been impossible to confirm which of these is correct. Similarly, searches for any children born to the couple have also drawn a blank. There was however a child Sarah Harvey, born in August 1729 and christened at St Mary’s Bishophill. Sarah could plausibly have been the child of either John or Daniel as no other child by the name of Harvey seems to have been born in York during this period. In 1720, a record cites Daniel Harvey as Master Carver, taking on an apprentice called Charles Mittley in York at a cost to the apprentice’s

father of £8⁽²⁶⁾. Mittley went on to become a renowned craftsman in his own right. During 1730, Daniel was employed to sculpt a replacement monument to Hugh Ripley⁽²⁷⁾, former Mayor and Wakeman of Ripon, in Ripon Cathedral. The monument had previously suffered damaged and was defaced in the English Civil War. It is impressive in scale and attributed as the work of Daniel Harvey of York.

Drake's⁽²⁸⁾ *History of York* states that Daniel died at York on 11th December 1733 and cites his memorial in Latin. John Harvey died in 1735. Although unconfirmed (because only her surname and status as a widow is given in records) Daniel's wife probably died in York in 1765. Drake's account describes Daniel's inscription, roughly translated, as follows:



Hugh Ripley Memorial at Ripon Cathedral by Daniel Harvey 1730.

In Memorium

Here lies Daniel Harvey, of French stock (Gallus Ideraque), Sculptor and skilled Architect, talented, honest and upright, his friendship and spirit intact. Died 11th December 1733.

Aged 50.

26. *British Country Apprentices: 1710-1808*.

27. Hugh Ripley was first Mayor of Ripon (1605) and the City's 'Last Wakeman' (1604). His house still stands in the Market Square. Ripley died 1637.

28. Drake, Francis, 1788. *'Eboracum: Or, History and Antiquities of the City of York, from its origin to this time'* in two Volumes: Vol 2. Published by T Wilson and R Spence. York

Drake's *History of York* refers to Daniel as being buried in St Olave's Churchyard, York in 1733. As no burial record confirmed this, further investigation of Daniel's will⁽²⁹⁾ revealed the following poignant affirmation (abridged) of his wishes:

In the Name of God, Amen. I, Daniel Harvey, being of an indifferent state of health but of perfect mind and memory do, after recommending my Soul to the mercy of God make my last Will and Testament in the manner of the following: I desire that my body may be interred near the place where I shall happen to dye. But if it shall please God that I dye in York or very near it, then I desire that my body may be buried in the churchyard of St Olave's without Bootham, as near to the ruins of the old abbey as (illegible – possible?). I (wish?) to be in a plain coffin, early in the morning, without much pomp and ceremony and my corpse only to be attended by such as my executor shall judge necessary, it being my request that it be done privately. I give all my singular, real and personal estate and equity unto my wife, Rebecca (? Deborah) Harvey, commonly known by the name Rebecca (Deborah?) Whitely, excepting some books, which are marked on the inside cover with the letter D and which I should like (? illegible) to accept as a token of my friendship, and I do hereby make her, my wife (Rebecca? Deborah) sole benefice of this my last will and testament. Sealed, signed, published and authored by the above testator and witnesses, whereof I have set my hand and soul. In the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Thirty-Three. 24th November 1733.

The whereabouts of Daniel's last resting place in the churchyard are, like some others, lost to history. Several gravestones near the wall of the abbey (and elsewhere) are illegible, broken or weathered through the passing of years. It is hoped that Daniel Harvey achieved his wish regarding the placement of his burial site.

29. Daniel Harvey; Will. Prerogative Court Dec 1733. Vol 83 Folio 220 (Microfilm 1003). Borthwick Archives.

8

Memorial to Alatheia Jordon of Micklegate, by Fishers of York

South side of church between two pillars closest to altar steps

The **Fisher** family firm were celebrated sculptors with workshops in Minster Yard and North Street. Founded by Richard Fisher in 1729, the business lasted until 1884. They provided items carved in wood and marble to the aristocracy and gentry, specialising in chimney/fire surrounds and church monuments. There are many examples of their work in York Minster and across Yorkshire. Richard Fisher's daughter, Hannah, who died in 1754, aged 23, is buried in St Olave's churchyard. Alatheia Jordan, the subject of the memorial, was the wife of John Jordan Esq, Colonel of the 9th Regiment of Dragoons. She died in November 1741 and is interred in a church vault. Her husband died in 1756 and was buried in Middlesex. Her daughter Alatheia Maude (who died in 1778 and was interred with her mother), commissioned the monument in her last Will.

This memorial is particularly fine; there are other Fisher memorials in the church including:

- George Stephenson Esq (South Nave wall)
- John Roper Esq
- George Hutchinson

*Alatheia
Jordan
Memorial
by Fishers
of York
1721*



*George
Hutchinson
memorial:
Fishers*



9

Abel Taylor - Apothecary and Surgeon

Abel Taylor (1753-1797) was born March 1753 in Almondbury, nr Pontefract, West Yorkshire. The son of John

Taylor. Little has been discovered about his early life. He married Isabella Battie on 7th November 1774 at All Hallows Church, South Kirby. There are no records of any children born to the couple. Abel was practiced his skills as Apothecary and Surgeon in Hemsworth, West Yorkshire. There are records of Abel as a Master Apothecary, taking on apprentices in 1778 and 1785 (Joseph Grice and William Jennett respectively). It is assumed



18th Century Apothecary Box



18th Century Apothecary shop, Fairfax House, York

that he himself set up in the business following a period as an apprentice.

Abel must have been successful in his early years as an apothecary, eventually owning several properties, with land, in Hemsworth (all sold by auction after his death). His properties incorporated gardens with fruit trees and plants, no doubt used for the making of medicines and 'physics'.

Abel was a partner in the business with Michael Woodcock. The partnership was dissolved in 1796 (a year before Abel's death), presumably

because he or his partner either retired or because one or the other was unable to continue because of ill health⁽³⁰⁾.

30. *Leeds Intelligencer* -9th May 1796 -classified ad announcing the dissolving of the business partnership.

Apothecaries began operating in medieval times as itinerant medicine sellers, later settling in shops. In 1632 the College of Physicians obtained an order which stopped apothecaries from prescribing medicines. This enabled physicians to operate a monopoly over prescriptions which were merely dispensed by the apothecaries. During the plague, apothecaries remained in their shops, visiting and treating victims when most physicians had left for fear of contracting the disease. This re-established the apothecary, (in the eyes of many), as a person who fulfilled the role of doctor and prescriber as well as dispenser. However, the market was largely unregulated and there was no requirement for a licence or diploma to practice until 1800⁽³¹⁾.

The eighteenth century was a notorious period of vigorous medical claim and counterclaim. Accusations of ‘quackery’ were readily invoked. The medical market was a free-for-all with a confusing array of remedies, some of which were positively harmful, such as the use of mercury for venereal disease and the overuse of opiates. Regardless, there were growing numbers of practitioners such as Abel Taylor who began to describe themselves as surgeons and apothecaries, providing the bedrock of working doctors. They were dubbed the nation’s General Practitioners, well before the term came to be used as we know it today.

Extract from an eighteenth century ‘Apothecaries prayer’:

‘O mighty Eucalyptus, hear a poor little man, overwhelmed with misfortune. Grant, I beseech you, to lend a few fevers and obstinate catarrhs amongst us, and if it should please thee to throw in a few cramps and agues, this would greatly assist thy miserable servant. May it please thee to look over my book of bad debts with an eye of compassion and increase my neighbours’ infirmities’

Author unknown (source: Wellcome Foundation)

31. In 1815 The Worshipful Company of Apothecaries laid down regulations for the training and qualification of Apothecaries, including the learning of Latin, and lessons in Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology. The minimum age of 21 to practice was introduced.

Despite the risks posed by unscrupulous apothecaries, their reputation gradually began to rise, and they frequently attained prestigious positions in local civic society. A notable number were engaged in promoting local hospitals, sick rooms in workhouses and dispensaries to provide free medicines for the poor.



Abel Taylor grave: St Olave's Churchyard

There is a record of Abel Taylor appointed as surgeon-apothecary at Leeds General Infirmary in 1772, at a salary of £30 annually. He only stayed there one year, resigning due to ill health. During his time there he would have been expected to visit the wards and report on the status of patients, dispense medicines and be present during visits by physicians and other surgeons.

It is not known when Abel and Isabella Taylor came to live in York. He was buried in St Olave's churchyard on 15th June 1797, aged 52. Isabella was interred with her husband in 1799.

10

**Michael Lofthouse (Loftus) 1685-1762 –
Servant to Duke of Ormonde**
South nave wall

The wall monument to Michael Loftus (full name 'Lofthouse' in the parish record), is intriguing and, on its own merits, is a lovely example of Georgian craftsmanship. Unfortunately almost nothing has been discovered about Michael Loftus (Gent) personally other than he was born in 1685 and died in York on July 22nd 1762. He may have come from the long established family of 'Lofthouse' in Nidderdale but, despite extensive searching of both name varieties, nothing definitive, other than his burial record at St Olave's, aged 77, has been found. Nevertheless, the inscription on his memorial tells its own story and

gives some indication of the interesting life Michael must have led as servant to James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormonde.

Given Michael's description as '*Gent*' on the memorial plaque, he was probably a senior servant or steward, working closely with the Duke and in his employer's absence, performing day-to-day tasks on his behalf. There was a strict hierarchy in noble households during the late Stuart and Georgian eras. A steward would best equate in present day terms to a personal assistant – the top of the household. Michael may have been responsible for engaging and dismissing other servants, paying their wages, managing the budget and keeping the Duke's accounts. It is unlikely he wore livery and may have had his own quarters within the household.



Wikipedia

The 2nd Duke of Ormonde, James FitzJames Butler (1665-1745) was an Irish Statesman, soldier and protestant who inherited the Earldom of Ormonde and was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the reign of Queen Anne. He had previously served in the campaign to put down the Monmouth Rebellion at the Battle of Sedgemoor (1685). He also fought at the Battle of the Boyne (1690) and served on the continent under William of Orange during the Nine-Years War. After Queen Anne's accession, he became commander of land forces (with General Rooke) in Spain during the war of the Spanish Succession (1702). The Michael Loftus

memorial makes reference to this particular period of his tenure as a servant and presumably he travelled to Spain with the Duke, supporting his needs during the military campaign. He may also have accompanied and served Ormonde during his later time in Spain in exile (see below).

Ormonde married Lady Ann Hyde, and after her death, Lady Mary Somerset. He had one son and three daughters. As well as military

proWess, Ormonde achieved further notoriety when he tackled and stabbed a French double agent during a Privy Council meeting in 1711. The agent tried to assassinate the Earl of Oxford who was injured but survived. The agent died after the incident as a result of wounds inflicted by Ormonde and others.

On the accession of George I, despite his protestant upbringing and because of his Jacobite sympathies, Ormonde was stripped of his military posts. Later attainted and impeached for treason during the failed Jacobite rising of 1715⁽¹⁹⁾, the Duke chose to avoid the consequences, escaping and going into self-imposed exile in France and Spain. His titles and honours were extinguished and he died in exile in November 1745. Ormonde was subsequently buried in Westminster Abbey in 1746. It appears that Michael Loftus maintained respect and admiration for Ormande, despite his fall from grace, as evidenced by the proud inscription on his memorial.



Michael Loftus Memorial tablet, St Olave's (south nave wall)

11

Thomas Gilbank – A Sheriff of York

Thomas Gilbank (1710-1794) - was a successful coal merchant who held high office in the city of York, becoming Chamberlain in 1761 and Sheriff during 1785-6. Thomas (born 1710) married Sarah Andrews (also born 1710) at York Minster on 16th January 1737, when they were both aged 28. They had a long marriage of more than 50 years and had five surviving children: Ann, Elizabeth, William, Thomas and Sarah. It appears they lost three of their children at a young age. Daughter Sarah Gilbank married William Holgate in 1778. No records have been found regarding their other children's marriages. Thomas's election as Sheriff was a great honour but an onerous undertaking. The postholder had to provide the annual feast for the Mayor and dignitaries, an expensive outlay. The Sheriff did have at his disposal rents, tolls and other profits but because of the

expense some elected to the post chose to pay a fine rather than serve; this was the case with Joseph Halfpenny. It seems that Thomas Gilbank possessed enough wealth to fulfil the role and it appears he was a highly successful businessman who was highly regarded.

The role of Sheriff was a busy one, if only for a year. Predominantly, the Sheriff presided over his courts. County Courts were held monthly, dealing mostly with debt, trespasses and pleas. The Sheriff also had authority to hold courts for specific purposes. The



Thomas Gilbank's former house



Thomas Gilbank initials on drainpipe

postholder also collected taxes, inspected weights and measures and inspected markets. Once appointed the Sheriff took an oath of secrecy in the Council chamber and was admitted to the Privy council. He then rode with a white staff into the yard of the priory at Micklegate and read a solemn proclamation; this was repeated at four other venues in the city. There would be a procession with sergeants and maces, musicians and gentlemen

of the city. Elements of this ritual remain to the present day.

In 1768 Thomas purchased a fine house no 25 Bootham, and his family subsequently resided there. The rainwater drainpipe at the front still bears the initials T G. The original building was substantial with three floors and a central entrance. The late 19th century shop front (adapted after Thomas's time) extends across the full width of the house that Thomas originally purchased. It is one of only a few remaining shop fronts in York with cast iron railings. However, the interior retains many original features including dado rails, cornices, window architraves and an elegant



Present day Sheriff of York

staircase. The current building has been adapted as flats and the lower shop floor houses an interior design shop.



Gilbank Grave

It seems certain that the Gilbank family worshipped at St Olave's because Thomas was the churchwarden here during 1782. His signature and status appear in parish records. Thomas's wife Sarah died in 1793, aged 82, followed by Thomas in 1794. He was 84. To live to advanced ages and be married over 50 years was relatively unusual in the eighteenth century. He left a generous legacy to his two surviving sons and one remaining daughter. Thomas and Sarah are interred together at St Olave's. The inscription on their grave is a fitting tribute to the couple:

Here are deposited the remains of Thomas Gilbank, Sheriff of this city A.D 1785 who died universally respected for his probity and beloved for his benevolence. Died Dec 5th, 1794, aged 84. Also, of Sarah, his wife who died July 6th, 1793 aged 82. A real example of conjugal affection and maternal tenderness over a course of more than fifty years.

Likewise, the remains of four of their children, Ann, Sarah, Thomas and Elizabeth, who died young. This just tribute to the memory of their surviving children, William, Thomas and Sarah 1794.

Several obituaries to Thomas were announced in the *York Press* and one in the *Gentlemen's Magazine*.

12

The Scott Family – Realities of infant mortality

Robert and Mary Scott – had a total of five children between the years 1780 and 1788, all of whom died. Robert Scott (Gent), born in 1754, was an Attorney at Law in York and for many years his firm operated in Petergate. He married Mary Turner at St Olave's in 1777 and the couple lived most of their married life at 23 Bootham Row. It seems Robert was highly successful, taking on many apprenticed solicitors and owning or leasing several properties in the city.

The tragic litany of the deaths of their five children in the parish records reads:

- William Scott, buried October 20th, 1783, aged 3 months;
- Mary Scott, buried February 27th, 1787, aged 2;
- John Scott, buried April 10th, 1788, aged 3;
- Robert Scott, buried November 26th, 1794, aged 7;
- Joseph Scott, buried August 26th, 1795, aged 5.

Like many other infant deaths in the churchyard, the record demonstrates the perilous existence for children in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Robert was relatively affluent, and his family

should have benefited from better hygiene, better health and lower mortality. However, disease and death were no respecters of class. Even the reigning monarch, George III and his wife Queen Charlotte, lost all but two of their fifteen children. There can be no doubt that Robert and Mary suffered heartbreaking loss for more than a decade, together with dashed expectations that their children would go on to greater things and have families of their own. The inscription on Mary's grave reads:



Scott Grave group: St Olave's

Here lieth the body of Mary Scott, wife of Robert Scott (Gent), and the remains of their late dear children, William, Mary, John, Robert and Joseph.

Mary died three years after the loss of her last surviving child in February 1798, aged 50. Robert lived on, continuing his business and dying in May 1830, aged 76.

19th Century

13

Charlotte Pick (1803-1806) – A child stricken with smallpox

Charlotte Pick was born in 1803, the daughter of James and Rebecca Pick. Her parents (both aged 26) were married at St Olave's in 1792 and lived in Stonegate. Their only child Charlotte was christened at St Helen's Church. James, the son of John Pick from Clifton, was a bricklayer, who had completed an apprenticeship with Henry Edwards in 1785 and was admitted, in the same year, as a freeman of York⁽³²⁾.

Tragically, Charlotte died, aged 3, of smallpox on July 10th, 1806 and was buried on the 19th July in St Olave's churchyard⁽³³⁾. Smallpox (*Variola Major*) was a deadly airborne disease, to which 10% of the population succumbed. In cities, the incidence of deaths could be as high as 20%. Spread by coughing, sneezing, contact with bodily fluids and infected clothing, the symptoms began with high fever, headache, severe back and abdominal pain and vomiting. These initial symptoms subsided to be replaced by a rash and the formation of pustules and abscesses which, if the individual survived, healed leaving pitted and disfiguring scars. The incidence of smallpox in a household created panic and dread, official notices were placed on doors to announce its presence and ward people away.

The fight against the disease had already begun when 'the father of Immunity' Doctor Edward Jenner (1749-1823) after extensive testing,



Drawing: Birmingham City Library

*Mother nursing sick child:
Charlotte Pick Grave*

32. *City of York Apprentices and Freeman 1272-1930.*

33. *Yorkshire Bishops Transcripts of Burials. St Olave's 1805/6.* This record stated the cause of Charlotte's death.

developed the world's first vaccine from a similar, but less virulent, agent called Cowpox. This was found to confer immunity. Jenner had recognised that milkmaids who, exposed to Cowpox, failed to develop Smallpox. But the medical establishment prevaricated about the benefits. Despite years of criticism, Jenner persisted, even inoculating his own son to persuade the medical hierarchy to accept the protective effects of the Cowpox vaccination. Eventually, the approach began to be promoted seriously around 1808. Too late for children like Charlotte. Charlotte's grave is particularly poignant because her grieving parents had the following inscription etched on the stone:



*Edward Jenner vaccinating a child
(coloured engraving: Wellcome Foundation)*



Charlotte Pick Grave

James died in 1822, aged 56 and leaving £100 in his Will. His widow Rebecca lived on until 1842. She died whilst residing in Peasholme Green, aged 76. Both parents are buried with Charlotte, in the churchyard.

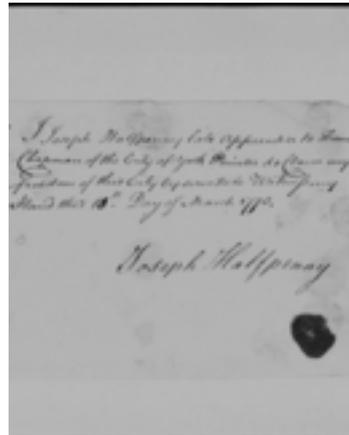
'The cup of life just with her lips she pressed, found the taste bitter and declined the rest, averse then turning from the face of day, she softly sighed her little soul away'.

James died in 1822, aged 56 and leaving £100 in his Will. His widow Rebecca lived on until 1842. She died whilst residing in Peasholme Green, aged 76. Both parents are buried with Charlotte, in the churchyard.

Joseph Halfpenny (1748-1811). A renowned artist and engraver

Joseph Halfpenny was born in Bishopthorpe on 9th October 1748. His father, Thomas worked as a gardener to the then Archbishop of York, Matthew Hutton. No records exist about his mother's name, his childhood and early life. He appears to have had one sibling, a brother, also Thomas, who died in 1763 at Bishopthorpe. Joseph was apprenticed to Thomas Chapman, as a house painter around 1763, and in March 1770, with his apprenticeship completed, he claimed the Freedom of the City of York, enabling him to join a Guild and have access to certain rights. An image of his claim and signature exists (shown right). He continued his role as a house painter but although no records of subsequent training exist, he had clearly set his sights on becoming an expert draughtsman and developed a talent in this field. In ensuing years, he raised himself to that position and began to make his mark as an artist and teacher of drawing.

