

## Some missing memorials part 1

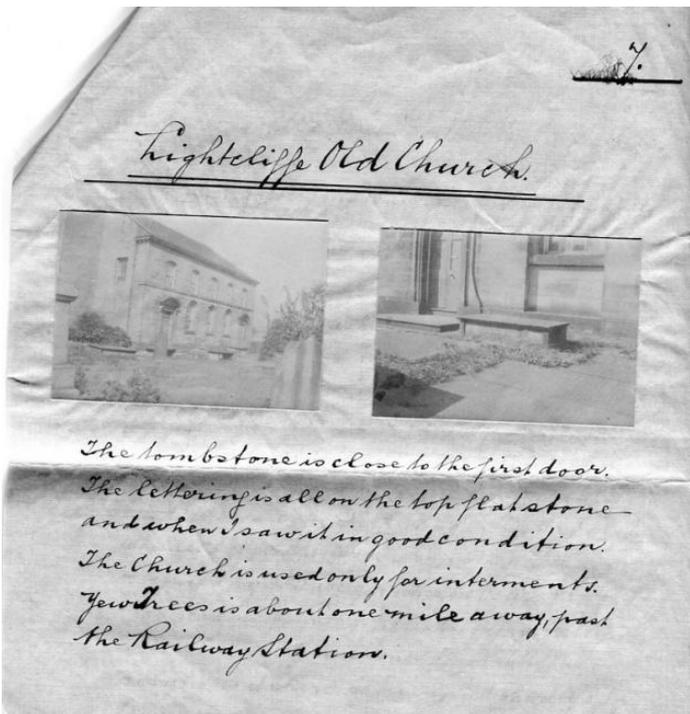
The **Burial Search** facility on our website [Burial Records \(lightcliffchurchyard.org.uk\)](http://Burial Records (lightcliffchurchyard.org.uk)) allows users to search for an individual to see if they were buried in the churchyard. For some individuals there is then the added bonus of being able to look up a transcription of the memorial inscription. These handwritten transcriptions were made by a gentleman called Arthur Blackburn nearly one hundred years ago.

Arthur Blackburn visited many local churchyards for a few years around 1930 recording many of the inscriptions on grave memorials. He did ours, writing down about 900 memorial inscriptions. It is known as the Blackburn Register of Memorial Inscriptions; a copy is kept in the vestry of St Matthew's Church and another in Bradford Library's Local History section. When the restoration project began, these transcriptions were used to check the newly revealed grave plots against the burial records.

But about twenty were missing. These were known burials that Blackburn had recorded the memorial inscriptions for so headstones or ledger stones had existed then, but we could not find. Were they buried under grass, or had they been removed? One summer after a dry period, a neighbour flew his drone over the churchyard. Outlined in a different colour, some of these grave plots showed up below the parched grass. Then after a little digging their ledger stones were revealed. This reduced the number of missing plots to about fifteen. We have also had tested every piece of grass to no avail.

### The Tate family

Then we had an enquiry from descendants of a Tate family. They enclosed a note and a photograph of a Tate chest tomb situated just outside the western doorway of the old church. Where it was then is now just a rectangle of grass. The English Heritage photograph of the front of the church, taken in 1960, does not have a tomb by the door.



The note above reads:-

*The tomb stone is close to the first door. The lettering is all on the top flat stone and when I saw it in good condition. The Church is used only for interments. Yew Trees is about one mile away past the Railway Station.*

