

A DRIVER and WEATHERHEAD family history

Silsden, West Yorkshire, England

Tracing the story of two Silsden families, through six generations of change

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The Weatherhead family narratives

Remembering that spelling in early days was largely phonetic it is not surprising to find Weatherhead and Wetherhead in the family, and perhaps also Wethered. In this history we have adopted the two 'a's name variant except initially where the original detail is significant.

The Old Parish Records (OPRs) in the Craven Index, data from Bishop's transcripts and the manorial records, plus the Boyd's Marriage Index, have enabled the Weatherhead tree to be extended back with confidence to generation M and with less confidence to generation J. This surname is uncommon in Silsden and its surrounding villages and, when taking dates and locations into consideration, suggests that the few early records found may be related. We have records of the baptism of Robert whose father was Thomas Weatherhead of Eastby, the marriage of Robert Weathered to Isabel Smithsom of Linton-in-Craven, and the birth of William, son of Robert Weatherhead of Empsey. The village of Empsey (Embsay) is only five miles north west of Silsden.

In the Skipton Castle records, some of which are held in the Borthwick library in York University, mention is made of an Ellen Weatherhead, a widow of Silsden, who made a will in 1691 and died in May 1692. Her will does not link her to any other Weatherhead, provides an estate valuation of £62 and seems not to be family. The fact that this document is the only source of information mentioning Ellen illustrates how sparse and incomplete information can be. A few other Weatherheads have been found in Skipton, Draughton and Embsay, but these appear not to be linked to Silsden. I just wonder whether Ellen might have been the wife of Thomas. She was probably about the right age to have been Robert's mother. However, her will does not mention any Weatherhead children so the children mentioned would have to have been married daughters.

Those Weatherhead family members for whom a narrative has been produced are as follows. In order to more readily identify them they have been given a number commencing at 101. Those underlined are direct line.

- 101 Robert Weatherhead and Isobel Smithsom, K1.
- 102 • William Weatherhead, L1.
- 103 • • William Weatherhead and Grace Fortune, M1.
- 104 • • • Charles Weatherhead and Ann Steel, N1.
- 105 • • • Peter Weatherhead N3.
- 106 • • • Mary Weatherhead and James Spencer, N4.
- 107 • • • • Grace Weatherhead and John Jackson, O1.
- 108 • • • • William Weatherhead and Elizabeth Gill, O2.
- 109 • • • • • Ann Weatherhead and Manassah Walker, and
Martha Thompson, P1.
- 110 • • • • • Margaret Weatherhead and Thomas Hollingdrake and
Thomas Blakey, P2.
- 111 • • • • • • Thomas Blakey and Isabella Lambert, P2+.
- 112 • • • • • • Ellen Blakey and Richard Fletcher, P2+.
- 113 • • • • • • Grace Weatherhead and Christopher Smith, P3.
- 114 • • • • • • Andrew Smith, P3+.
- 115 • • • • • • Elizabeth Smith and Hanson Bradley, P3+.
- 116 • • • • • • Charles Smith and Elizabeth Laycock, P3+.
- 117 • • • • • • Ann Smith and Jacob Ellison, P3+.
- 118 • • • • • • Sarah Weatherhead and Francis Stirk, P4.
- 119 • • • • • • John Stirk and Margaret Hartley, P4+//.
- 120 • • • • • • Margaret A Stirk and Edward Dalton P4+.
- 121 • • • • • • Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Cockshott, P5//.
- 122 • • • • • • Charles Weatherhead and Esther Summerscales, P6.
- 127 • • • • • • Ann Weatherhead and Henry Cockshott, Q1.
- 128 • • • • • • • Charles Henry Cockshott, Q1+//.
- 129 • • • • • • Sally Weatherhead, Q2//.
- 130 • • • • • • Fanny Weatherhead, Q3//.
- 131 • • • • • • Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Booth, Q4.
- 132 • • • • • • • William Booth and Elsie Denison, Q4+.
- 145 • • • • • • • • Christina Booth & Arthur Forber Seddon, Q4++.
- 146 • • • • • • • • Mary Booth and Ronald C T Clark, Q4++.
- 133 • • • • • • • • Mary Booth and Clarence Evelyn Dixon, Q4+.
- 147 • • • • • • • • John Booth Dixon, Q4++//.
- 148 • • • • • • • • T. Geoffrey Dixon and Constance Muriel Green,
Q4++.

- 134 • • • • • • • **Thomas Booth and Mary Hirst, Q4+**
- 149 • • • • • • • • **Brian Booth and Elizabeth Gillies, Q4++.**
- 150 • • • • • • • • **Francis Eric Booth and Anne Hewitt, Q4++.**
- 135 • • • • • • • • **John (Jack) Booth and Dorothy Stell, Q4+**
- 151 • • • • • • • • **Josephine M S Booth and Peter Waring, Q4++.**
- 152 • • • • • • • • **John Netherwood Booth & Corinne Carter, Q4++.**
- 136 • • • • • • • **Florence Weatherhead and Charles Driver, Q5.**
- 137 • • • • • • • • **Arthur Driver, Q5+,** see Driver narrative 52.
- 138 • • • • • • • • **Sarah (Sally) Driver, Q5+,** see Driver narrative 53.
- 139 • • • • • • • • **Morris Driver, Q5+,** see Driver narrative 54.
- 140 • • • • • • • • **Frank Littledale Driver, Q5+** see Driver narrative 55.
- 141 • • • • • • • • **Florence Elizabeth Driver, Q5+,** see Driver narr. 56.
- 142 • • • • • • • **Esther Weatherhead, Q6//.**
- 143 • • • • • • • **William Weatherhead and Jane Liggins, Q7//.**
- 144 • • • • • • • **Margaret Weatherhead & Charles Fletcher, and
Jane Weatherhead Q8//.**
- 123 • • • • • • • **Thomas Weatherhead and Grace Gill, P7.**
- 124 • • • • • • • • **Herbert H Weatherhead and Mary Jane Shepherd, P7+.**
- 125 • • • • • • • • **Emily Weatherhead and Herbert Wilkinson, P7+.**
- 126 • • • • • • • **William Weatherhead, P8//.**