In 1770, John Carr⁽³⁴⁾, an eminent architect (born in Wakefield in 1723) with numerous buildings to his credit in York, England and abroad, was asked to survey the fabric of York Minster. From the scaffolding erected to undertake the survey, artists were able to produce precise architectural views of the building to assist those undertaking design and execution of restoration. Joseph Halfpenny was employed by Carr as his clerk of works. He painstakingly etched detailed drawings on plates showing numerous



Records of City of York Freemen (Find My Past search)

*Joseph Halfpenny's claim
to be admitted to the
Freedom of the City of
York.*

34. John Carr (1723-1807) was a prolific architect best known for Buxton Crescent and Harewood House. He remodelled Fairfax House in York. Carr, the son of a master mason, had risen from relatively humble beginnings to become one of the leading architects of the day. He acquired substantial personal wealth, becoming Lord Mayor of York on two occasions. In later life he lived at Askham Richard.

aspects of the Minster. With his reputation enhanced, Joseph was also taking on apprentices of his own, in the same year (1770) a record exists concerning Benjamin Lee who was indentured to ‘Master Painter’ Joseph Halfpenny at a cost of £4⁽³⁵⁾.

Aged 24, Joseph married Jane Atkinson in March 1772 at Bishopthorpe and the couple had two children, Margaret (born 1773) and Charlotte (born 1781). Jane Halfpenny died aged 34 in 1784 and two years later Joseph married his second wife Frances Maria Barrett (born 1746 to Ann and John Barrett) on July 10th, 1786 at St Olave’s. Joseph’s father was present at the wedding. There are no records of any further children. Joseph and his family lived initially in Coney Street, later moving to 26, Gillygate (now known as 26a Gillygate, Halfpenny House). Interestingly, whilst residing there, Joseph was subject to the imposition of ‘window tax’ in the years 1774-1776⁽³⁶⁾.

Gillygate and Bootham had become fashionable areas in York to live, with many fine houses. Despite the existence of cock fighting and ale houses in and around Bootham, this was a time when the city could boast a host of attractions nearby such as the York Theatre Royal (built 1744 and flourishing after 1750), shopping, races on the nearby Knavesmire (from 1731), dancing and cards at the Assembly Rooms, civic functions and processions⁽³⁷⁾.

Between 1795-1800, Halfpenny used his etchings for a book, published by subscription in 20 parts. This notable production was entitled ‘*Gothic Ornaments in the Cathedral of York*’ and Joseph’s



Joseph Halfpenny’s former home: 26a Gillygate (Halfpenny House)

35. *British Country Apprentices 1710-1808*.

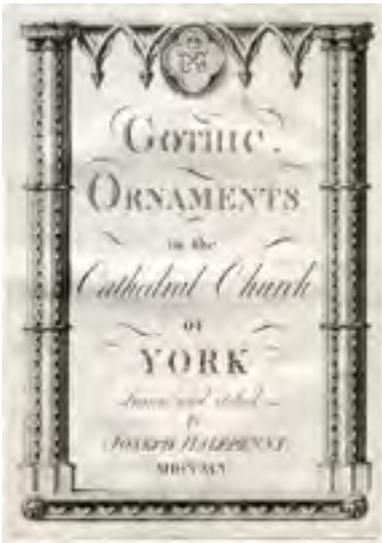
36. An unpopular measure, the Window Tax was applied in the 18th and 19th centuries, based on the number of windows in a house. To avoid it, some owners removed glass and bricked up their windows. Numerous examples of this can be seen in York’s Georgian and Victorian houses.

37. *A History of the County of York: City of York*. Drake. Ed P.M Tillot (London 1961). British Historyon-line.

modest preface read: *'I have been induced to exhibit this selection of Gothic Ornaments'*. Another edition was printed in 1831, 20 years after his death. A second book entitled *'Fragments Vetusta, or the Remains of Ancient Buildings in York'* was published in 1807. This had over 175 specimens of ornaments illustrated, and it subsequently achieved recognition as one of the earliest contributions to the revival of Gothic building in England. Importantly some of his recorded drawings included parts of the Minster that were later damaged by fire, helping the restoration effort afterwards. Five views of other churches in York were published posthumously by his daughters.



*John Carr Architect:
William Beechey (1791)*



Front Cover: Halfpenny's first publication Chapter House: York Cathedral: Halfpenny 1795

In 1798, Joseph alongside many other men, volunteered to join the York Armed Association⁽³⁸⁾. This was one of many such organisations set up across the country. Composed of male civilians they were formed to support national defence in the event of an invasion during the Napoleonic Wars. This possibility was a considered a real threat during the time. (see Hardisty entry for further information).

Joseph's second wife Frances died on November 12th, 1800 aged 54. In 1806, he was elected Sheriff of York. Although an honour, Joseph chose not to take up the position, for which he was fined £70⁽³⁹⁾. The post of Sheriff was an expensive undertaking; the occupant was expected to hold a civic feast for

38. Source: York Infantry: Copy of the enrolment with names of persons enrolled. 1798.

39. British Newspaper Archives – *York Herald*: Weekly summary citing the Joseph Halfpenny fine. October 1806.

the Mayor and dignitaries alongside other civic functions and roles, the cost of which was partially borne by the individual. Not surprisingly, some elected to the post preferred a fine to the risk of bankruptcy!

Further information about Joseph's later years is sparse. Without doubt he was a seriously gifted artist and draughtsman who influenced

architecture appreciably during his lifetime and beyond. His work was accomplished and prolific, and it is significant that some of his works are held by the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Grenville Library (at the British Museum) as well as York City Art Gallery.

Joseph Halfpenny died at his house in Gillygate on 11th July 1811. He was 63 and died intestate. However, the Borthwick Institute holds a



*West Front: York Cathedral:
Halfpenny 1795 – York Art Gallery*

record proved in the Prerogative Court of York (17th August 1811) indicating that Joseph's goods and the sum of £600 was granted to '*Margaret and Charlotte Halfpenny, the natural and only children of the said deceased*'. This was sworn in the presence of Reverend James Richardson. He was interred, presumably with his second wife Frances, on July 13th in St Olave's Churchyard. Although Joseph's burial place is confirmed in parish records⁽⁴⁰⁾, the grave inscription is not dedicated to him individually; rather he is referred to as the husband of the deceased



*The Bridge: Fountains Abbey.
J. Halfpenny 1793*

40. York, St Olave's Burial Register: 1770-1812. Record states that he was a Drawing Master living in Gillygate and that he died 11th July 1811 and was buried 13th July 1811, aged 62. No cause of death was entered.

Frances and no dates of his birth and death are visible. It is assumed that since his name was already inscribed on the stone, no further action was taken by his daughters to mark his death. The Halfpenny grave is close to the burial place of Frances's mother, Ann Hesletine, who remarried after the death of her first husband and Frances's father, John Barrett⁽⁴¹⁾. She died a year after her daughter in 1801.

In an obituary published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* 1811 Joseph was described thus:

'Aged about 70, Mr J Halfpenny of York, eminent draughtsman. Published in 1795, his etchings of the interior of York Cathedral 'Gothic Ornaments' which for taste and execution, few artists have excelled. He also published in 1797 'Fragments Vetutsa' which met with patronage and approbation from a discerning Publick, which every lover of graphic taste must approve. His instruction in drawing was in great request. He was distinguished not more by his professional talents than by his disinterested loyalty and patriotism, in which latter instance he will be deeply regretted by many of his fellow citizens'⁽⁴²⁾

Margaret and Charlotte Halfpenny published some of their father's work after his death. The only record concerning their subsequent lives appears in the City of York Deeds Register 1718-1866, indicating both sisters had left the house in Gillygate and were unmarried in 1824. They would have been 51 and 43 years old respectively. No other records have been found.

*Frances Maria
Halfpenny
Grave (and
Joseph
Halfpenny):
St Olave's
Churchyard*



41. John Barrett is described as 'deceased' on the marriage record of Joseph and Frances in 1786. He came from Barnby nr Doncaster.

42. The article refers to Joseph being about 70 years old at his death but since he was born in 1748, the parish record confirms that he was 62.

15

Thomas Hardisty (1740-1811) – A Skilled Carpenter and Joiner

Thomas Hardisty was born in 1740, during the reign of George II. A contemporary of Joseph Halfpenny, the renowned engraver, Thomas was apprenticed to his own father (also Thomas Hardisty) in 1758 to learn the skills of carpentry. The term used to describe his occupation was ‘Turner’ (transcription error on document which stated ‘tanner’). The apprenticeship was agreed and based on Patrimony (birthright). In 1760, a deeds record showed that Thomas Hardisty (Senior) was cited in a rights of passage matter for the family home in Castlegate. Also, in 1761, a window tax of 9d had been imposed on Thomas senior. The same amount had been levied from his neighbour, ‘Widow Lowther’⁽⁴³⁾.

After completion of his apprenticeship, Thomas (Junior) was admitted to the City of York Freemen’s roll in 1778 as carpenter and joiner. He began taking on his own apprentices within a year. In 1780, a young apprentice named John Turner was registered and later ‘indented’ to Thomas for a set term⁽⁴⁴⁾. In the ensuing years he took on Richard Wood 1787, Francis Edeson 1790 and Richard Meggeson in 1791. There may have been others not recorded.

On 4th April 1774, Thomas married Hannah Wilcockson at St Michael-Le-Belfry Church. Thomas was 34 and Hannah 25. The couple lived in Far Water Lane, St Mary’s Castlegate. They were parishioners of St Olave’s so it is likely they worshipped here. Thomas and Hannah had a daughter Ann, born in 1780.



Views of Far Water Lane 1817



43. City of York Hearth and Window Tax 1665-1778. A variation on the Window Tax in which the number of hearths and fireplaces were included.

44. *British Country Apprentices 1710-1808*. 61 f 102.

No records of other children have been found.

Thomas progressed to become a successful, well-respected carpenter, specialising in carving ornate detail on doors, mantelpieces and staircases. In 1774, a book published by Thomas Scaife entitled: *'A Key to Civil Architecture'*, had as its patron, Thomas Hardisty (carpenter and joiner of York). In the *'Monthly Review (or Literary Journal)'* Vol 3, published between July 1772 and Jan 1776, in London, the editors did not give Scaife's book positive reviews. However, they commented that Scaife should *'better his understanding by the opinion of his patron'* since *'Mr Thomas Hardisty, Carpenter and joiner in York' had 'practical methods which were at least equal, if not superior to any of the present age'*. The critics went on to say that *'affiliation (with Hardisty) would be of particular advantage to Mr Scaife's future productions'*. Clearly, they were unimpressed by Scaife's book but not so with Thomas Hardisty! It is not known how Scaife reacted or whether he took up the editor's advice.

In November 1790, Thomas Hardisty appears in a *City Deeds Register* (managed by Joshua Oldfield Esq) regarding the part lease and conveyancing of premises in Swinegate (or Little Stonegate) to John Hall. It appears he was part owner of the property, which included a low room, shop and garden plot and he may possibly have had a workshop there. Another *'Deeds'* appearance occurs in 1795, concerning the part-exchange of property deeds in Far Water Lane from Leonard Terry (Woollen Draper deceased) to Thomas Hardisty at a cost of £330.

In 1798, Thomas, along with many other men (including Joseph Halfpenny) enrolled as a member of York Armed Association⁽⁴⁵⁾. Like Joseph, Thomas volunteered to be trained in military tactics and use of arms should there be an invasion resulting from the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. These associations were in existence for the whole period of the wars (1793-1815). Volunteers were provided with Government allowances, exemptions from certain taxes and full-time military service. But there was a risk in setting them up. Such forces could pose a challenge to the established political and social order, so precautions were put in place to avoid this happening⁽⁵⁴⁾. Hannah Hardisty died in 1796 aged 48 and was buried at St Olave's on 23rd December.

45. Austin Gee 1989, *The British Volunteer Movement 1793-1807*. Bodleian Library. Oxford.

Thomas died six years later at his home in Far Water Lane on 12th February 1802, aged 64. He was interred with Hannah on 15th February and left £300 in his Will, proved in 1803⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Hannah's family (the Wilcocksons) have their headstone next to her own, including her mother Ann Wilcockson who died in York Asylum in 1782, aged 67. Interestingly one of our former Churchwardens, current member of the congregation and PCC, Doreen Gurrey, is a descendant of Thomas and Hannah (x3 Great Aunt and Uncle) but was unaware, until recent years, that her ancestors were buried in the churchyard. Coincidentally Doreen's husband, Charles, is also a Carpenter and Sculptor.



*York Armed Association
Muster Roll (1798)*

William and Ann Leng – Thespians at the York Theatre Royal

16

William and Ann Leng - were a married acting couple who delighted audiences at York Theatre Royal during the 18th Century. Despite extensive searching, very little is known of their personal lives and families. William was born most probably in Lythe, Yorkshire in 1734 and Ann in 1736. No credible record of their marriage date has been found but it is likely their respective jobs as actor and actress brought them together. They lived in Gillygate. Both acted individually and jointly at theatres at York, Hull and Leeds during the reigns of George II and George III. Records indicate the couple had a daughter, Maria, also an actress. The script of a comedy farce still exists called *'The Macaroni'*⁽⁴⁷⁾

46. Prerogative & Exchequer Courts of York: Probate index – 1688-1858.



*Playbill Theatre Royal
(Bodleian Library)*



Wikipedia

*Tate Wilkinson – Actor and Manager of
the Theatre Royal*

The York Theatre Royal was established in 1764. During the Leng's time it was under the management of Tate Wilkinson (1739-1803) and Joseph Baker. Wilkinson, a successful actor in his own right, became sole manager after Baker's death. He was esteemed for his creative management of the York theatre circuit. Wilkinson wrote memoirs which provide a flavour of the world of theatre during the period.

William Leng was buried at St Olave's on February 15th, 1804, aged 70. An obituary in the *Leeds Intelligencer*, 13th February 1804 announced:

On Friday morning died in his 70th year, Mr William Leng, comedian and actor, fifty years of which he had trod the boards at the York Theatre, and on the circuit, from which he had recently retired. He was neither a Garrick, nor a Kemble – he had however, during his time as much real applause as many who lay higher claim to the art. The Gods knew 'Billy' well either in King or Catchpole.'



Leng Grave

Ann died on April 1st, 1814, aged 78. She also received warm tributes in the York press indicating how much she would be missed by friends and former acting colleagues.

A dynasty of Watch and Clock makers – the Agars

John Agar (1730-1815) – John Agar was born in York and baptised at Holy Trinity, Goodramgate. He was the first surviving son of an established clockmaker, John Agar (the elder born 1707). John (the younger) and his brother Seth learned their skills through apprenticeship to their father and became Freemen of York. A dynasty of clock and watch making had begun, based in Castlegate. The family business extended throughout the Hanoverian period up to the Victorian age. John (the younger) married Mary Atkinson in 1750 at St Olave's. The couple had three children who died young (Sam died 1763 aged 12; Francis died 1773 aged 9 and Ann also died in 1773 aged 3). All were interred at St Olave's.

They had three surviving sons, Charles, John III and Thomas. All became clockmakers. Charles and John III eventually moved to Pontefract and Malton respectively; probably to avoid competition with their father. Thomas⁽⁵⁰⁾ remained in York apprenticed to his father. A nephew, Francis (son of Seth Agar), also worked in the business in the early 1800s operating from Pavement.

During the Hanoverian era, English clockmakers were among the finest in Europe. The clocks they produced reflected changing fashion, as well as the growing interest in science and technology during the Age of Enlightenment⁽⁵¹⁾. They produced beautiful longcase (grandfather), bracket and wall clocks from the early 1700s up to the Regency period. Their clocks became an elegant and expensive feature in wealthy Georgian homes. Before this, most people had to rely on church or public clocks, sundials and hourglasses. The introduction of the pendulum had radically improved the accuracy of timekeeping and England had become so dominant in the practice of clock and watch work that Louis XIV banned English imported clocks into France.

The clockmakers of York had a notable history. One of the first known was Bartholomew Newsome, who became clockmaker to

50. Thomas Agar was a Councillor for York Walmgate, in 1807.

51. An intellectual and philosophical movement which dominated ideas in Europe during the eighteenth century.

Elizabeth I. The Museum of York houses a clock built by John Smeaton (born 1623). Smeaton's great-grandson (John Smeaton III), designed the Eddystone Lighthouse. Henry Hindley (born 1701), was a York born inventor in his field and considered the city's finest clockmaker. John Terry (and sons) were also renowned. It is obvious that the Agars occupied a competitive field of precision craftsmen in the city.

Records for successive Agar apprenticeships (by patrimony) exist, as do other records granting them Freeman status. They also feature in other records such as deed transfers and taxes on their property, and their workshops in York. Like other residents in the city, the properties of John Agar I and II were subjected to the Hearth and Window Tax, in successive years. Little further information exists about the family, but they were certainly renowned as clockmakers and their products still feature occasionally in antique sales and horological journals.

The photo on the right shows a clock made by John Agar II circa 1780. It is a mahogany, eight-day longcase clock, signed Agar and Sons, York. It appeared in a sale by Tobias Birch (antique clock specialists) recently. The clock is described as influenced by Hindley: *'possessing a fine eight-day movement with anchor escapement, striking the hours on a bell with a trip repeat. The flame figured mahogany case of rich patina and swan neck pediment, has a brass and gilded flambeau finial. Brass capitals to the fluted free-standing columns, and the door veneered with figured mahogany'*.

John Agar II was one of many watch and clockmakers cited as undertaking repairs and restoration to St Martin's Clock in Coney Street. Accounts exist from 1726 regarding successive restorations, and they include familiar York names, John Terry and Henry Hindley (who was paid over £10 in 1742 for an overhaul⁽⁵²⁾). John Agar subsequently had a lasting influence on the clock. He commissioned the 'little admiral' figure on



*John Agar
II – Longcase
Clock 1780.
Source: Tobias
Birch*

52. Hindley also built a clock for York Minster in 1751.

the top of the drum in 1776, now the only remnant of the eighteenth-century versions of the clock. John was paid £6. 17s for his work. Over the next 20 years, Agar & Sons, received sums for the maintenance, gilding and mending of this significant feature of York. The clock was replaced in 1855. The mechanism was smashed after the bombing of St Martin's in 1942. It was replaced, based on original drawings and some remaining features, in 1966, and undergoes regular maintenance.



St Martin Le Grand 'Admiral Clock'

John died 15 years later. He was interred with Mary in St Olave's churchyard on 24th March 1815. He and his family left a lasting legacy of fine clockmaking in York.



Agar children's grave John and Mary Agar grave

18

Reverend Daniel Isaac (1780-1834) - A Celebrated Methodist (Wesleyan) Minister

Daniel Isaac was an itinerant Wesleyan Minister. The forgotten history of this remarkable man, whose life was punctuated by momentous political, social and world events, has recently come to light. Why he is interred in a Church of England burial ground is unexplained but may be because a Methodist burial ground did not exist in York at the time of his death. Much of his history is drawn from a comprehensive biography, written in 1838, by his supporter and fellow Minister, James Everett⁽⁵³⁾. Born in July 1780 in Caythorpe, nr Lincoln, Daniel was the tenth son of Bryan Isaac, a farmer, and his wife Mary. Educated at Caythorpe where he showed early aptitude for reading and study, he subsequently pursued a number

53. Rev James Everett. *The Polemic Divine: Memoirs of the Rev Daniel Isaac*, 1838. London.

of jobs. Aged 19, whilst working in Nottingham at a bank, he met a clergyman who encouraged him to attend the local Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, which Daniel readily embraced. He was received into the Methodist Society in 1797. His course as a future Wesleyan Minister was set. Whilst teaching at a Methodist School, he began to preach locally, walking 30 miles on a Sunday to give sermons to different congregations. In 1801, he became a fully licenced itinerant Minister, aged 21.