Read more about the family who lived at Yew Trees in

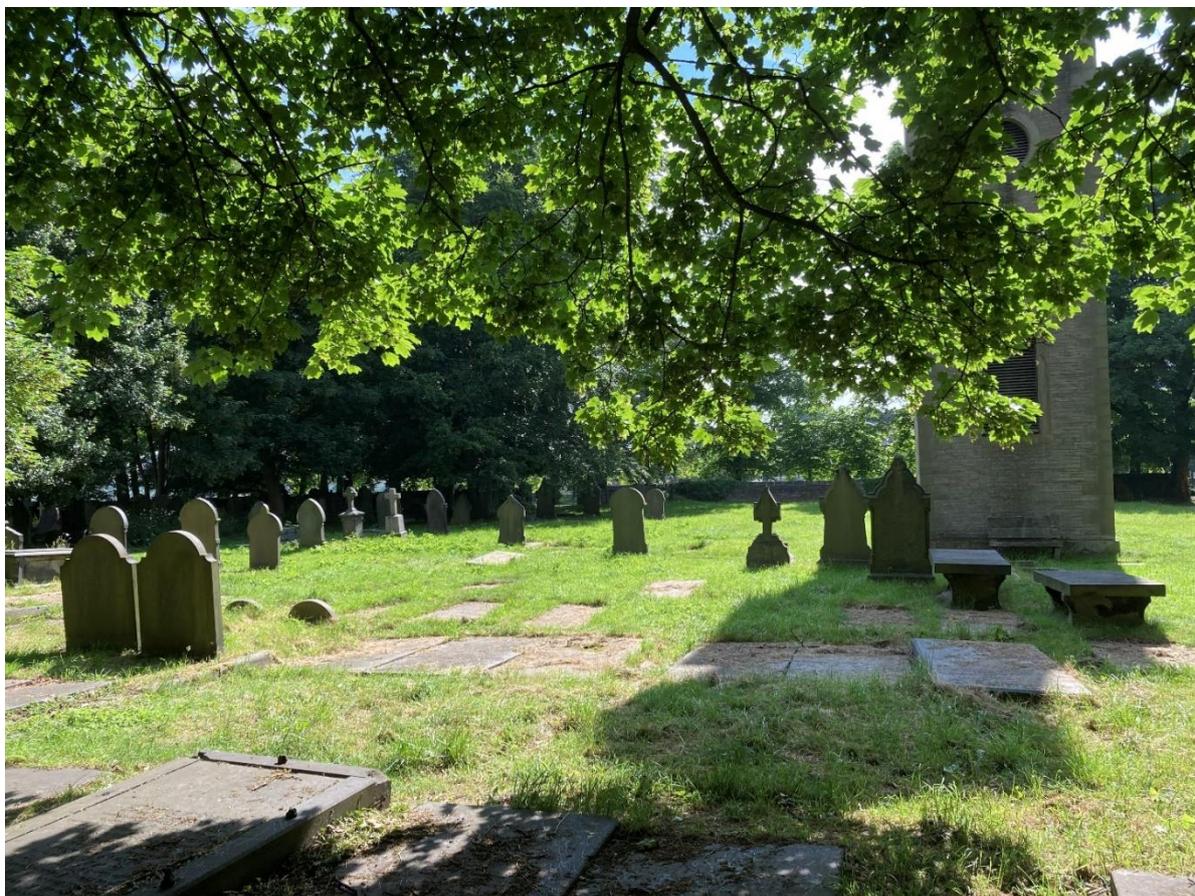
### **The Tate family and then The King family**

If one substantial chest tomb had been removed, perhaps that was what had happened to some of the others. There is a little evidence in the West Yorkshire Archives that a vicar and the council came to an agreement to remove some of these tombs to make cutting the grass easier. We have not found the official permission (a diocesan faculty) approving this. But there are a few slabs of stone with no inscription on them which we now suspect were bases for chest or table tombs.