Preaching on a wide range of circuits in England, his favourite posting was York and he was on the circuit here on three separate occasions. Daniel married Mary Patrick, at St Saviour's Church, York on 24th February 1808. Around 15 years older than Daniel, Mary brought to his life companionship, help and support. There are no records indicating that they had any children.

His sermons were inventive, witty, engaging and original, and he was well known for his tenderness towards the poor, often giving away his clothes and donating personal subscriptions to charities. He enjoyed gardening and walking. In and out of the pulpit, Daniel's humour was often on display. An elderly lady, visiting his home, seeing him relaxed and puffing on a clay pipe, remarked with false affectation, holding her hands aloft: '*Aye, Mr Isaac, I see you are at your idol again?*' '*Yes, Madam*', he replied coolly (through a cloud of smoke, with a demure expression on his face), '*I am burning it*'. He had some notable dislikes, particularly the use of instrumental and organ music during worship. His preference was for unaccompanied singing. It is not without irony that Daniel's grave is situated close to the strains of beautiful music heard weekly at St Olave's, but it is hoped that even he could not fail to appreciate it.

In 1814, Daniel finished a book entitled '*Ecclesiastical Claims*' which was criticised by members of Methodist Society who claimed passages were heretical, blasphemous and critical to Ministers. An interdict was issued against the book. Daniel was affronted. Publishing a defence, he scorned his fellow accusers: '*Every writer should be responsible for what he has written. If the book is heretical, then I am a heretic, if Jacobinical, then I am a Jacobite, if blasphemous then I am a blasphemer*'. The book was not published in England until 1841, after his death.

Political events

In 1811, a bill brought forward by Lord Sidmouth regarding Methodist dissenters, attempted to exclude Ministers from military service only if they could be ‘vouched for’ by six householders. Unable to speak in their own defence, the Ministers protested strongly. Daniel was a leading opponent, active at meetings, writing pamphlets and gaining respect with his Methodist colleagues as a result. The bill was defeated.

Whilst a minister on the South Shields circuit, two miners (members of an association called ‘The Brotherhood’) attacked Daniel on the road, because he was the leader of a group of ministers influencing the break-up of trades unions. The attackers rained blows down on Daniel with cudgels. He fended them off and escaped, badly bruised and beaten. For his own safety Daniel was subsequently advised to travel in company. He refused.

Indignant about Slavery, Daniel considered it a monstrous practice. In a letter dated 1826, he mentioned: *‘a public meeting, last Thursday, to petition parliament against the slavery of the West Indies. As the petition neither prays for immediate abolition nor an end to the withdrawal of bounties and duties from West Indian produce, I shall not sign it. I am no believer in the gradual abolition scheme’*.

The petition had been drawn up by the Anti-Slavery Society, a body which acknowledged that ‘gradual’ abolition had more chance of success. Daniel felt this had been tried for half a century and achieved little. He went on in his letter to say: *‘Short of total abolition from all British territories and colonies, cautious reform is useless’*. He was convinced that ‘an enlightened Christian nation should not continue to countenance such a sinful practice’.

Daniel took active interest in the Ten-Hour Rule bill eventually brought to parliament by Lord Ashley (Earl of Shaftsbury) and resulting in the Factory Act of 1833. This landmark legislation was followed by further reform over



*Rev Daniel Isaac:
Engraving formerly
owned by Everett*

the next decade. The ten-hour rule aimed to limit the working hours of children (and eventually adults) in factories, who were exploited and subjected to awful conditions. Daniel was asked to speak in favour of the bill at a public meeting in 1832, led by Michael Thomas Sadler, Tory MP for Leeds. Sadler was a key proponent of factory reform and a prominent philanthropist.

Daniel told Sadler his interest in the bill was not as a Whig or Tory, but simply as a question of humanity. His case, as written, included the following statement:

‘God and nature agree that the labourer is worthy of his hire: is entitled to to an equitable remuneration for his work. Present practices fall short of this. He ought not to be overworked. This not only extracts the sweat from his brow, but his flesh from his bones and the blood from his veins’.

Death and obituary

On May 19th 1832, Daniel suffered a stroke. Following recuperation, he returned to take up his final post on his favourite York circuit. Further strokes in close succession resulted in more disability and deterioration. Visiting him in May 1833, his friend Everett found him weak and confined to the house. Daniel sobbed and said he had given up hope of recovery. A few moments later he remarked: *‘All will be well, I have faith in Christ. I have no hope but in him, he is all to me’.*

Daniel Isaac died at home in York on March 21st 1834. He was 54. His funeral and interment at St Olave’s Church was described by Everett, and several funeral sermons were reported in the local press. The *York Herald* of 5th April 1834 reported a sermon in memory of Daniel, given in the New Street Chapel to a large congregation by Revd Calder, Superintendent of the York circuit. Calder said that as a Minister, Daniel was highly esteemed, as a friend he was benevolent and sympathised deeply with those in distress, affording them *‘pecuniary aid according to his means’*. His works showed his profound acquaintance with the human heart, combining genius and piety. He said Daniel’s publications would constitute a *‘noble monument to his memory’*.

Daniel was clearly a distinguished and significant figure in the Methodist movement. He had spent 37 years as an active circuit Minister, also producing many written works. He remained true to his beliefs and principles, often in the face of strong criticism from colleagues and antagonists. His life was action-packed during pivotal changes in social, political and world history. Following his death, Mary Isaac lived in Monkgate, with her brothers and her niece. She survived to old age, dying in York, on 1st June 1856, aged 90, and leaving £1000 in her will. Daniel's obituary was well summarised by Reverend James Bromley at St George's Chapel in York in April 1834. *'Daniel lived and died with the good word of all. He was a Minister of truth. Under God, without such men, the world would be overgrown with ignorance and error'*.

Note: A separate and detailed pamphlet on Daniel Isaac's remarkable life is available at the rear of church.



*Daniel Isaac
grave*

19

The Shepherd family – A portrait of maternal and infant mortality in the 1830s

Edward and Mary Shepherd were married at St Olave's in 1827. Edward, the son of Joseph Shepherd (from Kettlewell), was born in York in 1805. The Shepherd family lived in Minster Yard. Mary was born in Little Ouseburn in 1809. Edward became a teacher of classics and a librarian and was recorded before his marriage as being exempt from military service (reason not stated). The couple lived in Gillygate. On 3rd May 1833, after five years of marriage, Mary gave birth to a son, John. He was baptised at St Olave's on 6th May.

The joy of his birth soon turned to tragedy when Mary died under 2 weeks later, aged 24, followed nine days later by her baby John who was nineteen days old. Mary was buried at St Olave's on 17th May and John was buried with her on 22nd May. Their names appear alongside

each other in the parish register of burials. The experience of maternal and infant death was not uncommon and there are other examples in the churchyard. This story has added poignancy because Edward died eleven months later, aged 29 and was interred with Mary and John on April 12th, 1834.

The dangers of childbirth were prevalent in the nineteenth century, but it was only in 1837 that maternal deaths were registered as a classification. Indeed, the Church of England, '*Book of Common Prayer*', contained a prayer for the '*safe delivery and preservation of women from the great dangers of childbirth*'. This remained in use until recently. Although the exact cause of Mary's death is unknown, many deaths after childbirth resulted from Puerperal Fever followed by septicaemia and/or peritonitis. Other causes included haemorrhage and exhaustion

usually from difficult births. It is possible in Mary's case that she died from puerperal fever, given the period between the birth of her son and her death. This condition, usually affected women three days or so after the birth, progressing rapidly. The mortality rate was around 80%. Her baby, deprived of his mother's milk, no doubt weak and vulnerable, may also have died from an infection which overwhelmed him. The distress and grief experienced by Edward following the loss of his wife and baby son must surely have hastened his own untimely death. The causes of the Shepherd family deaths cannot be discerned definitively because death records and death certificates only became compulsory in 1837.



Shepherd Grave

Frances Worsley 1758-1837: Ancestor of HRH the Duchess of Kent

South side of aisle

Frances Worsley was the second daughter of Thomas Worsley Esq of Hovingham Hall near Castle Howard, where she would have spent her childhood. Thomas had eight children with his wife, Elizabeth Lister. He designed and built Hovingham Hall. It housed a riding school, where Thomas taught the future George III to ride. Thomas was devoted to



Wikipedia (Gareth Green 2006)

*Hovingham Hall –
Nr Castle Howard*

the royal family. He was Whig MP for Oxford, which may explain why his daughter Frances was christened at St Martin-in-the-Fields parish church in Westminster. He later became MP for Callingham. Apparently, he wasn't particularly interested in politics but became MP through a friendship with Lord Bute. This was a relatively normal occurrence at the time with the House of Commons largely filled with landed gentry.

Thomas died in 1778. He is buried in a family vault in All Saint's Church, Hovingham. Frances and her eldest brother were the last surviving children of Thomas and his wife. They were responsible for erecting his monument at All Saints. Frances was a forebear of the



*Frances Worsley Memorial
St Olave's*

current Duchess of Kent – Katherine Worsley. Her branch of the Worsley family of Hovingham were elevated to the peerage in the 19th century. Nothing further has been discovered about her life and why she resided in York; possibly her family had a residence in the city. She seems not to have married and lived in Bridge Street, York, until her death at the age of 79 in 1837.

The Font and James Lindow Brockbank – Headmaster and Inspector of schools

The font was installed circa 1840. In 1963, a suspended font cover was erected to a design by George C Pace⁽⁵⁴⁾. A carved inscription surrounds the base of the cover and is dedicated to James Lindow Brockbank (1872-1958). The full inscription reads:

In memory of James Lindow Brockbank, 4th August 1872-19th February 1958, for many years, the friend of blind children'

James L Brockbank was born in Haverthwaite, nr Ulverston in the south Lake District. His father, John, was a draper. James had four younger siblings, a sister Mary and three brothers, Joseph, Albert and Walter. He was educated at Brow Edge School in Holker; St John's College, York, (1894), where he qualified as a teacher; London University (1895), where he gained an MA. In the 1901 Census, James was living at a boarding house in Marygate, whilst working as Headmaster in the York Model School. Dubbed '*a demonstration school*,' the school was attached to the York and Ripon Diocese Training College.

The Model School opened in 1859. 121 boys attended six classes and were initially taught under the monitorial⁽⁵⁵⁾ system. Although the overall focus was unclear from the sources accessed, it is assumed the school prepared boys for careers as future teachers. It was claimed that pupils



*Brockbank Memorial
(base of font)*

54. *The History of St Olave's Church*. Henry E.C. Stapleton. Page 10.

55. The 'Monitorial' system of education (also known as 'Mutual Instruction') was based on abler pupils being used as 'helpers' to the teacher, passing on the information they had learned to other students. It was considered a cheap way of making primary education more inclusive and accessible for poorer children. The motto of Joseph Lancaster (one of the developers of the scheme) was: 'he who teaches, learns'.

received ‘superior education, using the best teaching methods.’ By 1874, there were fewer boys; but the model had changed to one where the boys progressed to a ‘practice school’ with placements, enabling them to implement their skills. The school was supported by Diocese Training College funds.

James progressed in his career to become an HM Inspector of Schools (date unknown). In 1910, he married Harriet Elizabeth Tyrell, at Holy Cross Church in Holywell, Oxfordshire. They had one child, a son, John Noel. In 1911, the family was living at St Mary’s Lodge, in Marygate. James had retired (possibly prematurely) from his role as a Schools Inspector. It is likely that the couple worshipped at St Olave’s. It is not certain how and when he came to be involved with the welfare of blind children, but it is assumed he may have taught at the York Blind School, promoted their needs in his subsequent role as Schools Inspector, or became involved after retirement.

James Brockbank had a particular interest in history, writing a book on the *History of East Yorkshire* in 1913, published by Clarendon Press. The preface contains a valuable quotation: *People are often history blind; they have eyes but do not see. Let us carefully study the history of what is past, so that we may avoid the errors of the past*. James Lindow Brockbank died in 1958, and Harriet, in 1965. It is assumed Harriet and her son commissioned the memorial at St Olave’s. Both are interred at Dringhouses cemetery. John Noel Brockbank became a solicitor.



*Brockbank grave
(Dringhouses)*

Four Littledale infants died between 1838 and 1842. Their three headstones occupy one base against the south wall of the churchyard. The eldest child to die, George Dawson Littledale was four; his siblings all died before they were two years old. Francis and George died within six days of each other. This was the tragedy of early Victorian England, when infant mortality took its toll on many families. During that time only half of all living babies survived to their first birthday. Whilst many babies and children died as a result of infectious diseases, against which there was no adequate protection in the form of immunisation, the causes were usually poor standards of sanitation and hygiene. Sometimes this was due to ignorance, for example the practice of using unsterilised feeding bottles. In less affluent families, poor environmental conditions and malnutrition also played a large part.

In the case of the Littledale infants, who lived in a reasonably wealthy family, the causes of their deaths are unknown. They may have succumbed to infectious diseases, such as cholera, diphtheria, scarlet fever or smallpox. These were true killer diseases, particularly for vulnerable children. In the case of scarlet fever, it was not uncommon for all the children in a family to become infected. The four infant siblings buried together were:

- Pudsey Dawson Littledale aged 14 months – died 1838
- Francis Ambrose Dawson Littledale aged 1 yr. 6 months - died 1840
- George Dawson Littledale – aged 4yrs – died 1840
- Sarah Blanche Mary Littledale – aged 14 months – died 1842

Their parents were William Dawson Littledale and his wife Frances (nee Cobbe). Frances, born in Ireland, was the daughter of Major General Cobbe. William, born and baptised in Liverpool in 1811, was the son of a merchant, Anthony Littledale. The family was relatively affluent with significant ancestry.

William, who was blind, went to Oxford, gaining a BA and second degree in music. Afterwards he moved to York, meeting and marrying

Frances (born 1808) in 1835, at St Lawrence's church. By then William was working as a fundholder and investor. His move to Yorkshire may have been influenced by the existence of the city's new and pioneering blind school, situated in the King's Manor, which the family lived close to (in Manor Yard). He may possibly have taught there, given his own disability.

The couple had ten children over a thirteen-year period, losing four (above) in infancy. Between the years 1841 and 1861, William and Frances had another six children who all survived to adulthood. Mortality rates had gradually improved as the century progressed. The prevalence of the oft used middle name 'Dawson' stems from the maiden name of William's mother. The name 'Pudsey' was also derived from a family ancestor, appearing again in some of their surviving children. Census data also shows the family employed three servants, a housekeeper, cook and maid. In the 1861 census the family were captured (whilst guests) staying at a cousin's home in Norton Conyers near Ripon. The house belonged to William's cousin Frederick Greenwood, identified as a landowner and magistrate. Their eldest daughter, Florinda, was then twenty years old. The other children with their parents, on the census date, were Ambrose (10), Georgiana (9) and Harold (1).

At some point after 1861, the family moved to Cheltenham, Gloucester. There Frances died, aged 71 in 1879 and William 5 years later in 1884. He left over £19,000 in his will. Although they had surviving children, the devastation of losing four infant children in close succession, can only be imagined.



Littledale infant graves

Henry Cooper – Innkeeper -White Horse, Bootham

Henry Cooper (1795 -1845) - was born in Skelton, the son of George Cooper. He married Mary Lockley in 1815 at St Olave's, aged 28. Henry became Innkeeper at the White Horse, Bootham sometime before 1841. In the census that year he was reported as living in Marygate with his wife, Mary and several other people, presumably some of his staff at the White Horse. One was his ostler, Robert Walker, another his apprentice. The White Horse had operated at 6, Bootham, since the late eighteenth century. It occupied a



White Horse: Bootham



prominent position on the main road into the city from the north (on the line of the old Roman road). It remains a popular pub to the present day. York had many Inns during Henry's time and they were the main locations for men to visit after work. In 1834, there were over a hundred Inns established in the city, some dating back to the fifteenth century. For example, 'The Old Starr Inn' in Stonegate dates from 1644 and has the longest continuous licence in the city. The 17th century Punch Bowl (also on Stonegate) was a popular meeting place for Whigs and railway enthusiasts. The Coaching Inns provided much needed refreshment for travellers and drivers.

Henry Cooper's White Horse often doubled as an auction house for the sale of properties

Henry Cooper's Grave in the Bootham vicinity and other goods.

This would have provided additional income for him and it attracted publicity. Many Inns were also supporters of York races, enjoying the extra business during race week and collectively sponsoring a silver plate for race winners

In 1839, the *Yorkshire Gazette* reported that Henry and a few other Innkeepers were causing a nuisance in the City by allowing their carts

to stand opposite their public houses, blocking the flow of traffic. The Lord Mayor, presiding over their case, insisted that this was unfair to other businesses and that it must be '*put an end to*'. He told the publicans that if they re-offended, they would be prosecuted in full. They were each fined 1s and 6d.



*Bird in the Hand:
Bootham*

Little further has been discovered about Henry and Mary's personal life and family. No records of children have been found. Henry Cooper died in 1845 and was interred at St Olave's. The churchyard is also the resting place of John Wheelhouse (died 1771) who was Innkeeper of 'The Bird in the Hand' Public House, just behind Bootham Bar.

William Etty (1787-1849) – A York-born Royal Academician

William Etty (RA) occupies the most prestigious and well-known grave in the churchyard. Despite the undoubted talent of many other individuals buried here, Etty went further to achieve wider national and international acclaim during his lifetime. Born in York in 1787, William was the seventh son of Matthew and Esther Etty. His parents were staunch Methodists. Matthew was a successful baker who owned a shop in Feasegate. After early schooling, Etty, at the instigation of his mother, left home to take up a printing apprenticeship. This he completed in seven years, a period which he considered a prison sentence. But he used his spare time during the apprenticeship to develop early promise as an artist. He read and studied avidly. In 1805 he moved to London to stay with his uncle, following in the footsteps of his older brother Walter, who had moved there a few years previously. Together, his uncle and brother became his most constant benefactors, encouraging, funding and supporting his artistic ambitions.



Etty Self Portrait 1823

Thanks to a generous subscription from his uncle, a sample of his drawing and a recommendation from the Hull MP, Richard Sharpe, Etty, aged 19, was accepted as a probationer student at the Royal Academy less than a year after he arrived in London. He thrived and seemed to enjoy the capital, but he never lost his affection for his native York. Two of his student contemporaries were John Constable and Edwin Landseer. Persistence with his studies under Henry Fuseli (a swiss-born RA), and Sir Thomas Lawrence, paid off and Etty exhibited and sold his first paintings around 1810. But recognition came slowly. Although yet to become commercially successful, by 1814, Etty was becoming more widely respected as an artist of historically themed paintings often

featuring nude figures. He was acclaimed for his ability to paint realistic flesh tones. In 1814/15, he travelled to Paris and Italy to study the works of old masters, coinciding with Napoleon Bonaparte's abdication and exile to Elba.

Etty's father died in 1818 and he wrote that this was the: *'first truly heavy blow my heart ever felt'*. Buried at All Saint's Pavement church in York, Etty always felt regretful that his father did not live to witness his rise to fame as an established Royal Academician. By

1820 he was becoming well known in London, receiving commissions and attracting the attention of serious art collectors. Major acclaim came with a study of *'Cleopatra's arrival in Cecilia'*. However, his preoccupation with nude figures offended many and courted controversy. Some considered his

paintings were composed of *'dirty flesh'*, indecent and pornographic and that his subjects were *'out of proportion'*. He strongly defended his art.



Lady Lever Art Gallery

Cleopatra's Arrival in Cecilia
- 1820:

After years of striving, Etty was finally elected Associate to the Royal Academy in 1824 and full member in 1828, beating his contemporary, John Constable. Delighted, he wrote to his cousin and friend in York, Thomas Bodley: *'I have triumphed! I am a Royal Academician of England! Last night the deed was done that made me happy, I am overwhelmed with joy!'*

Etty's shy character made it difficult for him to host social events expected with his new found social status. He was essentially a modest man, preferring to keep himself to himself, but was popular with fellow artists. His typical day consisted of rising at 7am, painting until 4pm, having a meal, going for a walk and retiring at midnight - following two cups of tea. He was considered unattractive and slovenly, short in stature with a large jaw and brows. His hair was wild and sandy, his face pock marked from smallpox, contracted when he was a child. During travels abroad he had fallen in love on a couple of occasions, but his love was unrequited. He never married.

Betsy Etty, (his niece) came to live with him and keep house in London. The daughter of his brother John, she remained with him until his death. When his mother died aged 76, in 1829, he was deeply affected. Esther was buried with her husband at All Saint's Pavement. A memorial plaque was subsequently erected to his parents by their younger son, Charles Etty in 1852.

Soon after this loss, Etty became involved in the conservation of York Minster and the City Walls. Although raised a Methodist, he always preferred the liturgy

of the Church of England and had strong leanings towards Catholicism. He adored York Minster and his interest in conservation was stimulated after the Minster suffered major fire damage in 1829. On hearing of the disaster, he apparently burst into tears and was soon writing letters to the Dean and Chapter offering support and suggesting an architect to



York Minster in Etty's time

manage the restoration. His suggestion was ignored. Etty did not shirk from being in dispute with those who wished to change original features of buildings and over many years he campaigned passionately to oppose plans which sought to damage York's heritage.

During a visit to Paris in 1830, Etty was inadvertently caught up in the 'July Revolution'⁽⁵⁶⁾, an experience he never forgot as he had to escape the 'mob' on more than one occasion. He was lucky to escape unharmed. Etty was very much a traditionalist and considered political reform '*an evil*'. Throughout these distractions and events, he continued to paint and produce works as expected for Royal Academy exhibitions. He accepted commissions from notable people in London and York, including the nobility and prominent politicians. He rubbed

56. The 'July Revolution' began with unrest on the streets protesting the rule of King Charles X, who was overthrown and succeeded by his brother Louis.

shoulders with many other famous artists such as Pugin, Turner, poet Robert Browning and author William Makepeace Thackeray. An important commission was the painting of the ‘Swedish Nightingale,’ Jenny Lind. In the mid-1830s he also sat on a Fine Arts Commission, chaired by Prince Albert. The Prince subsequently commissioned him to paint frescos on the walls of a Summer pavilion in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. Although this was unsuccessful, it did Etty’s career no harm.

In his last decade, Etty lobbied and succeeded in establishing a provincial School of Design (1842) in his native city which provided a legacy for art in York. He paid a further visit to France and on return began to explore the potential of buying a property for his retirement. He purchased a house in Coney Street, close to St Martin-Le-Grand church and the River Ouse. He was by now financially independent, making most of his money in later years. Always plagued by ill health, particularly asthma, his health began to deteriorate enough to hasten his retirement from the Royal Academy in 1847. He left London in 1848 for York, with his faithful niece Betsy. When not troubled by respiratory problems, he enjoyed taking walks along the riverside and continuing to paint. He frequently attended services at the Minster and enjoyed the company of trusted friends.

The Royal Society of Arts held a retrospective exhibition of his work in August 1849. Over a hundred of his paintings were shown. Etty attended and was delighted, but the exhibition was not a commercial success. Soon after this he suffered a bout of Rheumatic Fever which exhausted him and although he rallied for a short time, he never regained his health. He died at 7.45 pm on Wednesday 13th November 1849, aged 62. Apparently reconciled to dying, he said to a servant: ‘*Wonderful! This death!*’ His doctor entered the cause of death as ‘*congestion of the lungs*’. Etty’s fervent wish was to be buried in the



*Etty portrait in later life;
1823*

Minster but he failed to make provision for this in his will. It was decided, probably by his cousin and Executor, Thomas Bodley and his old friend John Brook, that Etty should be interred at St Olave's churchyard, with a vantage point through a ruined arch of St Mary's Abbey and reasonably close to his beloved Minster.

The funeral took place at St Olave's on 23rd November. It was attended by many dignitaries and friends, the cortege processing slowly, to the sound of muffled bells, from Coney Street, Blake Street, St Leonard's Place (with a last view of the Minster) to Bootham and finally Marygate. Shops were closed as a mark of respect. The service was dignified and impressive. Etty's tomb inscription read:

William Etty, Royal Academician

Who in his brilliant works has left an enduring monument of his exalted genius. Earnestly aiming to attain the lofty position on which his highly gifted talents have placed him, he throughout his life exhibited unabated perseverance in his profession, to promote its advancement in his beloved country. He watched the progress of those engaged in its study with the most disinterested kindness. To his elevated and highly poetical mind were united a cheerfulness and sweetness of disposition, with great simplicity and urbanity of manners. He was richly endeared to all who knew him. His piety was unaffected, his faith in Christ sincere and his devotion to God exemplary.

*He was born in York March 10th, 1787
And died in his native city November 13th, 1849*

*Why seek ye the living among the dead?
Luke XXIV. V*

Betsy was grief-stricken, writing to a friend: 'I am heartbroken, I have lost my best friend, I can say no more'. Four months later, Walter Etty died and was buried at the foot of his famous brother's tomb at St Olave's. Betsy eventually married a widower, Stephen Binnington. She left York to live in London with her husband and stepdaughter,

dying in 1888. In February 1911, the City of York belatedly unveiled a statue to William Etty outside the Art Gallery. A stained-glass insert was also placed in one of the south nave windows at St Olave's. Minor exhibitions of his work were held in the 1930s and 40s, but his work had largely fallen out of fashion until 2001/2 when the Tate Britain had an exhibition themed '*The Victorian Nude*', which helped to revive his status. In York, the City Art Gallery had a major exhibition of his work in 2012 and now holds the largest collection of Etty's work in the country.



Source: Leeds Art Calendar 1961

William Etty Tomb

Note: A more detailed booklet on William Etty RA can be found at the rear of the church.

25

Death by drowning – Richard Nicholson Esq - Brother-in-Law of George Hudson ‘Railway King’.

Richard Nicholson Esq (1793-1849) was born in York, the second child and only son of James and Elizabeth Nicholson (nee Wainman). He was baptised at Holy Trinity Church, Goodramgate on 17th July 1793. James Nicholson, in partnership with William Bell, ran a very successful Tailors and Drapers business in College Street. Established by his father, Nicholson and Bell grew to become one of the largest trading establishments in the city. Richard had two sisters, Rebecca (born 1790), Elizabeth (born 1795). The family lived above their shop. Richard's mother died in 1799 and his father in 1838, aged 88. Both were buried in St Olave's churchyard. His sister Rebecca had married her father's partner William Bell and they eventually ran the business. After Bell's death in 1813, Rebecca carried on the shop. She was assisted by brother Richard and younger sister Elizabeth. It was Rebecca who employed a 15-year-old apprentice, George Hudson in 1815.

The rise of Hudson and the effects on the Nicholson's

At that time, neighbouring cities and towns in West Yorkshire, such as Leeds and Bradford, were growing wealthier due to huge changes in manufacturing and production. But York had not yet embraced the changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution. The city remained heavily dependent on the patronage of farmers, clergy and leading county families for its prosperity, and risked being left behind. This did not concern the ambitious new apprentice, George Hudson, in 1815. He had lost his parents before his eighth birthday; left his birthplace in nearby Howsham, after allegedly fathering an illegitimate child; and he simply needed to learn a trade to improve his prospects.

In the meantime, Rebecca passed the thriving Draper's business over to Richard Nicholson in 1817 and all continued smoothly. George Hudson, a hardworking apprentice, quickly became an asset to the business, gaining skills in salesmanship. He befriended and courted Elizabeth Nicholson, who was five years his senior. They married in July 1821 at Holy Trinity, Goodramgate. According to Beaumont⁽⁵⁷⁾ Elizabeth was considered plain and not very bright. She was certainly a 'catch' in terms of money and connections and Hudson genuinely loved her. Their long marriage subsequently survived many traumas. Within the next five months, Hudson became Richard Nicholson's partner in the business⁽⁵⁸⁾. The couple had their first three children, all male and all of whom died young. Their first child, Richard James Hudson, died aged 18 days in May 1822. He was buried at St Olave's with his Nicholson grandparents. The Hudson's went on to have four surviving children, George (born 1829), John, William and Ann following in close succession⁽⁵⁹⁾. In 1827, Hudson's fortunes were further transformed by a substantial legacy worth around £30,000, left to him by an affluent uncle, Matthew Bottrill Hudson. The Will had been changed only weeks before his death. This made Hudson one of York's wealthiest

57. Robert Beaumont, *The Railway King, A Biography of George Hudson*. 2016 Headline Publishing Group. Chapter 2.

58. The deed of partnership survives in the Borthwick Institute for Archives. It revealed that Hudson and his wife would live over the business premises at a rent of £35 annually. £6,000 would be invested in the partnership by the Nicholson's.

59. John Hudson became a doctor and was later killed by a train, William had an army career and was killed in action during the Indian Mutiny. Ann married a Polish Count.

men and he moved with Elizabeth to a smart house in Monkgate. His first important appointment in York was as member of the York Board of Health in 1832, where he distinguished himself during an outbreak of Cholera in the city. He visited the sick and took a prominent part in organising a burial ground to prevent further spread of the disease. He also took a leading part in establishing the York Union Banking Company. Next, he became Treasurer of the York Railway Committee, subscribing for 500 shares. The Committee had been formed to link York to Leeds and London, to enable the city to enjoy cheaper coal and the fruits of the industrial age.

Hudson met George Stephenson in 1834 and they soon became friends and business associates. He persuaded Stephenson to back his vision for a railway line including a York link. His famous early slogan, delivered in his Yorkshire dialect, was to: *'Mak' all t' railways cum t' York'*. The Committee was re-named the York and North Midland Railway in 1835 and Hudson was elected Chair. Officers of the Committee included Richard Nicholson and other leading York businessmen such as former Mayor James Meek, and Quaker businessman Joseph Rowntree. Subsequently various other railway companies were purchased or merged, with Hudson taking on the chairmanships. Now owning one third of the railway network, he was dubbed 'Railway King', becoming a millionaire by 1845. As one of Hudson's right-hand men, Richard Nicholson grew wealthier by association. In 1847, over 300,000 people were employed on British railways.

The son of a Howsham farmer, from relatively humble beginnings, had also become a prominent Tory, in what was a predominantly Whig city. He had been elected to the City of York Cooperation as alderman in 1835; Lord Mayor in 1836 and 1837; MP for Sunderland



George Hudson.

and Lord Mayor for the third time in 1845. During this meteoric rise, Hudson made enemies including solicitor, alderman and Liberal MP for York George Leeman. Hudson purchased properties and estates in Yorkshire and London⁽⁶²⁾, together with a growing involvement in other organisations and companies. He was loathed and lauded in equal measure. Many disliked him for his intemperate, combative manner, his taste for ostentatious banquets, his corpulence and his heavy drinking. Others were enthralled by his personal magnetism and vision. Whilst intrigued by Hudson, the aristocracy held his wife Elizabeth in contempt, ridiculing her for her social gaffs, ‘vulgar’ sense of style and extravagance. Charles Dickens⁽⁶¹⁾ apparently wrote to a friend indicating his extreme dislike of Hudson:

‘I find a burning disgust arising in my mind – a sort of morbid canker of the most frightful description – against Mr. Hudson. His position is a monstrous one and one so illustrative of the breeches pocket size of the English character, that I can’t bear it. Like a dog, I feel disposed to throw up my head and howl whenever I hear Mr Hudson mentioned. If you can let me know anything bad about him, pray do. It would be a great comfort. Something intensely mean and odious would be preferred, but anything bad will be thankfully received.’

Hudson was mocked frequently in cartoons and satirical publications. Even his friend, George Stephenson, began to complain that: *‘he has grown much too grand for me’*. Hudson burned the candle at both ends, rising early, spending the day on parliamentary and railway work; then entertaining into the late hours. Meanwhile, questions began to be asked about his lax accounting methods.

Richard Nicholson’s fortunes had also soared, largely through links with Hudson’s empire. The years 1835-1848 must have been a truly significant period in his life. He didn’t marry and Beaumont suggests that whilst Richard was: *‘amiable, he could be pompous and was perfectly happy to bask in the reflected glory and wealth of his now*

60. His property in the capital, called Albert Gate East, was probably the largest private house in London at the time. (Beaumont). Hudson paid £15,000 for the Italianate mansion and spent another £15,000 on furniture, fittings and decoration.

61. Quoted in Lambert, Richard S: *The Railway King: A Study of George Hudson and the business morals of his times*. 1934. George Allen and Unwin.

famous brother-in law'. Hudson grew to love Nicholson as a brother and was a good husband to his sister, Elizabeth. Nicholson acquired a taste for cultured living, enjoying the opportunities afforded by his wealth to indulge in collecting art and drinking fine wines. For example, by 1848 ,he had accumulated over fifty of William Etty's paintings. Etty was quoted as being delighted about these purchases because he considered his paintings had '*come home to York*'⁽⁶²⁾. However, Nicholson was not considered as ostentatious as his brother-in-law and lived relatively quietly. He was a promoter of, and intimately associated with, several prominent organisations and charities in York, all of which enhanced his standing and esteem in the city. They included:

- Treasurer, trustee and shareholder: York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway⁽⁶³⁾;
- High Sheriff of York (1842);
- Director of the York Waterworks Company, (1842) – sitting on the provisional committee prior to the company's formation and becoming a full director thereafter, alongside Chair George Hudson and other directors including Samuel Tuke (Quaker Tea Merchant and Philanthropist);
- Member of the Board of Directors, York United Gas Company (1845);
- Subscriber to, and committee member of, the York School of Design (established by William Etty RA)⁽⁶⁴⁾,
- Subscriber to the York Minster restoration fund in 1840-41
- Churchwarden at Holy Trinity, Goodramgate.
- Laity guest at the enthronement of the Archbishop of York (Dr Musgrave) on January 13th 1848, where there were thousands of spectators. Dr John Camidge played the organ and other guests included John Brook Esq and George Hudson MP.

62. Quote from Robinson, Leonard 2007. *William Etty: The Life and Art*.

63. Cited in *Yorkshire Gazette*: April 14th, 1849.

64. At the first Annual Meeting of the School of Design in October 1847, Richard was elected to serve on the Committee which also included George Hudson, John Brook, William Etty RA and Dr John Camidge. All those named, except Hudson, are buried in St Olave's churchyard.

At the Corporation meeting, electing him to the High Sheriff position, Richard Nicholson was nominated by Alderman Cobb and seconded by Alderman William Heseltine. The process was reported in full by the city press. Alderman Cobb's words were fulsome in support of his nominee:

Alderman Cobb – My Lord Mayor and Gentlemen, I rise with more than ordinary feelings of pride and pleasure to propose an old and valued friend as a fit and proper person to fill the office of Sheriff of this city. I am not able to describe all his good qualities, but I will say that the gentleman to whom I refer is a liberal man, a kind neighbour, and that he is a fine specimen of an English gentleman (cheers). I have known him from my boyhood, and I am confident that there is not a more honourable man in existence. (continued cheering). I do venture to say that every citizen of York will approve our election of him as Sheriff of this city. I beg leave to conclude by proposing for the office of Sheriff for the existing year, Richard Nicholson Esq. (applause).

Alderman Heseltine went on to emphasise Nicholson's high personal standing and respectability. A vote was taken, and his election was announced to further loud cheers and applause.

Yorkshire Gazette. November 12th, 1842.

The beginning of the end

But all this was not to last. Beaumont relates that it is hard to pin-point when 'the railway bubble burst' but there were several influences. Beaumont first cites the repeal of the Corn Laws and the shortness of the American cotton crop in 1847, which together precipitated a national depression. Interest rates were raised with the Chancellor (Sir Charles Wood) blaming the depression on railway speculation, which had extracted huge quantities of money from the economy. Firms were going bankrupt and credit was less freely available. Some banks closed their doors entirely. The following year saw significant unrest and revolution in Europe, further affecting confidence. When railway travel also began to decline, and shares plummeted, shareholders became very worried. Hudson had to fend them off at shareholder meetings whilst also contending with increasing competition from his rivals.

He started losing money through propping up weaker businesses and had to jettison some of them to streamline his railway operations. All now seemed to conspire against him. Unsurprisingly, his former robust constitution started to fail, and he developed digestive disorders and angina attacks.

Hudson's catastrophic fall from grace was hastened by the shareholders who had earlier praised him whilst he had engineered their growing prosperity. Two shareholders (Prance and Love) took a detailed interest in the financial affairs of the York and North Midland Railway, Hudson's powerbase. A meeting was held with the directors of the company (including Richard Nicholson). Hudson did not turn up. The meeting was a disaster and a committee of inquiry was convened. Things went from bad to worse when the '*Prance Report*', published in April 1849, confirmed (amongst other things) that Hudson had fixed the price of the company's shares, subsequently selling them at an inflated price to the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway Company. His enemies started buying for his blood. Inquiries into his affairs were springing up in his other companies. Hudson was exonerated by some and damned by others. He tried hard to defend himself and was courageous in the face of adversity, but moves were made to oust him from boardroom roles for embezzlement, manipulation of accounts and conflicts of interest relating to share purchases. He eventually resigned. At no time did he try to pin the blame on others around him and he repaid vast sums so legal action was largely avoided. Whilst he remained popular with his Sunderland constituents, the disintegration of his empire and his reputation continued unabated. He had to start selling his properties and land, later leaving him near to destitution and broken.

Probable suicide of Richard Nicholson

The first human cost of these momentous events was Richard Nicholson, who must have found the public dissection of his affairs and vilification of his name too much to bear. Certainly, the inquiries alleged that Hudson together with his directors were culpable in using and abusing their positions. Indeed, there were suggestions that Hudson's right-hand men (David Waddington (Deputy Chair), Richard Nicholson and James Richardson were also implicated in underhanded

shares transfers and profiteering⁽⁶⁵⁾. Whilst Hudson was the primary focus of attack, Nicholson was in effect, one of his co-accused. Sources describe him as cutting a deeply troubled figure since the revelations in the Prance Report.

One evening⁽⁶⁶⁾, a month after the report's publication, Richard sat down for dinner at his smart home in Clifton. He drank half a bottle of port and set out for a walk along the River Ouse towards the city centre. He was spotted around 9pm by several witnesses (three youths and two other men who knew him), looking dejected and failing to acknowledge them. He was never seen alive again. Around 10pm, his hat, then his body were found by

two boatmen near Scarborough Bridge. He was dragged from the river but had been dead for at least 30 minutes. The Yorkshire Gazette of May 12th, 1849 reported that his body was taken to a nearby house in Marygate, then medical assistance was summoned. There were no signs of violence to his body or disturbance to his clothing. He was wearing a great coat when he left home, but this was missing. From the condition of the body there was no doubt that the cause of death was by drowning.

A subsequent inquest quoted witnesses saying that 56-year-old Nicholson had looked unwell and in poor spirits for a few weeks. He went out frequently for short periods and seemed (to his servants) to be restless. Others said he had lately been seen walking slowly with his head down. Two acquaintances (Uriah Hesp and James Briggs), said that on the night he drowned, they saw him near a tree on the banks of the river. When they approached, he moved away with his head down and ignored them. They carried on and looked back, observing that



Richard Nicholson Esq

65. Apparently shares had been transferred to Nicholson and another director but this was later described as a mechanism to get around House of Commons rules in force at the time, which limited the number of shares that could be held by an individual. The Inquiry concluded that the directors did not benefit personally from the transfer.

66. Nicholson's death by drowning occurred on May 8th, 1849.

Nicholson had returned to the tree again. They said he had his great coat on with the collar turned up. When his body was recovered, he had in his dress coat pocket, a gold pencil case, 9s 6d in cash, a comb and a knife. No watch was found.

Based on the evidence, the jury returned a verdict of ‘Found Drowned’. But most assumed he had committed suicide. The *Yorkshire Gazette* concluded its report by saying his loss would be keenly felt by his private charities. ‘*His bounty has relieved the pressing wants of the aged and distressed amongst his fellow citizens; and his greatest pleasure appeared to be centred on promoting the happiness of those around him*’. Although he was described as a Director of Hudson’s railway companies and a former High Sheriff, no mention was made of the scandal that had erupted around Hudson, or that Nicholson was implicated.