### **The Macaulay family**

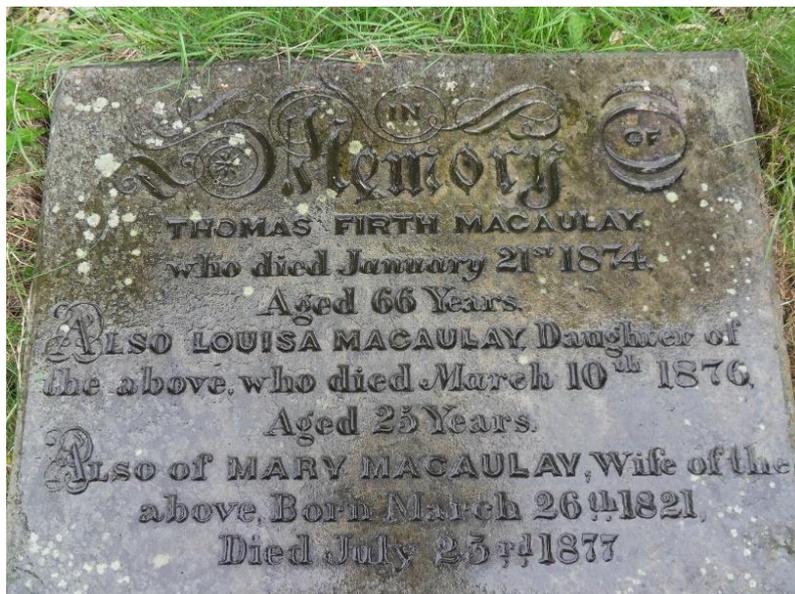
The row of flat ledger stones below belongs to members of the Macauley family originally from Slead House. But two of the six stones are blank – the first and third from the left. Were members of the family buried in these plots? Have their chest or table tombs been removed? Possibly, read on and then read:-

### **The Macaulay family of Slead Hall**



The Macauley family originally of Slead Hall have a number of adjacent plots in the closed churchyard covered with ledger stones. Arthur Blackburn recorded and numbered their various memorial inscriptions.

This one for Thomas Firth and Mary Macauley and a daughter was number 333.



**The ledger stone on plot CC\*7 in the closed churchyard.**

Seven more of their children who had predeceased them were remembered on one of our missing memorials. Arthur Blackburn recorded their details and numbered their transcription 332. Does this mean that the plot was alongside the one their parents eventually occupied? Possibly, as there is a patch of grass there now as the line of ledger stones does not quite 'line up'. So was the lengthy memorial inscription – see below – on a headstone or more likely a ledger stone, perhaps even on a raised tomb stone. It could not have been on the other side of their parents' plot as that was where their grandparents Abraham Firth and Mary Macauley were buried. And then further over are some uncles and aunts and even a great aunt and uncle. Perhaps it was next to the top or bottom of their parents' ledger stone. We will probably never know. What we do know – thanks to Arthur Blackburn – is what the missing memorial said.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM FIRTH MACAULAY THE SON OF THOMAS FIRTH AND MARY OF CROSSLAND HILL NEAR HUDDERSFIELD WHO DIED MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> 1841 AGED 5 WEEKS.

ALSO OF CHARLES HAROLD, SON OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED AUGUST 14<sup>TH</sup> 1846 AGED 29 WEEKS.

ALSO OF HANNAH MARIA DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED DECEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> 1847 AGED 6 WEEKS

ALSO OF CLARA DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup> 1849 AGED 10 MONTHS.

ALSO OF ALFRED BEBBINGTON, SON OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED FEBRUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> 1861 AGED 3 MONTHS

ALSO OF MARY ANN DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED MAY 26<sup>TH</sup> 1865 AGED 22 YEARS

ALSO OF GEORGE GIBSON SON OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup> 1871 AGED 32 YEARS AND WAS INTERRED AT THE HUDDERSFIELD CEMETERY.

## The Balmforth children

John Balmforth married Margaret Holt on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1834 at Heptonstall. They had their eldest son James Holt Balmforth and then their daughter Ann Elizabeth baptised at St. John's Church, Halifax on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1835 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 1837. Each time father John was a cardmaker from Northowram. This is where the family where and what he was doing on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1841.

### 1841 census

John Balmforth	70	Farmer
John Balmforth	40	Cardmaker
James Balmforth	20	ditto
William Balmforth	20	ditto
Margaret Balmforth	30	
Ann Balmforth	4	
Mary Balmforth	2	
John Balmforth	1	Mo
Address Upper Lane, Northowram		

The three oldest children were buried at St. Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1836, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1845 and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1848 with this inscription on the missing memorial number 627.

IN MEMORY OF JAMES HOLT BALMFORTH  
THE SON OF JOHN AND MARGARET BALMFORTH OF NORTHOWRAM  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> 1836 AGED 14 MONTHS.

BLESSED LOVELY BABE JUST FOR A MOMENT GIVEN  
SHOWED FORTH ON EARTH AND THEN RETURNED TO HEAVEN.

ALSO OF ANN ELIZABETH  
DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED JOHN AND MARGARET BALMFORTH  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup> 1845 IN THE 9<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF HER AGE.

ALSO OF MARY HANNAH  
DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 27<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER 1848  
AGED 10 YEARS.

The children's grandfather John Balmforth and their uncle James Balmforth were buried under this table tomb on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1844 and 8<sup>th</sup> February 1858. Read its memorial inscription in the next image.

Was the missing memorial inscription to the children on a similar tabletop tomb next to it? There is room – to the left in the image - and one end of a possible base for the table is just visible.





### Grace Baxendale

Grace Smith of Hipperholme married spinner William Baxendale of Southowram on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1820 at St. John's Church, Halifax. They had four children baptised in Halifax, Mary in 1821, Richard in 1822, John in 1824 and Sarah in 1826. A son James was born about 1829 but baptised later, in 1834, with a half-sister. Grace died not long after little James was born. Presumably William Baxendale remarried after that.

IN MEMORY OF GRACE  
 THE WIFE OF WILLIAM BAXENDALE OF SOUTHOWRAM  
 WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup> 1830 AGED 35 YEARS.

WITH SICKNESS SORE I WAS OPPRESSED  
 WHICH WORE AWAY MY LIFE  
 THAT CAUSED MY SOUL TO SEEK FOR REST  
 THAT NEVER DOTHS DECAY.

**Fanny and William Jowett and four young children.**

Another missing memorial read :-

IN MEMORY OF FANNY WIFE OF WILLIAM JOWETT OF HUNTOCK HOUSE  
LIGHTCLIFFE WHO DIED AUGUST 19<sup>TH</sup> 1849 AGED 78 YEARS

ALSO OF THE ABOVE WILLIAM JOWETT  
WHO DIED AUGUST 24<sup>TH</sup> 1857 IN THE 86<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF HIS AGE.

ALSO IN THIS YARD INTERRED

BETTY

HAM

WILLIAM

AND ONE IN ITS INFANCY

In 1838, i.e. before Fanny died, another son and his daughter were buried in the plot below, now given the code Z\*7. Arthur Blackburn recorded these two memorial inscriptions consecutively as Nos 295 and 296. There is a 'gap' – ringed - next to the first ledger stone. Is this where a Jowett ledger stone or even a Jowett tomb was originally located?

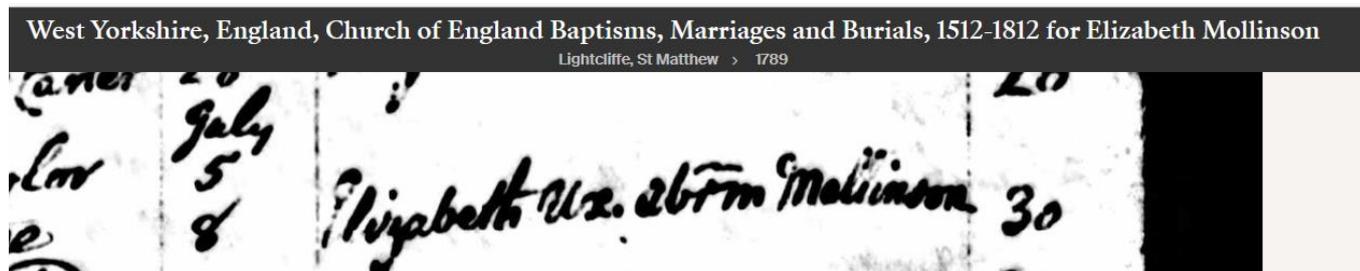


Read more about the Jowett family and their other memorials in

**The Jowett family parts 1 and 2**

## Elizabeth Mallinson

This lady has the longest epitaph that Arthur Blackburn recorded although he did get her husband's name wrong. The parish record names her husband as Abraham Mallinson.