Richard Nicholson’s funeral took place on Saturday 12th May. He was interred at St Olave’s, with his parents and his nephew, Richard James Hudson. A very short notice in the *York Herald* that evening, reported that: ‘*The remains of this unfortunate, but respected man, were interred this morning in St Olave’s churchyard, Marygate. The funeral was a strictly private one*’.

In August, his household contents were sold at auction, providing insight into Nicholson’s wealth and standing. They included: ‘*250 dozen choice wines, 500 ounces of silver plate, jewelry and watches, bed and tables, linen, select library of splendid illustrated books, pictures and engravings, numerous beautifully cut and stained glasses, rich dinner dessert and equipages; with bronzes, medallions, marble figures, busts, shells and numerous shares in the York Gas Company, the Cemetery Company and the De Grey Rooms.*’



*Nicholson Grave
Also, the resting place
of George Hudson’s first
child and Nicholson’s
nephew*

Next, his residence in Clifton was sold. Advertised in the Yorkshire Gazette of September 15th 1849, the house was described thus:

Genteel Residence

Clifton, York

Partly furnished

For the remainder of the lease, which is 7 years and unexpired

DWELLING HOUSE AND PREMISES, lately occupied by Richard Nicholson Esq, deceased, situated at Clifton, in the immediate vicinity of York. The house comprises, Entrance Hall, Dining and Drawing Room, Study, Servant's Hall, Butler's Pantry, Kitchens, Wine and Beer Cellars, Four Best Bedrooms, Four Servant's Bed Chambers and is otherwise replete with every convenience.

Adjoining the house is a tastefully laid out garden, well stocked with the choicest flowers and other plants. Also, a Coach House, Stable, Harness Rooms and other outbuildings. The locality is decidedly the most genteel and healthy in the neighbourhood of York, combining all the advantages of a town and country residence.

Being abundantly supplied with pure filtered water (from the new Waterworks), leaves nothing to be desired in rendering York and the neighbourhood, when considered in connection with its numerous local attractions and advantages, one of the most desirable as well as the most delightful places of residence in the Kingdom. Clifton is exempt from city rates and the parochial assessments are remarkably low.

*Immediate possession can be given
Further information at the offices of:*

J & J.E Wood

&

J&H Richardson and Gold

Solicitors, York

September 14th, 1849

Aftermath

The suicide of her brother must have made Elizabeth Hudson confront the consequences of the collapse of her husband's empire. Hudson himself must also have felt partly to blame and Richard's death was another bitter blow. Within days Hudson was again facing antagonists in the House of Commons, to answer charges of bribery. A Times editorial was partially sympathetic to him by suggesting that there was a spider's web of corruption and that Hudson was simply '*one player in a dirty game*'. They went further to say he was: '*an easy target and everyone was taking aim, but there many others just as culpable*.' His own view of his situation was that he had been: '*morally right but legally wrong*'.

The city of York now turned its back on him, removing his portrait as former Mayor from the Mansion House, taking his name from the aldermanic roll and re-naming Hudson Street as Railway Street. A statue planned for him was replaced by one for George Leeman, his chief tormentor. Leeman replaced him as Chair of the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway. Yet Hudson had an unlikely supporter in William Etty. Despite his opposition to the impact of railway schemes on York's heritage, Etty gave Hudson a fair hearing, even going so far as to support him in the press writing: '*I know him to be kind-hearted, public spirited and generous to the last degree*'. Etty wrote this when the weight of evidence was against Hudson⁽⁶⁷⁾.

By the end of 1852, Hudson's fortunes spiralled further into decline, as did his health. He was drinking even more heavily and suffering frequent episodes of gout. Three further inquiries into his activities followed and he was ordered to pay back more funds. He sold his beloved property in Yorkshire (Newby Park nr Rainton) and his house in London to settle his debts. His creditors were still not satisfied and continued to pursue him. By now he was falling into arrears and in serious trouble. Being a sitting MP was the only thing saving him from bankruptcy and imprisonment. He travelled to Spain partly to evade his creditors and partly to try and start some new railway business ventures which did not materialise successfully. At the 1857 General Election, he returned, managing to cling on to his Sunderland seat and was involved in promoting the interests of the Sunderland Dock Company, becoming

67. Leonard Robinson: *William Etty - The Life and Art*. 2007, Page 407.



Scarborough Bridge (circa 1930s)

their Chairman. In December the same year he learned that his 25-year-old son, John, had been killed in action during the Indian Mutiny. Elizabeth Hudson sank into despair. Hudson's grief was so acute he could hardly function and before long, the Dock Company also became unproductive. The shareholders were increasingly restless and pointed the finger

of blame his way. He went to France for a while. There was another General Election in 1859 and this time he lost his seat, having been their MP for 14 years.

After a farewell speech to his former constituency, he fled back to France and spent six years in effective exile. He returned to England in 1865, having been chosen to contest the Whitby seat for the Tories. Just a couple of days before polling day, Hudson was arrested and placed in the debtor's prison at York Castle. It was widely believed that George Leeman and Hudson's rival for the Whitby seat were behind his arrest. He remained there for three months and was eventually released in October 1865. He was arrested again in London the following year, spending a further three weeks in prison. He again went abroad, returning in 1870 following the passage of an Act which abolished imprisonment for unpaid debts. His creditors relented and friends rallied to help him out financially raising an annuity of £600 so that he could live reasonably well at Churton Street London, with Elizabeth, to make up for the long years they spent apart during his time of self-imposed exile. His debts were eventually compounded, and he seemed to regain his spirits and be at ease with himself, spending long hours reminiscing on his past and visiting friends. He was even re-elected chairman of

the smoking room at the Carlton Club. He and Elizabeth celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1871. They remained close despite all their tribulations.

Hudson's death

George Hudson had a series of severe angina attacks in early December 1871, whilst on a visit to see friends in Yorkshire. He was advised to return home to London, which he did. On Wednesday 13th December, he had a massive heart attack and died the next morning in the arms of his youngest son, William. He was 71. His body was brought to York by train. The simple funeral cortege left from the Station Hotel, through York. It was accompanied by the Lord Mayor, another alderman, family members and closest friends. Elizabeth was considered too frail to attend. The Minster bells tolled for him and shops were closed in respect. His funeral and interment took place at Scrayingham, with guests from Malton, Howsham and Whitby joining the funeral party. The press remarked on the simplicity and sincerity of the service. He was interred with his son John, close to his parents and other Hudson ancestors. Five years later, William Hudson was also buried with his father.



Scrayingham Church: George Hudson's Grave

In his last Will, the once great magnate left a total of £200. His small estate was left to his two surviving sons, both of whom had embarked on successful careers of their own. William (a doctor) was killed in an underground train accident in 1876. The nature of his death was a terrible irony. George Hudson junior, (a barrister then factory inspector), died married but childless, in 1909 aged 80. Hudson's daughter Ann, who married a Polish Count, also died childless in 1874. There were therefore no direct descendants of George and Elizabeth Hudson. Elizabeth lived to be 91. She was interred with her husband and sons at Scrayingham in 1886.

An obituary in the Times: 16th December 1871, gave him a balanced assessment: *'The world which blindly trusted him, which cringed to him and flattered him, avenged itself by excessive and savage reprobation. It seems the passage of time has dimmed George Hudson's mistakes and highlighted his undoubted achievements. He had speculative confidence and courage. He could be ruthless but also capable of acts of great personal generosity. There is little doubt he transformed York into the most important railway centre in the north of England and was probably the greatest railway man who ever lived.'*

26

John Brook (1770-1851) – Esteemed solicitor, supporter and friend of William Etty RA

John Brook- was born in York in 1770. The son of John and Elizabeth Brook of Bootham, He was baptised at St Michael-Le-Belfrey church, where his parents had married. He had a younger brother, Benjamin. The family lived in Bootham, where John continued to reside, after his parents had died. Around 1789, he became an articled clerk to a long-established firm of solicitors, William Gray and Sons of Duncombe Place. There he learned, over a five-year period, the basis of his profession as a solicitor. The profession was then becoming more sophisticated, with early moves towards regulation prior to the establishment of the Law Society. John was latterly involved with, and a supporter of the establishment of the Society. He began to practise independently as a solicitor in 1791, also securing an appointment

as County Clerk of Yorkshire and seal keeper for the High Sheriff. He would go on to act as Under-Sheriff to seven High Sheriffs during his career. Like other men who are interred in the churchyard, John Brook put his name forward on the ‘muster rolls’ of civilians in York during the late 1790s, volunteering to defend the country should Napoleon’s forces invade England.

He later entered into a partnership with George Bulmer, operating jointly as Bulmer and Brook. The partnership endured for many years. When that dissolved, John returned to operating independently for a few years, later striking up another partnership with William Ware. During these years he also acted as agent to the great slave trade reformer, William Wilberforce⁽⁶⁸⁾, whilst he was the



*Portrait of John Brook –
William Etty 1838.*



*William Wilberforce
(John Rising 1790)*

MP for Yorkshire, supporting his political campaigns. This must have had an abiding influence on Brook, who, whilst inclining towards support of the Tories, was liberally minded and passionately opposed to slavery.

Over ensuing years, John Brook developed a reputation for fairness and professionalism as a solicitor. He was an ardent admirer of William Pitt⁽⁶⁹⁾ whom Brook considered ‘*the ablest politician of the age*’. Although Brook had an unassuming and retiring character, he was a firm supporter of causes that interested

68. William Wilberforce (1759-1833). A native of Hull, philanthropist and MP for Yorkshire. He founded the Anti-Slavery Society and the RSPCA. He had a lifelong concern for social reform and progress.

69. William Pitt (1759-1806) became the youngest MP in history, aged 24, during the reign of George III. He led Britain during the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars and was considered an outstanding administrator. He was also a reformer who opposed slavery.

him. He was a regular churchgoer who delighted in literature, fine arts and music. These tastes influenced the friendship he developed with William Etty. Although it is not known how and when they met, they were certainly drawn together by a mutual passion to preserve York's antiquities, particularly the Minster and the City Walls. Brook had been one of the founding members of the *Yorkshire Gazette* and used this medium to support campaigns for conservation, encouraging Etty to publish letters, reporting on lectures and promoting subscriptions. When Etty visited York, he would often stay with Brook or his cousin Thomas Bodley, enjoying their company on trips to the Yorkshire countryside. In 1838, Etty painted a fine portrait of John Brook, appearing pensive.

It was probably Brook, who facilitated Etty's burial at St Olave's when Etty's wish to be interred at York Minster was thwarted by lack of provision in his will. Brook and Thomas Bodley (Etty's Executor) must have realised that burial in the churchyard, close to an arch in the abbey ruins, would meet with Etty's approval. It was certainly a place in York he admired.

During John Brook's long career, he took on many articled clerks of his own, many of whom went on to be successful solicitors. One of his kinsmen, Eric Rudd Esq, after being articled to Brook, became a barrister⁽⁷⁰⁾. Brook's office conducted the act for incorporating the York Gas Light Company together with local acts for the enclosure of lands around Monkgate, Micklegate and Walmgate. He also founded the Yorkshire Law Society and was Treasurer of the York Asylum for many years⁽⁷¹⁾. At the coronation of King George IV in 1820, John Brook was chosen as staff bearer for the Earl Marshal of England. John died at the end of January 1851, two years after his friend Etty. He never married and the only relatives attending were his niece and his kinsman Eric Rudd. John was interred in St Olave's Churchyard on 5th February 1851. He left £5,000 in his will. The funeral was reported in the press:

70. Interestingly, Rudd, who restored Brook's grave some years after his death, was probably unaware that renewal of the inscription resulted in an erroneous spelling of John's surname as 'Brooke'.

71. His appointment as treasurer to the York asylum happened at a pivotal time, when Brook, alongside other reformers took over the institution after a national outcry about the abuses and malpractice there.

'On Wednesday morning last at 11am, the remains of John Brook Esq were interred in the churchyard of St Olave's Marygate. From the high reputation of the deceased among his fellow citizens, there was a numerous attendance of gentlemen, friends and admirers. The hearse left from the home of Henry Richardson Esq, opposite Mr Brook's home in Bootham. The procession moved down Marygate, headed by members of the legal profession and influential citizens. The great Peter bell of the Cathedral was tolled.

There were four funeral coaches, one containing the domestic servants of the deceased. The corpse was met by Reverend W.E Strong, who conducted the service in an impressive manner. He was interred in that portion of the churchyard immediately adjoining the walls of St Mary's Abbey and close upon the vault of his late lamented friend, William Etty, the artist'.

Two of his friends attending the funeral, Mr John Roper Esq and Benjamin Dodsworth Esq, were also interred in the churchyard years later. Both have memorials inside the church. An obituary in the *Yorkshire Gazette* of February 1851, stated that Brook:



John Brook's Grave

'Retained his business habits to the end of his earthly life, and his mind possessed all those intellectual qualities and quick perceptions for which he had long been so distinguished. The increasing infirmities of old age brought on bodily prostration and after an illness of no long duration; he breathed his last at his residence in Bootham on Friday 31st January, at the age of 81 years'.

Edward and Henry Grimes – Young brothers, students of divinity, who died in York Asylum & other asylum burials

Edward and Henry Grimes – died a year apart, whilst they were both patients at York Asylum. Edward was born in 1819 in Gomersall, nr Bradford, West Yorkshire, Henry in 1822 at Bedford⁽⁷²⁾. They were the sons of Richard Grimes and his wife Sarah (nee Vines), who had eight children in fourteen years. Three other sons had died in infancy and there were three surviving daughters, Sophia, Eliza and Sarah Louisa. Richard Grimes (born 1786 in Mirfield, West Yorkshire) was a non-conformist Minister of the Moravian United Brethren, who held posts as Minister in Gomersall, Bedford and Wyke (also nr Bradford)⁽⁷³⁾. Sarah died in 1839. Nothing more of significance has been discovered about the Grimes family background except the 1841 Census which captured Richard, then aged 55 and four of his children: Sophia, Eliza, Henry (then aged 15), Sarah Louisa and a servant, living in Chapel Fold, Wyke, where he was the Minister.

The 1841 record shows Edward no longer living with the family because he was recorded, aged 20, in the same Census as a patient at the ‘York Lunatic Asylum’. From an examination of Borthwick Archive discharge and death records, Edward was admitted to the asylum on March 28th, 1839. In the Census entry, his occupation was described as ‘*student*’. His official death certificate clarified this further as a ‘*student of divinity*.’ The death certificate of Edward’s younger brother Henry Grimes also refers to him as a ‘*student of divinity*’. Both brothers were therefore pursuing their father’s role, (perhaps through his influence), as a Minister. Other patients recorded alongside Edward on the Census, demonstrate the diversity of individuals admitted to the asylum. They

72. Edward and Henry were both baptised by their father Reverend Richard Grimes.

73. The Moravian Church was established in England in the early 18th Century. It was formally recognised by Act of Parliament in 1749 as an ancient Protestant church descended from the Bohemian Brethren of the 15th Century. There were churches established in five districts including Yorkshire and Bedfordshire, where Richard Grimes held posts as Minister.

included: William Routledge, aged 70 (labourer); Mary Thomas, aged 20 (servant) and John Hindle, aged 45 (a surgeon).

On November 28th, 1844, Henry Grimes was also admitted to the York Asylum. The distress of his father and siblings must have been acute, witnessing

both brothers committed there for (what was to be) the rest of their lives. Reverend Richard Grimes died in 1849 in Wyke, aged 63. He left £500 in his Will, presumably to his surviving daughters. His eldest daughter, Sophia had died in 1846 so by that time, the only members of the family remaining (other than Edward and Henry) were sisters, Sarah Louisa and Eliza.

York 'Lunatic' Asylum was purpose built in 1774 by John Carr (Architect). The first patients were admitted in November 1777, at a time when little was known about mental illness. The founding aims were laudable. It was declared that: *'patients might expect to meet with the most humane and disinterested treatment: and where they might have a chance of being restored to health and reason.'* The catchment area of the asylum covered Yorkshire, later extending beyond the County. Fees were charged for admission, initially 8/- weekly for all patients, including paupers (the latter funded by the parish). Accommodation, designed for a maximum of 54 patients, was graded according to fees paid.

The asylum was best known for its notoriety during 1780-1815, when well published scandals arose over ill treatment, particularly of poor patients, and there was a marked departure (over 36 years) from the asylum's initial aims. Reports in the press abounded, regarding filthy accommodation, whippings, high death rates, use of manacles



York Asylum: Circa 1790s.

and chains. Critics were also concerned about the extent to which the asylum had become insular, under the grip of one physician. This came to a head when a Quaker patient Hannah Mills, who had been refused visits, died suspiciously in 1790. The Quakers were appalled, and the incident led to the establishment of their own institution 'The Retreat' which opened in York in 1796⁽⁷⁴⁾. There, the pioneering 'moral' treatment of patients contrasted sharply with increasing allegations of inhumane practices at the asylum.

The criticism of the asylum continued unaddressed. Although changes were made to grade the fee system, a reduced ratio of pauper inmates to wealthy patients resulted in most fees being paid to the physician rather than the institution. The chief superintendent, Dr Charles Best⁽⁷⁵⁾, who took over management and treatment in 1809, regarded the mentally ill as sub-human, denying the poor (in particular) access to religion and compassion. Evidence of poor management, unsanitary conditions, overcrowding⁽⁷⁶⁾, harsh treatment (meted out by untrained and lowly paid 'keepers'), irregular and false accounting, led to a national inquiry. The asylum was eventually taken over by a group of more enlightened reformers late in 1814⁽⁷⁷⁾. Some of whom had deliberately paid a fee of £20 to become Governors in order to infiltrate what was a 'closed institution'.

The result of the inquiry led to a change of the ancien regime at the asylum. Former officers, including Charles Best, were dismissed or retired. They were replaced with the advice and support of Samuel Tuke and the Retreat. New blocks were built to house female patients and the hospital acquired a larger estate. Therapy began to focus on work and occupation, use of sedation '*to calm patients*' and significantly less use of

74. The Retreat was established by William Tuke (1732-1822) and the Society of Friends. He was a Tea and Coffee Merchant, Quaker and Philanthropist. His pioneering legacy was continued by his son, Samuel Tuke, who is buried in the grounds of 'The Retreat'.

75. Charles Best refuted criticisms levelled at him in the York Herald. He sought to absolve himself from responsibility, blaming his antagonists for raising 'public clamour and indignation' about the asylum. *York Herald*: April 2nd, 1811. Charles Best was never prosecuted for alleged fraud and cruelty. He was simply forced to retire on the grounds of ill-health.

76. The original quota of 54 patients had grown to 199 by 1813, 'cared for' by seven keepers, who had other substantial household duties. Male and female pauper inmates were often housed together.

77. Two men also buried in St Olave's churchyard were part of this reform group, John Roper (Esq) as a Governor and John Brook (Esq) as Treasurer.

restraint for violent patients. Lower class male patients did farm-work and gardening, females, domestic and household work. Wealthy patients were occupied with reading, writing, drawing and music. Entertainments were introduced, decorations and furnishings improved.

Further reforms happened in later decades, as with other asylums. An example of this was the ‘*innovative*’ treatment of mania without the use of drugs. Despite this, controversial therapies such as electro-convulsive treatment, pre-frontal leucotomies and other bizarre attempts at ‘*curing*’ people featured in the history of asylums subsequently, with many institutions constantly beset by criticism and viewed as fearful places.

The archives for the former York asylum were only discovered in 1990 in two locations at Bootham Park. They were in a state of disorder. Significant gaps were found. Most early records were either deliberately destroyed during the height of the controversies between 1780-1815, damaged by a fire or lost due to poor filing and security. However, admissions and discharge/death registers from 1850-1810, somehow survived. Examination of these at the Borthwick Archives provided the evidence of the cause of death for Edward and Henry Grimes. Admissions and outcomes in the death register for this period are challenging to read in the 21st century. Some examples include⁽⁷⁸⁾:

- **Francis Stuart Hall** Aged 33. Occupation: Wool Draper. Diagnosis: Imbecile, Softening of the brain. Admission by authorisation of wife, December 31st, 1850. Died December 30th, 1831.
- **Elizabeth Simmons**. Admitted February 15th, 1850. Aged 46. Occupation: Labourer’s wife, from the Union (workhouse). Diagnosis: Mania. Cause: ‘Change of Life’. Died March 1851.



Samuel Tuke (1784-1857) Quaker reformer and businessman, who influenced ‘moral’ treatment of the poor in asylums.

78. The entries from the archived admission, discharge and death registers were signed on various pages by J.R Proctor and L Holmes, presumably untrained admissions clerks who signed with the title ‘*Companions in Lunacy*’.

- **George Hardcastle.** Admitted 1854. Aged 40. A butcher. Admission by authorisation of wife. Diagnosis: Melancholia, suicidal. Cause: Intemperance and pecuniary losses. Outcome: Recovered and discharged.
- **Christina Jackson.** Aged 24. A Maid Servant. Admission by authority of father - January 1855. Diagnosis: Overwork and fear of offending her employers. Outcome: Died of fever June 7th, 1855.

The actual admission diagnosis for Edward and Henry Grimes will never be known because records are absent; nor is it known whether they were housed together or visited by relatives. Most probably their patient fees were paid by their father (and after his death, their surviving sisters). It is hoped the years they spent in the asylum were at a period when ‘improvements’ in conditions were being implemented.

Edward died on 20th March 1851, aged 32, after spending 11 years in the asylum. Henry’s death followed on April 23rd, 1852, aged 30, after seven years there. Examination of their surviving asylum discharge and death records reveal both brothers died of Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis or ‘Consumption’)⁽⁷⁹⁾.

The ‘observation’ notes, written by two recorders of Henry’s death at the asylum, simply stated: ‘*several of his family went in the same way*’. Certainly, tuberculosis was a major killer in the Victorian age. Contracting the disease was more likely in places of over-crowding, deprivation, or as a result of close association with other family members. The Bronte family deaths from the same disease provide evidence of this. It also gives an indication of the reasons behind the high death rate in the Grimes family.

Edward Grimes’ official death certificate went further to state the cause of his death as ‘*Hereditary Consumption*’. But this was partly erroneous. Tuberculosis was not a genetic disease; it was the result of airborne transmission. The disease primarily



*Grimes Brothers
grave*

79. Henry and Edward Grimes death certificates were obtained from the GRO. Incidentally Edward’s certificate incorrectly states his age as 42. He was 32, as confirmed through his birth record.

affected the lungs but could disseminate to other organs such as the kidneys and brain. Henry Grimes' death certificate a year later stated the cause of death as simply: '*Pulmonary Consumption*'.

It is possible that progression of the disease may have caused the neurological symptoms and behaviour changes which ultimately led to Edward and Henry's admission to the asylum. It is assumed that Edward and Henry's two surviving sisters 'claimed' their bodies and approved the burial of their brothers in St Olave's churchyard. They must have authorised the brother's memorial stone placed there.

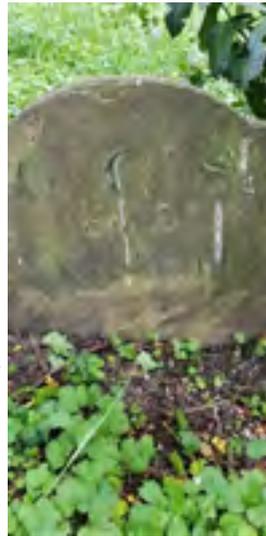
There are six other ex-patients of the York Asylum recorded as interred in the churchyard with graves which have memorial stones.

- **Joseph Binney** (Steel Merchant from Hartshead, nr Leeds, Business titled 'Binney and Sons') buried November 23rd, 1812, aged 34;
- **Ralph Deardon** of Rochdale (Gent) buried 2nd January 1817, aged 29;
- **Robert Cowan** (Gent) buried May 25th, 1818, aged 44;
- **Ann Wilcockson**, buried May 4th, 1782, aged 67 (probably the mother of Hannah Hardisty - nee Wilcockson - see page 50);
- **Reverend John Bristow** (former Vicar of St Mary the Virgin, Nottingham – incumbent from 1806) buried 20th February 1810,



Three adjacent graves of Joseph Binney, Ralph Deardon and Robert Cowan, who all died in York Asylum

aged 42. A brief investigation⁽⁸⁰⁾ concerning **Reverend Bristow** revealed he was still in office up to 1808. That year he sued the owner of the vicarage to recover damages for its poor upkeep, obtaining £70. Also, in 1808 he was presiding at a musical festival at the church to raise funds for the hospital, and later that year a civic service. However, during his tenure, there were reports of badly kept registers and from 1808, weddings and baptisms were conducted by other clergymen. After 1809, nothing is written in parish registers or documents about Reverend Bristow; only a report of his death in 1810. It is assumed that he was admitted to the asylum at York during 1808/9. His death was referenced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of March 1810.



*Gervais Charles
Seaton's Grave:
Died in the asylum
1811*

- **Gervais Charles Seaton**, buried November 11th, 1811, aged 31.

Other recorded asylum patients in the churchyard (1811):

Other people dying in the asylum, recorded in the Archbishops Transcripts of Burials as interred at St Olave's during 1811, but not investigated in the church parish record, have been listed. These names were discovered by chance whilst seeking information on Gervais Charles Seaton above. There are probably far more ex-patients since this observation refers to just one year. The same story is no doubt replicated in other city churchyards and those in the suburbs. To discover the total extent of burials from the asylum would require more intensive investigation of Borthwick Archive records. The cause of their deaths is unlikely to come to light, but it seems no small coincidence that these patients died during the worst period of controversy about conditions and practices at the asylum⁽⁸¹⁾. Patients from the asylum (no memorials) identified as buried at St Olave's in 1811:

80. The History of the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Nottingham (1806-1809). Brian Taylor September 2000

81. The most illuminating source for the history of York asylum during this period was written in a journal article in 1983 by Ann Higgins. *Changes in the Asylum: The Case of York. 1777-1815*. It is available at the Borthwick Institute for Archives and on-line.

- Mary Carter, buried June 12th, aged 64;
- Thomas Bigland of Thirsk, buried June 25th, aged 29;
- William Husker, buried July 6th, aged 32;
- Robert Handal, buried August 24th (no age determined);
- Elizabeth Turner, buried September 12th, aged 54;
- John Cowcliff, buried September 21st, aged 54;
- John Smith, buried September 30th, aged 52.

York Asylum joined the new NHS in 1948 having been renamed Bootham Park Hospital in the 1930s. In 2015 it was deemed ‘unfit’ and closed by the Care Quality Commission, largely because of difficulties of modernising a Grade 1 listed building. It partially re-opened in 2016 but was recently sold by the Government.



Bootham Park Hospital in the present day

28

Henry Russell – Esteemed surgeon at York County Hospital

Henry Russell (1801-1854) was born in York, the only son of David Russell (an Attorney) and Elizabeth Baynes. He had one sibling, a sister Elisa. Henry was baptised at St Olave’s on 6th June 1801. His parents lived in Bootham and the family worshipped at St Olave’s. Henry was educated initially at Bootham School. Records have not been found regarding his medical education, but it was probably undertaken in London, since, apart from Edinburgh, there were few

provincial schools in existence at that time. Most of the teaching hospitals in London had been founded for centuries, but medical training was not as systematic as it is in the present day.

The teaching hospitals in London (after 1800) enabled successful students to qualify after experience and study, basically an ‘apprenticeship’. They would attend anatomy classes and other courses of instruction in surgery (usually delivered by teachers at Guy’s Hospital and other private institutions such as William Hunter’s Anatomy School). The students gained Diplomas from the Royal College of Surgeons in London and/or the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries. At that time, they did not necessarily have to take a degree. However, during the early part of the century after the College of Surgeons had received its Royal Charter, the profession began to insist that student surgeons must study medicine before qualifying in surgery. In 1843, a new Royal Charter changed the name of the body to Royal College of Surgeons in England, expanding its remit outside of London and establishing a higher qualification, the Fellowship of the College. Examinations became more rigorous and specialist subjects were introduced.

Henry Russell achieved his initial surgical qualifications and became M.R.C.S in 1825, aged 24. He worked in London for a decade to gain experience. He returned to York in 1834 and applied for ‘election’ to the position of Consultant Surgeon at the York County Hospital. A newspaper account of his application and the outcome was discovered (*York Herald* 1834). The article explained the process of his election in detail. Henry was chosen for the post over two other candidates. He was elected by a group of trustees, including the Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Slingsby and Marcus Worsley Esq (grandson of Sir Thomas Worsley of Hovingham Hall). The process was protracted and intensive, in which the candidate’s credentials, diplomas and testimonials were closely scrutinised. Sponsors then spoke for the candidates. One of the Trustees, Robert Dennison Esq, proposed Henry Russell, indicating that he was highly competent and much esteemed for his record of practice in London and his ‘*high moral character*’. This was seconded by another trustee, Major Northcliffe. The press report related that Henry was lame in one leg and the trustees discussed whether this might impair his surgical practice. However, these anxieties were dismissed, and



York County Hospital Monkgate (1745 building) 'New' County Hospital 1851 (now flats).

Henry Russell was duly elected, winning the election by 30 votes over his nearest rival. He took over from James Atkinson who had enjoyed a long career and was retiring after holding the post for fifty years.

Henry had a lot to live up to, but brief obituaries published after his death, demonstrate that he was highly regarded after a career there of over 20 years. The hospital, in Monkgate, was built in 1745. In 1840, during Henry Russell's tenure, a competition was held to design a new hospital. The old hospital was demolished and replaced with a larger building costing £11,000, paid for largely by subscription and charities. It is likely that Henry played a significant part in the process and lived to see the new hospital opened and operating. He was credited with founding the York Eye Institution soon after his appointment. It was first registered as an Institution in 1831 but only comprised a small hut with two beds. The Institute was subsequently absorbed into the York County Hospital and although it remained limited in terms of in-patient facilities, Henry was its first surgeon, whilst also remaining in his main consultant post at the County Hospital⁽⁸²⁾.

Henry married Mary Craven in 1840 at St Lawrence's church. They lived initially at Precentor's Court, Minster Yard, later moving to 12, Clifton. There are no records of any children. They employed three servants. Henry was admitted as F.R.C.S in 1843 and was apparently one of the original 300 Fellows of the newly re-formed Royal College.

82. *British Journal of Ophthalmology*, Sept 1946. Nineteenth Century Provincial Eye Hospitals. Arnold Soresby. London.

He was a member of the York Medical Society, lectured at the Medical School in York and had publications in *The Lancet*. He remained in his post until he died in July 1854 aged 53. Henry Russell was interred at St Olave's on August 3rd 1854. He left £450 in his Will. His grave occupies a position close to the walls of St Mary's Abbey and has unfortunately become rather dilapidated over the years.

29

1803-1859 The Camidge Family – talented musicians, organists and clergymen

The Camidge family of York made a significant contribution to the city's musical heritage, over five generations. The most important musicians in the family, two of whom are buried in St Olave's churchyard, were John (1734-1803), Matthew (1764-1844) and John (1790-1859)⁽⁸³⁾. All were successive organists at York Minster. They also composed and were prominent players during concert seasons in the city and more widely. The younger John was an acquaintance and friend of the composer Felix Mendelssohn.

- **John Camidge** (1734-1803), was the last of a family of seven children born to Robert Camidge (a bricklayer) and his wife Ann (nee Haigh). His parents were both natives of York and were married at Holy Trinity Micklegate in 1718. John, baptised at Holy Trinity Goodramgate in December 1734, was the first male in the family to show musical promise. He became a chorister at the Minster and after his voice broke, was paid to do musical copying. According to his great-grandson, Thomas Simpson Camidge, John impressed the Dean of York, who took him (with his own family) to stay in London where he apparently had music lessons with George Frederick Handel. If true, this happened before John was appointed as organist of Doncaster Parish Church with an annual salary of £30⁽⁸⁴⁾. Just six months later, he left Doncaster to take up the dual post of organist

83. A pedigree of the Camidge family, compiled by Hugh Murray, is kept at the local History Collection, in York Public Library.

84. This appears to be true, as confirmed in an article about Handel's students by David Hunter (May 2011), OUP, Vol 39.2. Pages 157-164.

at the Minster and St Michael-Le-Belfrey. His salary was increased by £10. Remaining organist at the Minster until 1799 (when he was succeeded by his son Matthew), he stayed on at St Michael-Le-Belfry until just before his death. John married Elizabeth Walshaw in 1756 and they had seven children, including Matthew. Following Elizabeth's death in 1793, he married Jane Mills in 1794, living with her in a house in Bootham and running a boarding school.

John was a comprehensive musician, active in both composition and performance on pianoforte, harpsicord, organ and violin. He composed ten anthems for the choir at the Minster, 'Six easy lessons for the Harpsicord' and numerous subscription pieces, particularly for female performers. He composed a hymn for his Freemasons Lodge in York, where he subsequently became Worshipful Master in 1777. His introduction of Handel's music, including Messiah at Advent and Christmas, into the repertoire and services at the Minster, first met with some resistance but later became very popular. Three song compositions were published towards the end of his life, by Matthew. Sometimes referred to as 'Jacky Camidge' and 'the boy' in advertisements for subscription concerts at the York Assembly Rooms, John sang some pieces and performed organ concertos by Handel and Stanley. He was lead violin in a performance of the 'Messiah' at nearby Tadcaster. Involvement in concerts and several societies demonstrated his outgoing character. In 1799, he founded the York Musical Society, essentially a Gentleman's club devoted to music and bonhomie.

John senior died at home in York on 23rd April 1803, aged 68, and was buried in St Olave's churchyard. His widow Jane died aged 86 in 1837 and was buried with her husband. John left his pianoforte and harpsichord to her, for as long as the school remained and thereafter to Matthew. Matthew received his violins, musical compositions and papers. There is a pastel portrait of John Camidge senior, held in York City Art Gallery.

- **Matthew Camidge** (1764-1844) was the third son of John and Elizabeth Camidge. He was christened at Holy Trinity Goodramgate on 25th May 1764. Of his early musical education, little is known

but it is assumed he was schooled and taught by his father. He became a 'Child of the Chapel Royal London' from around the age of 10-12, presumably at the instigation of his father. His choirmaster there was James Nares, former Minster organist, who had also taught his father. He stayed until he was 15, returning to York, where he remained for the rest of his life. In 1789 he married Mary Shaw, the daughter of a York musician. They had five children; three sons, John, Matthew and Charles Joseph⁽⁸⁵⁾,



Wikipedia

Matthew Camidge

and two daughters, Mary Ann and Emily. His son John (II) became the third-generation organist at the Minster. The couple lived initially in Castlegate, then Petergate, in a house formerly lived in by his parents.

Matthew was appointed organist and choirmaster at York Minster in November 1799, taking over from his father. He later took on his father's appointment at St Michael-Le-Belfrey, remaining in both offices until he retired, aged 79 in 1844. Whilst in post, he published music for the cathedral and parish church, writing in 1806, a volume entitled '*Cathedral Music*' containing anthems, morning and evening service pieces. These remained in the repertoire at the Minster until the mid-1850s; later they were dropped, together with pieces by his father and son (John Camidge II). In its time, his verse anthem '*Thy way, O god, is Holy*' was considered impressive, incorporating a bravura baritone solo. His compositions for hymns and psalms were compiled into a publication known as the '*York Hymn and Psalm Book*'. As well as these compositions, Matthew published works aimed at more evangelical churches in York and

85. Matthew's son Charles Joseph Camidge, later became vicar of Wakefield, and his son, Charles Edward Camidge, in turn, became a clergyman, appointed as rural Dean of Thirsk, Canon at the Minster and later Bishop of Bathurst, New Zealand.

the surrounding districts. He became a musical leader in the region and was well known for his brilliant organ improvisations. Like his father, Matthew organised many concerts and festivals and was also proficient at playing the violin. He later wrote several piano sonatas which whilst popular, were written (he admitted) very much in the style of Handel and Corelli. His compositions were considered solid in craftsmanship but somewhat conservative.

Matthew and particularly his son John Camidge II were friends and contemporaries of William Etty; they often moved in the same circles. In fact, William Camidge (Solicitor and author, son of John Camidge II), wrote a biography of the artist. Matthew died on 23rd October 1844, aged 80. He was interred in the churchyard with his wife Mary, who died, 1835, aged 72.

- **Dr John Camidge II** (1796-1859) followed on from his father and grandfather to become a celebrated musician and organist, assisting and eventually taking over from Matthew as organist at the Minster. He had played the organ in his youth, receiving musical education from his father. He went to Cambridge, graduating in 1812 as Mus.Bac, later achieving his doctorate degree in 1819. Around 1825, he composed and published a volume of cathedral music and adapted classical music for use in Anglican services. But he was principally known for his masterful organ playing, having learned techniques from his father but using his own considerable skills to improvise and innovate. John (II) and his wife Elizabeth (nee Dickenson) had four children, Elizabeth, John, Thomas Simpson and Mary Angelica. They lived in Manor Yard, Marygate and were parishioners at St Olave's. Mary Angelica died, aged 17 in August 1825. She was buried in St Olave's churchyard. In 1829, there was a fire at York



York City Art Gallery

*Dr John Camidge II
(William Etty)*

Minster, which, alongside other serious damage, destroyed the organ. A press report in the *York Courier* Feb 7th, 1829, described the damage (abridged):

‘After the fire, how different was the scene which met the eye from what used to be witnessed from that glorious temple. Instead of the sacred silence that habitually reigned in that holy place, the aisles resounded with shouts of persons within, giving orders to their assistants and the hurried tread of people moving to and fro. A detachment of Dragoon Guards was drawn up in the nave to prevent intrusion. On approaching the choir, a most distressing scene of blackened 14th century woodwork, carvings obliterated and then, the absence of the organ – the only remains of that splendid instrument consisting of a few pieces of pipe and ironwork heaped against a pillar near the screen upon which it had stood. All above it was the vault of heaven! The roof of the choir, from the tower to the great east window, was lying on the floor, in one mass of indistinguishable ruin, emitting a considerable cloud of smoke. A saddening gloom was cast upon this miserable desolation. The Great East Window – the glory of the cathedral, has suffered comparatively little, surprisingly, despite the roof, in its downward course, ranged within inches of the window structure. Of the exterior, a stranger could have no idea that a conflagration had taken place, apart from the heaps of debris. Many persons were inclined to believe it was the work of a diabolical incendiary.’

Estimation of the costs of restoration amounted to around £150,000 and replacement of the organ, at least £8,000. Afterwards, there were reports that



National Portrait Gallery

Charles Edward
Camidge: Bishop of
Bathurst
(Grandson of Matthew
Camidge)

anonymous letters had been sent to the Dean and clergy threatening destruction of the cathedral. A rope ladder had been discovered, with other signs of arson. Soon afterwards, an escapee from Bedford asylum, Jonathan Martin, was arrested and convicted. Committed to another asylum in Lambeth, he died nine years later. Camidge gave evidence at the trial regarding the destruction of the organ. He subsequently devoted considerable time to the construction of a replacement. For many years, it was considered one of the finest in the world, built under his direction. George Hudson, the ‘Railway King’ (before his fall from grace) donated and presented the ‘Jura Mirabilis’ organ stop, at the suggestion of Camidge.

In 1842, John was appointed organist at York, replacing his father. He held the post until his death. He continued the tradition of the ‘York Cathedral Festivals’ and under him they achieved their greatest acclaim. Six years after his appointment, he suffered a stroke whilst playing the organ at evening service; left disabled, he did not play the organ again.

His son Thomas Simpson Camidge took over as organist until John’s death in 1859, later becoming organist at Hexham Abbey. Thomas Simpson played the newly installed ‘Conacher and Brown’ organ at St Olave’s in 1856, during a choral service, at which the Minster choir sang. The service was reported in the *Yorkshire Gazette* of December 1856. Thomas’s son (John Camidge (III)) subsequently became organist at Beverley Minster, making him the fifth generation of organists in the family. By the time of John Camidge the younger’s death, St Olave’s had been closed to further burials. He was buried instead at All Saint’s Pavement Church⁽⁸⁶⁾.