HERE LIES THE BODY OF ELIZABETH THE WIFE OF EDWARD MALLINSON OF HOVE EDGE WHO DIED THE 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 1789 IN THE 51<sup>ST</sup> YEAR OF HER AGE.

IN MENTAL ABILITIES EXCEEDED BY FEW, IN INDUSTRY BY NONE,  
NO WONDER THEN THAT SHE DID MOST GOOD,  
AND THAT MANY LAMENTED HER LOSS.  
FAULTS SHE HAD SOME AND SEVERAL FRAILTIES  
OR SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE THAN WOMAN.

BUT STOP ENVY MALICE, HOLD THEY HAND NOR DARE TO RAKE FOR THEM  
AMONGST HER SACRED ASHES IN THIS AWFUL HALLOWED PLACE,  
BUT LET THEM REST WITH HER IN THE DUST UNMENTIONED, AND  
UNMOLESTED TILL THAT TREMENDOUS DAY WHEN SHE MUST GIVE AN  
ACCOUNT TO HER IMPARTIAL JUDGE, TO WHOM ALONE SHE IS  
ACCOUNTABLE, AND WHEN HER GOOD ACTIONS RUSH UPON THEY MEMORY  
GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE.

## Ann Marshall

**IN MEMORY OF ANN MARSHALL  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> 1816  
AGED 47 YEARS.**

West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Deaths and Burials, 1813-1985 for Ann Marshall  
Lightcliffe, St Matthew > 1816

Ann Marshall No. 150.	Lightcliffe	May 10	48 years	W. Willains Min
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The burial record states that she was buried on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1816 so perhaps the death date should have been 6<sup>th</sup> May 1816 and she was 48 years old.

## Generations of Midgleys

Joseph Midgley married Grace Thompson on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1792 and then had, perhaps, a dozen children baptised at St. Matthew's Church. A number including the daughter, Ann, mentioned on this missing memorial inscription were also buried in the churchyard. Sauf Hall, Lidgate with its various spellings was often the address given on the parish records.

But who were the first two ladies on the memorial inscription? It is almost impossible to know as Midgley was probably their married name. At a guess Ann Midgley (c.1757–1830) may have been Joseph Midgley's mother with Mary (c.1703 -1739) perhaps being his paternal grandmother.

HER LIES THE BODY OF MARY THE WIFE OF JOSHUA MIDGLEY OF HIPPERHOLME  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 5<sup>TH</sup> OF MARCH 1739  
IN THE 36<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF HER AGE.

ALSO OF ANN MIDGLEY WHO DIED JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup> 1830 AGED 73 YEARS

ALSO OF ANN THE DAUGHTER OF JOSEPH MIDGLEY OF LIDGATE  
WHO DIED SEPTEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup> 1833 AGED 41 YEARS

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD

ALSO OF THE ABOVE SAID JOSEPH MIDGLEY  
WHO DIED MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> 1850 AGED 77 YEARS

ALSO OF GRACE RELICT OF THE ABOVE JOSEPH MIDGLEY  
WHO DIED DECEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> 1851 AGED 80 YEARS

The span of time from the first burial to the last suggests that the inscription was added at the time of the later burials. Was the inscription on another collapsed chest or table tomb or just a very long ledger stone? Again, we can only guess at the answer.

Now read

## Some missing memorials part 2

D.M.Barker

April 2023