Camidge graves: St Olave’s

86. Information concerning the Camidge family has been drawn primarily from ‘The Camidges of York: Five Generations of a Musical Family. David Griffiths. 2010. Borthwick Publications. Also, newspaper archives and other sources.

Wolstenholme Family – Carvers, sculptors and businessmen

The Wolstenholme family - was the most challenging family to research in this document largely because there were so many of them (!). In addition, Wolstenholme fathers named successive generations of sons after themselves. The most well-known trade in the family was wood carving. Many of York's Georgian and Victorian properties contain works from successive generations of Wolstenholmes. The family story (in terms of this research) begins when Eli Wolstenholme (born 1725 in York), a wool comber, married Elizabeth Atkinson at St Olave's in 1757. Eli had a younger brother, Joseph Wolstenholme, also a wool comber. No information has been found about Eli and Joseph's parents, but the two brothers were parishioners of St Olave's, married here and their children were all christened here.

Sons of Eli and Elizabeth Wolstenholme

Eli and Elizabeth had four sons. Thomas (born 1757), a sculptor/carver; John (born 1760), a silk weaver; Dean (born 1762); a fringe merchant (his son, also Dean, became a druggist); and Francis (born 1771), a sculptor/carver. They also had two daughters, Elizabeth (born 1764) and Ann (born 1767). Elizabeth died in 1798 and Eli in 1811 at the grand age of 86.

Thomas Wolstenholme (1757-1812)

It is not known where Thomas learned his trade, but it seems certain he was apprenticed to a master who did an excellent job. Over the ensuing years, Thomas became the lynchpin of Wolstenholme family fortunes, developing a successful business as an ornamental sculptor and carver whilst building and acquiring properties in and around Bootham and Gillygate. His business workshops were based at Manor Yard and Gillygate. Some of his best work can be seen in the wood and plasterwork around the doors, ceilings and fireplaces of 28, Gillygate - Gillygate House (former GP practice, placed on the market in 2018

for £2.25 million). Almost all the original features remain and are a testament to Thomas Wolstenholme's skills. He was much in demand and seemed to possess sound business acumen in his investments.



Interior reception room: Gillygate House.

Thomas built the two symmetrical houses which comprise 3-5 Gillygate in 1797. Four storeys high, they are now shops, and the building is Grade II listed. The upper floors are mostly original, but the facades and other parts of the houses have suffered from poor adaptations over the years, particularly in 1980. The Historic England website notes two original staircases, and on the upper floors, fireplaces enriched with garlands and urns and pilastered frames to bay windows and doorways. Thomas



Front Elevation (as built)



1st Floor Plan (as built)



3-5 Gillygate⁽⁸²⁾.

British History On-line



Gillygate House (Exterior)

occupied number 3 himself and the property remained in the hands of the family until 1887. The house must have looked impressive at the time it was erected as this drawing of the original building illustrates.

Numbers 15-17 Bootham were acquired by Thomas in 1790 (mentioned in his Will). Both are now substantially altered but original staircases and fireplaces from 1799 remain. One fireplace was fashioned by Thomas himself and has a composition decoration of anthemion pattern⁽⁸⁷⁾ between profile heads. He also undertook the same form of decoration on the architrave to one of the doors. Examples of his work can also be seen in Bootham Lodge and at Garrow Hill.

It seems that Thomas never married but his Will⁽⁸⁸⁾ reveals that he had a ‘natural’ daughter called Arabella Poole. Despite searching extensively, details about Arabella remain elusive. Thomas was obviously very fond of her since he left her a generous legacy in his Will dated 1800:

To my natural daughter Arabella Poole, who now lives with me, for her prudent conduct, dutiful and affectionate behavior, I give and desire to her and her heirs; the north east house in Gillygate, adjoining Mr Hugh Tootell’s premises, with all its conveniences and interest thereof .

He also bequeathed an annual allowance to her together with: *‘All my personal property in my place of residence including linen, clothing, books, drawings, prints, plate, bonds and every moveable object in the house belonging to me.’*

Thomas left his other properties to his brothers Dean and Francis (his other brother John had died in 1798), his father Eli, his sister Elizabeth and his niece Ann (daughter of John). The entry leaving property and £10 annually to his father for his lifetime is touching and refers to Eli’s *‘good example and parental attention to my early welfare’*. In the event, Eli died a year before Thomas and was interred with his wife Elizabeth at St Olave’s church. The Will entries regarding Thomas’s two remaining brothers are equally touching since he refers to their significant help and assistance to his business interests. It was his earnest wish that none of the properties should be sold and that they should remain in the family for *‘as long as may be’*. He left his business in *‘Composition Ornaments and Carving’*, presumably his greatest long-term asset, to his younger brother, Francis Wolstenholme, with its stock, moulds, drawing books, tools and equipment. The last part of his will

87. ‘Anthemion’ refers to a decorative motif common to Egyptian, Assyrian and Greek art.

88. Thomas Wolstenholme Will held at the Borthwick Archives. Proved February 1813. Vol 157 Folio 514.

says much about his character:

‘From the uncertain duration of human life, my present situation and view of circumstances, I am induced, whilst my faculties are unimpaired, thus, to arrange for distribution the property described in this my last will and testament. Which howsoever it may be defective, I trust in God will make my situation so clearly understood, that no disagreement or litigation may ever happen amongst the parties concerned and that each successive inheritor may receive their share with gratitude and enjoy it with contentment, living in harmony with one another and inviting the esteem of all around them.’

Thomas Wolstenhome died 12 years after making his will, on 20th August 1812, aged 53. The cause of his death is unknown. He was interred in St Olave’s churchyard, possibly with his parents but there is no inscription to them. The inscription on his gravestone provides a lasting epitaph to his rare skills:

Beneath this turf by this monastic shade, he sleeps in death, midst kindred ashes laid, his genius shone with graceful taste attired, his works spoke merit and the age admired. Bright honour’s path he firmly trod through life. Industry banished care and friendship strife. Still shall his memory live admired in fame, whilst genius word or justice hold a name.

Francis Wolstenholme (1771-1841)

Francis Wolstenholme successfully continued his brother’s business, building on his legacy. He had previously married Jane Sellers from Scarborough in 1793, at Scarborough Parish Church. The couple had three sons, John (born 1795), a carver in wood and stone: Francis and Alfred (both also wood carvers), and four daughters: Elizabeth, Jane, Ann and Phoebe. He seems to have accepted his brother Thomas’s natural daughter, Arabella Poole as though she was his own, clearly honouring his brother’s wishes. But it was his son John who was to become as celebrated as his uncle Thomas as a highly skilled craftsman. Francis added to his brother’s portfolio of properties, buying a house in Lord Mayor’s Walk (which later became his son John’s workshop base) and houses in St Maurice’s Court. Francis, together with his older brother John, was a churchwarden and benefactor of St Olave’s and his family worshipped here. His name appears on the benefaction board.

One of Francis's best-known works was the decorative wood carving on the organ at Sledmere for Sir Christopher Sykes in 1793. He is also attributed with carving work at Eaton Hall in Cheshire in 1811, for which he was paid £505 (Grosvenor Archives). On his death in 1841, the business was left entirely to his eldest son John Wolstenholme together with other properties. His younger sons and daughters, including Arabella were left properties and the youngest son Francis received all his carving tools. His house in Gillygate was left to John and his house in Bootham (with ample annual provision) to his wife, Jane. He asked John, in his will, to '*Act unto his brothers and sisters as a father and employ his younger brothers for as long as they wished*'. He repeated the words which had been used previously in Thomas's will regarding provision for Arabella Poole's welfare. Francis died on 13th April 1833, aged 62. Jane, who died November 18th, 1841, aged 70, was interred with him.

Dean Wolstenholme (1762-1826)

Eli's third son, Dean, became a successful fringe merchant⁽⁸⁹⁾. It seems he also worked closely with his older brother, John (the second son of Eli) as well as supporting eldest brother Thomas in his growing business. He had a shop in Coney street. Dean married Mary Stabler and they lived in Bootham. He had a son (Dean Elias) and a daughter Olivia, who died at the age of 25 in 1825. Dean (Elias) became a druggist, owning a shop in the city. Dean (the elder) died in September 1826 aged 64 and was buried with his daughter Olivia on October 1st at St Olave's. His wife Mary died June 1st, 1831 and was interred with her family.

John Wolstenholme (1794-1865)

Son of Francis and grandson of Eli. John Wolstenholme became as celebrated as his uncle Thomas and possessed superb skills in wood carving. He married Sarah Shepherd in 1831 at St Olave's. He was 37 and Sarah was 35. They lived at 'The Groves.' Sarah died three years after their marriage on September 15th, 1834, aged 39. She was buried at St Olave's. John remained a widower until his death. In 1861 he had changed address and was living at Lord Mayor's Walk.

89. Fringe Merchants manufactured and sold trimmings and tassels, much in demand for curtains and fabric Decorations.

John is best known for his carving and sculpting work at York Minster and other York churches⁽⁹⁰⁾.

After the Minster fire of 1829, John worked with Sir Robert Smirke (architect). He was responsible for carving replacement bosses on the



Choir Stalls at York Minster: John Wolstenholme Carving after 1829 fire

choir ceiling, carving on the stalls, the screens and on the front of the organ loft. He was asked to work with Sydney Smirke (architect and son of Sir Robert) on restoration work at the Minster after it suffered another devastating fire on the night of 20-21st May 1841. John had earlier given evidence regarding damage to the woodwork in the cathedral at the trial of Jonathan Martin, who was convicted of arson and committed to an asylum. The fire damaged the medieval roof. Smirke re-designed the roof and the ceiling, and under his direction, John carved new roof bosses from drawings made by John Browne. Amongst other payments to him was one for £411 in 1843 concerning the bosses. He undertook carving on the central doors. The north west Minster door is also attributed to John and another carver George Coates. For many years before and after this, John was engaged in such work at the Minster. He was a member of the York Philosophical Society until his death.

He conducted business from his workshop in Minster Yard until 1827 when the premises were taken over to establish the Blind School.

90. Addleshaw G.W.O (1967). Architects, Sculptors, Painters and Craftsmen 1660-1960, whose work is to be seen in York Minster. *Architectural History* Vol 10 p89-119.

He then moved his workshop to Lord Mayor's Walk. He took on apprentices and continued to earn a solid reputation resulting from the quality of his work. It is not certain but likely that John either authored or contributed to a book published in 1866 (posthumously) entitled '*A guide to the Cathedral Church of St Peter's York*'. The uncertainty stems from differing accounts of authorship.



*Statue of Minerva (Minster Gates):
John Wolstenholme*

The Wolstenholme family is also attributed with several carvings on the front of buildings and businesses in the city centre. The most famous (by John Wolstenholme) is the carved and gilded statue of Minerva, above a shop at the junction of Minster Gates and Stonegate. He undertook this for his cousin (another John Wolstenholme!) who formerly owned the shop, running a very successful bookshop and printing business. This was later owned by his brother (another Francis Wolstenholme!)⁽⁹¹⁾.

John was captured in three Census records. Each time he was living alone with a servant, except the last record (1861) which recorded him as living with his nephew, Francis(!) and a servant/housekeeper. He died in 1865 and since St Olave's was closed to burials in 1854, John could not be buried with his wife Sarah. Despite searching, his place of burial in York has not been discovered. It is assumed that the business was subsequently taken over by one of John's younger brothers.

91. The shop is now called 'Shared Earth'.

Sons of Joseph Wolstenholme (Brother of Eli)

Joseph Wolstenholme (born 1723), was, like his brother Eli, a wool comber. No credible records have been discovered about his marriage, but he had at least two sons, including George (born 1758) and William (born 1761) who became a joiner. Both were cousins to Thomas, John, Francis and Dean Wolstenholme.

George Wolstenholme (son of Joseph) - was born in York in 1758. He too was a parishioner at St Olave's. He married twice, first to Elizabeth Turner in 1774. After her death in 1782, he married Mary Sugden in the same year. Both his marriages were at St Olave's. George and Mary had five sons, Joseph (born 1784); George junior (born 1785), Francis (birthdate not found), John (born 1791); Thomas (born 1793) and two daughters, Margaret (born 1782) and Rebecca (born 1785). The family lived in Palmer Lane. George was the Master of the Marygate Poor House for 30 years. Although his obituary extols his '*kind and humane disposition*' towards the poor, the Poor House did not have such a benevolent reputation. It was largely after his tenure that the institution became far more notorious.

In 1729 proposals were made for a residential workhouse to be established in York, following earlier failures to do so. There was local opposition and therefore the parishes went their own way to provide for the poor. Finally, in 1768, some of the parishes decided to set up a joint workhouse (poorhouse) to accommodate 90 paupers at a former cotton factory at 29, Marygate. The paupers worked on textile production. After 1837, the newly established Poor Law Union took over the existing workhouse in Marygate and found conditions unhygienic and disease rife. 'Privies' were non-existent, with offensive open cesspits in the yard. In 1845, *Leeds Mercury* reported '*shameful conditions*' at the York Union Workhouse, 'affecting the physical and mental condition' of the pauper inmates. The aftermath of the investigation and report led to the building of a new union workhouse on Huntington Road and the old Marygate premises were taken over by the 'Ragged School' and later the Industrial School. These too developed poor reputations and the school was closed in the early twentieth century. It is now the Post Office Club, but the building remains largely unchanged from its former purpose.

George Wolstenholme died on December 31st, 1822 aged 65. He was buried at St Olave's on January 5th, 1823, with his wife Mary, who had died in 1793. George and Mary's two unmarried daughters Rebecca and Margaret are buried in the same plot. His sons became successful businessmen, John and Francis running the bookshop and printing business in High Petergate, and Joseph, a wine and spirits business in the same street. George junior ran a confectionary business. No records have been found for the occupation pursued by Thomas. George Wolstenholme junior (the confectioner) died in 1831 aged 46; John Wolstenholme (the bookseller) died in 1843, aged 52; Thomas Wolstenholme died in 1845, aged 52; and Joseph (the wine and spirits merchant) died in 1847 aged 63. George, John and Joseph are all interred at St Olave's. It is not known where Francis and Thomas are buried.



*York Ragged School
circa 1900: Former
Marygate poorhouse.*

A grandson of William Wolstenholme (son of Joseph above), George William Wolstenholme (born circa 1810), who after an apprenticeship (possibly to his uncle John Wolstenholme), became a joiner/carver and was living at the long-standing family home in Palmer Lane. He committed suicide in December 1859. This was reported in the *York Herald* of Saturday December 10th, 1859 as follows:

On Tuesday evening last, an inquest was held to enquire into the circumstance's attendant on the death of George William Wolstenholme, joiner of Palmer Lane, who had, that morning, been found suspended by the neck from a beam in his own workshop in Fossgate. That morning he had conversed with a neighbour, near the workshop called Mrs Hartley and then went to his workshop. In the following 15 minutes Mrs Hartley sent her daughter to the workshop to borrow a glue pot and it was then discovered that the deceased was hanging by a rope from the beam, his toes touching the floor. An alarm was at once given, and two men who worked in the yard, cut him down. Mr O.A Moore,

surgeon, shortly arrived and after opening one of his veins, declared the deceased to be quite dead. He had been depressed in spirits for some time, in consequence of his business not answering his expectations and because of some legal proceedings at the County Court, in which he was involved. The case had been adjourned until Tuesday (the day he committed the rash act). He had also been noticed the previous night by a John Bellerby, in Fossgate, acting in a wild and abrupt manner: and at 11 o'clock the same night, he called Bellerby out of bed to tell him 'he would pay him what he owed him, if only he would wait a bit'. The Jury, under the circumstances, recorded a verdict that the deceased had strangled himself by hanging, whilst in an unsound state of mind.

The Wolstenholme family was both talented and largely successful in their various craft and business fields, apart from the last-named tragic case. Researching such a large and complex array of family branches and similar names has been particularly difficult but has been undertaken as accurately as possible using numerous sources. Problems arose because there many other Wolstenholmes residing in York from different family lineages. It would require the input of an expert genealogist to ensure total accuracy. No doubt there are living family descendants who may have achieved this!



Wolstenholme family graves in St Olave's churchyard.

20th Century

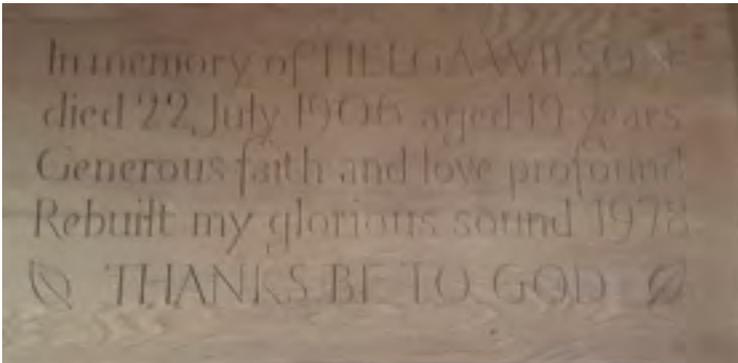
31

Helga Wilson (Organ Memorial plaque above the organ console)

The inscribed oak plaque is dedicated to Helga Wilson who died, aged 19 in 1906. There is a record of her having been buried at St Olave's that year but as the churchyard was closed to further burials 50 years earlier and there is no headstone erected to her memory, the whereabouts of her grave or possibly interment of ashes is a mystery. Helga died in London, possibly being treated in hospital there, visiting or at University. What caused her death is unknown. Her parents, parishioners George and Florence Wilson, lived at 111, St Peter's Grove in Bootham. George was a timber merchant in York.

Following Helga's death, Florence Wilson, who clearly admired organ music, donated the current organ to St Olave's in 1907 in memory of her daughter. She decided on this generous gift after listening to the wonderful sound of (a larger 1903 version) of the same organ in the Minster.

This organ was built in 1907 by Walker and Sons. With a total of 2,281 pipes, the organ is second only to that of York Minster in terms of range and quality.



Helga Wilson: Memorial Plaque (above organ console)

32

The Great War Memorial (North aisle wall)

The Great War (1914-18) Memorial, designed by WH Parkinson (Architect of Leeds) was unveiled at a service at St Olave's on 11th November 1920. After the war ended, the bereaved of the parish had been consulted about the design and it was paid for by subscriptions. During the centenary of the end of WW1 in 2018, research on each serviceman recorded on the memorial was launched at a special event on 26th October. The research is available as a booklet at the back of the nave.



Photo: Gail Munden 2018

Great War Memorial

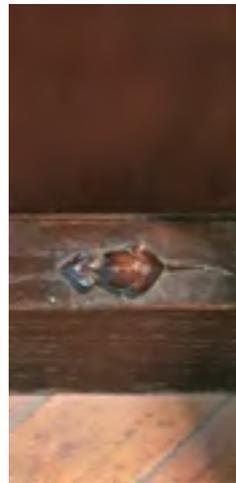
Ann and Adrienne Wilson (Pews in the Transfiguration Chapel)

One of the beautiful pews in the Lady (Transfiguration) Chapel displays an inscription to sisters Ann and Adrienne Wilson. They were the two daughters of John and Adrienne Wilson. Their mother was from Switzerland. Adrienne, their first-born child was born at York in 1849, Ann in 1853. There were three other siblings including a brother, George. John Wilson was a successful Master Carpenter, employing two men and three boys and taking on several apprentices over the years. Adrienne and Ann never married. Their brother George took over the family business when John Wilson died. In 1901, the two sisters were living with their elderly mother at 4, Tower Street in Castlegate. After their mother's death, Adrienne and Ann moved to St Peter's Grove and became regular worshippers at St Olave's. Ann died in 1929 and Adrienne in 1933.

Their generous legacy to the church over several years was used to enhance the current Chapel of the Transfiguration (converted from a former vestry in 1908). The reredos and altar rails were added, and pews were crafted by Robert Thompson of Kilburn in 1930. A couple of these feature the signature 'mouse' of Robert Thompson⁽⁹²⁾. The memorial windows of the chapel by Shrigley and Hunt, Whitefriars, and Stammers are described more fully in Stapleton's *History of St Olave's*.



*Transfiguration
Chapel (Wilson
pew)*



Thompson Mouse

92. Robert Thompson (1876-1955) was a celebrated furniture maker in Kilburn who contributed to the 1920's revival of the Arts and Crafts movement. His business still operates. The mouse motif originated after a conversation with a colleague concerning being 'as poor as a church mouse'. From then on, most pieces he made featured a mouse. Many churches in Yorkshire have a Thompson mouse 'hidden' somewhere.

James Hervey Rutherford (1874-1946) Architect (Memorial Window in south nave wall)

James (Jim) Hervey Rutherford was born on 16th April 1874, in Govan (Glasgow), the second son of Frank and Isabella (Hervey) Rutherford. His father was a mercantile clerk. He had three siblings, Thomas (his older brother by two years) and younger sisters Margaret and Isabella. The family later moved to Edinburgh where James had his early education. It is not known where he learned his initial skills in architecture (evidently he either did not sit, or failed to pass, the qualifying examination), but his career began in earnest whilst articulated as an apprentice to an Edinburgh firm, Robert Roland Anderson in 1893, attending classes at the Edinburgh School of Applied Art and Heriot-Watt College. In 1899, aged 25, James moved to London to work for three firms in close succession. Between 1899 and 1901, he attended the RA schools, winning several scholarships and prizes including the Pugin and Owen Jones Studentships. Winning the 'Owen Jones' gave him the opportunity, in 1902, to spend six months travelling in Spain, Sicily and Italy⁽⁹³⁾.

These early experiences were clearly influential (and beneficial) and his career started to progress. At the end of 1901, he took up an offer to move to York as chief assistant to Walter Henry Brierley. Brierley had practiced in York for over 40 years and was dubbed the 'Yorkshire Lutyens'. The Atkinson-Brierley Architectural Practice had been in existence in various phases since 1750 and the firm remains the oldest practice in the UK (now operating



*Rutherford's Drawing of
Beverley Minster 1898.*

93. The source material describing Rutherford's career as Architect is taken from the *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*. Wikipedia.



*James Harvey
Rutherford
(Architect: At home
and during WW1
service)*

*Photos: in Borthwick
Papers (courtesy
of James Hervey
Rutherford's nephew,*

as Brierley-Groom). This was another good career move for Rutherford and he thrived on it. He sought membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 1911. Proposed by the then President of the York and Yorkshire Architectural Society, he was admitted as LRIBA. His career was interrupted during WW1 when he served as a Private in the Highland Light Infantry. He married Gertrude Scothern in 1919, at the age of 45. There are no records of children born to the couple. They lived in Bootham Crescent.

After years of pushing, Brierley eventually agreed to entering into partnership with Rutherford. In 1918, the firm became Brierley and Rutherford. Brierley was one of his proposers for election to the Fellowship of RIBA on 30th November 1925. When Brierley died in August the following year, Rutherford went into partnership with John Stuart Syme, who had served as an apprentice alongside him years earlier, in Anderson's firm. The

partnership continued the successful reputation built by Walter Brierley, extending until Rutherford's retirement in 1939. James gained status as one of the finest architects in the north of England, building on the legacy of Brierley and earning accolades for his portfolio of work, some of which is documented in the Borthwick Archives at York University. One of his best works was the re-modelling of Lord Grimthorpe's house in Malton⁽⁹⁴⁾. He was a gifted draughtsman who was key to many of Brierley's best buildings. Brierley's also looked after the conservation and development needs of many of York's ancient churches and Rutherford became 'Consulting Architect' for St Olave's. Given they were parishioners, living in Bootham (and Rutherford's professional association with the church), it is very likely that James and Gertrude worshipped here.

94. This house was associated with Charles Dickens, who spent many days there, as a friend and guest of the then owner.

A shock to their system occurred when the couple's home was bombed in April 1942, following an air attack during WW2. Miraculously they survived but the house was effectively in ruins. James had a reputation for occasional grumpiness so this incident may have exacerbated this aspect of his character. He was able to claim for reparations and wrote a touching letter of contrition to a former colleague who successfully handled his claim and with whom he had previously fallen out. It demonstrated Rutherford's capacity to reflect on past differences and offer the hand of reconciliation⁽⁹⁵⁾. More generally, he found it difficult to recover from what he described as the 'calamitous event'. Declining in health, he died three years afterwards in March 1946, aged 72.



Rutherford's bombed house in Bootham Crescent, 1942.

His funeral service was held at St Olave's on 24th March 1946. According to an obituary and family notice in the *Yorkshire Post*, James was cremated at Lawnswood (crematorium) nr Leeds. On the south nave wall of St Olave's is a memorial window, commemorating his life and career. It was executed by Christopher Webb in 1947⁽⁹⁶⁾. The Faculty for a heraldic window was agreed in August 1947; it would replace a former window damaged during WW2. The window (illustrated on right) has an elegant simplicity, betraying its complexity. It reflects Rutherford's historical interests, personal taste and experience, association with the church



James Hervey Rutherford Memorial Window St Olave's

95. Thanks are due to Edward Waterson for his contribution and guidance on the entry for James Hervey Rutherford.

96. Christopher Webb (1886-1966). His stained glass is recognised as amongst the finest of the early 20th century.

and professional background. Members of the congregation and church visitors delight in looking at it, witnessing the beautiful design and colours, especially through sunlight. The memorial inscription, in sepia lettering, states:

James Hervey Rutherford, Architect, 1874-1946

Key features: on the left side are the arms of Thomas Arundel (FitzAlan): Archbishop of York 1388-1396, showing the arms of the See of Canterbury. On the right side are the arms of George Neville, Archbishop of York (brother of 'Warwick the Kingmaker') 1465-1476, again showing the arms of the See of Canterbury. The Royal arms in the centre of the window are those of Stuart monarch, Queen Anne 1702-1714. On the upper right are the initials JHR and on the upper left a Scottish thistle, denoting his birthplace and origins. The second inscription at the top of the window reads:

*'They shall build the old wastes,
they shall raise up the former desolations'
Isaiah 61:4*

The significance of the three coats of arms is that each were benefactors to the restoration of St Olave's during significant changes in its history⁽⁹⁷⁾.

97. In 1395, Archbishop Thomas Arundel ordered repairs to be done to the church after disputes between parishioners and the Abbot of St Mary's over maintaining the fabric, although little of significance was done. In 1466, Archbishop George Neville made the order for St Olave's to become a parish church, including an award for repairs and extension, donations of money, land for a churchyard, vestments and altar vessels from the Abbey. After the English Civil War, initial repairs to the damaged church were carried out through a grant from Queen Anne (*Queen Anne's Bounty*). These periods of restoration in the 14th, 15th and 18th centuries and damage resulting from WW2 were the guiding inspiration behind the design of Rutherford's memorial window.

Appendix

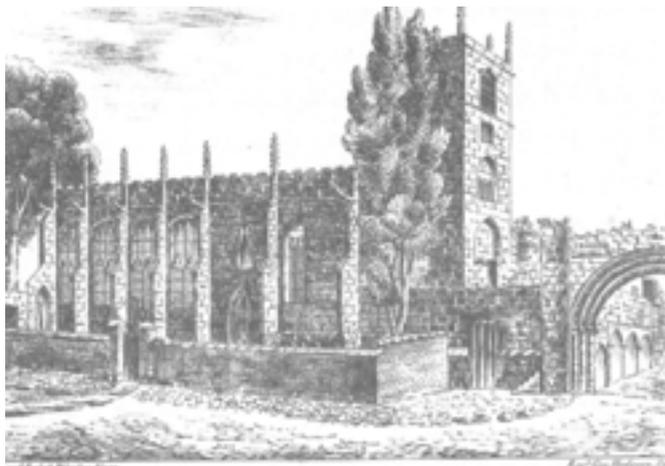
Maps showing the position of the memorials and graves of those researched can be found on p126-129.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Canon Malcolm Grundy, Bill Read, Gail Murden, Keith Wright, Anne Hall, Revd Kingsley Boulton, Revd Jane Natrass, Jacqui Edwards and Edward Waterson for their respective contributions and assistance during the compilation and presentation of this work. Also, for the incredible help from staff at the Borthwick Institute for Archives at York University and other members of the congregation and clergy who have put up with my frequent email streams.

All photographs are attributed to Helen Fields (particularly gravestones) unless otherwise stated and acknowledged.

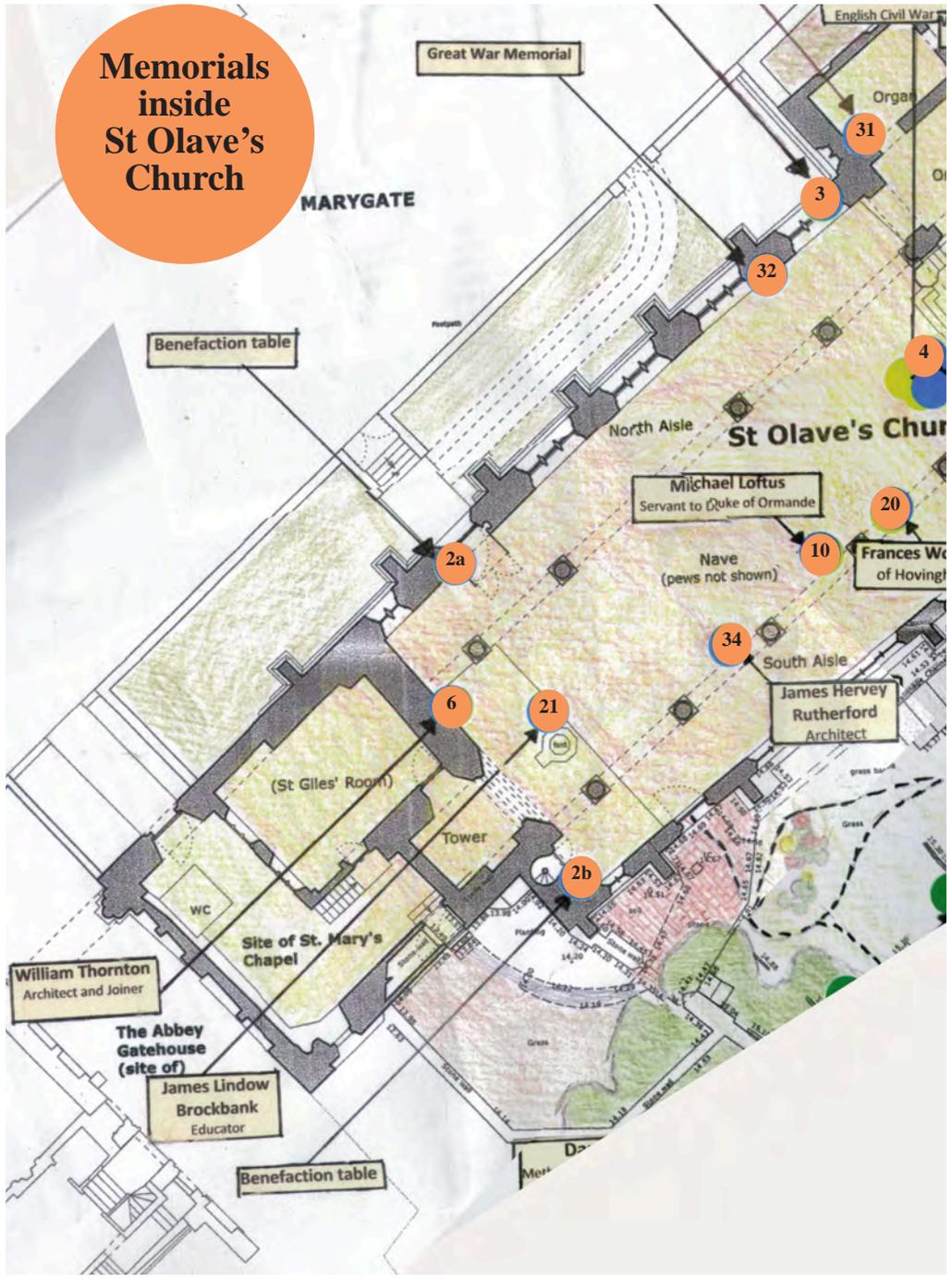
Helen Fields
June 2019

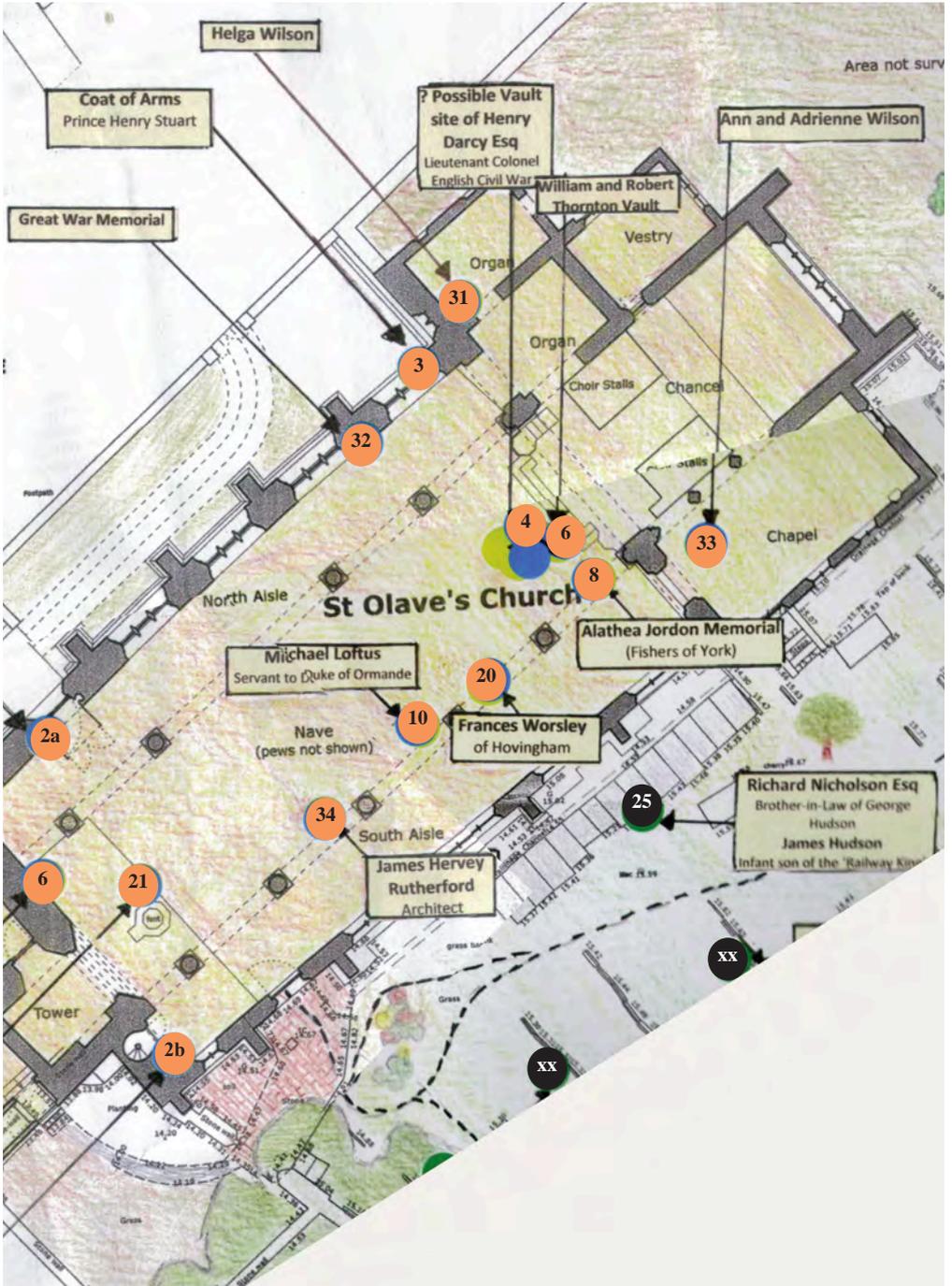


S^t OLAVE'S CHURCH, MARYGATE, YORK.

St Olave's Church pre 1830

**Memorials
inside
St Olave's
Church**

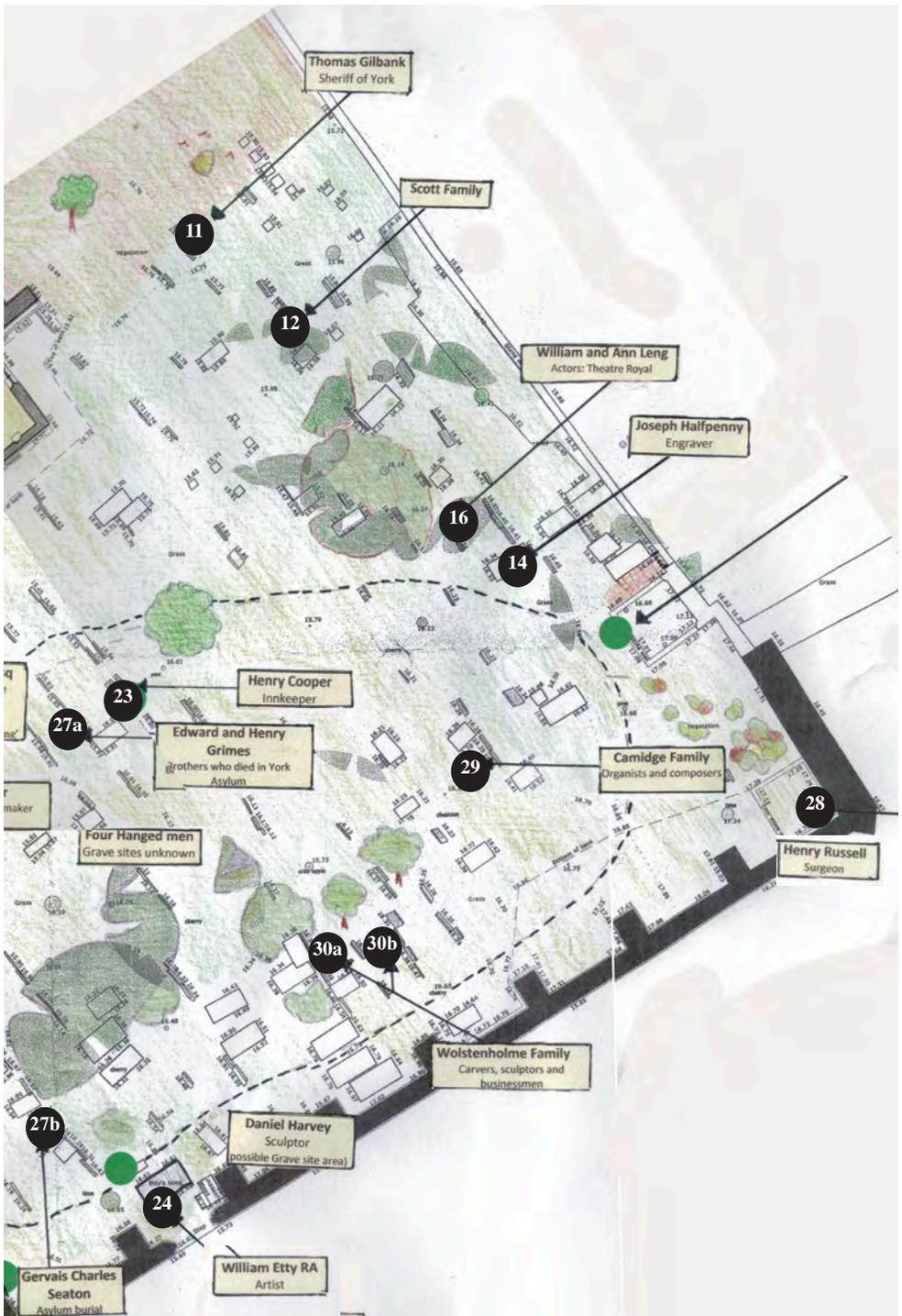




Graves in St Olave's churchyard

11







*Churchyard views, overlooked by the ruins of
St Mary's Abbey*