101 Robert Weatherhead and Isobel Smithsom, K1. Robert, the son of Thomas Weatherhead of Eastby, half a mile from Empsey, was born on 25th June 1658, which was the third month of the year in the Julian calendar. Robert Weatherhead married Isabel Smithsom at Linton-in-Craven in 1680. Linton is about eight miles from Empsey.

102 • William Weatherhead, L1. Bishop's transcripts show us that this William, son of Robert Wetherhead, was baptised in Empsey on 20th May 1694. We have not found records of any other Weatherhead children born in the area, nor have we found William's marriage.

Bearing in mind that Silsden in the early 1700s was a village of about 600 people and that the name of Weatherhead is not commonly found, it is possible that this William, the son of Robert Wetherhead, is the one who

in 1712 had a box pew in the Silsden Chapel-of-Ease and who had a son, William, born in 1732. This birth year comes from his burial record. He was buried at St James in Silsden in November 1822 at the age of 90.

We divert here for a few moments to relate a last minute correction which illustrates the complexity of research and the pleasure given by resolving one problem, but in so doing raising others.

The Bradford Archives had received various documents from St James Church of Silsden in 1980, amongst which was a plan of the church showing the layout of the 21 box pews and also a list of pew holders. The document arrangement was such that the pew layout and list of pew holders could have been made at different occasions. The document was dated 1712 but the position and writing of this date looked as if it had been a later addition. Having had a copy of the document photographed under ultra violet light I passed a copy to David Mason of the Silsden History Group. He had a copy of a plan of the rebuilt church of 1816 together with a pew plan. Seeing similarities between the two similar but different documents, he studied the two and realised that the curate and his family had pew 5 in both documents and that his name was the same in both. Since this curate was appointed in 1813 it was evident that at least the pew holder list of the document of 1712 was wrongly dated. So, the surmise mentioned above is invalid. We are left with a gap in supporting evidence but remember that those mentioned were the only Weatherheads found at that time in this vicinity. The plan of the church has the same length to breadth ratio as the description of the Silsden Church in the Skipton Castle records when it was being renovated in 1711. Hence the drawing of the church is most likely that of the early church. So, the William Weatherhead mentioned as a pew holder and having a place in the choir was not William L1 but probably his great grandson, William O2, of the Red Lion.

103 • • William Weatherhead and Grace Fortune, M1. As just mentioned, this William was born in 1732. The earliest records we had of Weatherheads in Silsden was of William marrying Grace in 1756. The following unusual document was found which apparently was made twenty-one years after the marriage perhaps because the marriage record had been lost. It is interesting to see that the document, at the bottom of the page, uses Wetherhead, but William's signature is Weatherhead. It confirms Grace's maiden name as Fortune.

'This is to certify That we William Wetherhead of Silsden in the Parish of Kildwick Blacksmith & Grace Wetherhead my present wife formerly Grace Fortune of Silsden aforesaid were married by Licence granted by The Rev^d Mr Yates Surrogate in the Chapel of Silsden by the late Rev^d Mr Jonathan Jackson about or upon the Wedenesday immediately following Christmas Day which was in the year of our Lord one Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty Six as near as we can recollect As witness our Hands this 13th Day of September 1777

This Marriage was solemnised
as above in the Presence of the
late John Ambler clerk Ann Cooper
& me
Thomas Fortune'

We see from the birth records of their three children; Charles, Mary and Peter, that William, like his father, was a blacksmith which corresponds with the above statement. All the family are recorded either at Kildwick Parish Church of St Andrews or at St James in Silsden. After further searches we found an online index record of William and Grace's marriage on 26 December 1756.

From this point forward most of the Weatherheads in the Craven Index (CI) of Old Parish Records are found to be descendants from William and Grace. However, there is one other Weatherhead family which seem to have stayed in Silsden for only about one generation. This was the family of Miles Weatherhead and his wife Ann Gregson, in one place with surname Wetherel. They are not considered to be part of our family history.

In two later consecutive generations of William and Grace's family, most

William Weatherhead

The mark + of
Grace Weatherhead

children are girls. Consequently, our Weatherhead family tree does not expand in the way that our Driver tree was found to expand.

William and Grace, both lived to a good age, 90 in 1822 and 79 in 1816, respectively.

104 • • • **Charles Weatherhead and Ann Steel, N1.** Charles, the first child of William and Grace, baptised in 1757, like his father grew up to become a blacksmith.

Charles, as a 12-year-old boy, saw the building of the canal and its wharf, an aqueduct taking the canal over the Silsden Beck and a new road bridge over the canal. Engineering projects that brought this new mode of transport to the village was to change its future.

In 1782 Charles married Ann Steel, who, at the time of her marriage, was stated to be a minor. She was born in 1765 which makes her 17 years of age when married. Her parents were Joseph Steel and Elizabeth Throup, innkeepers of the Red Lion in the centre of Silsden. The Red Lion was mentioned in an 1821 trade directory where it is referred to as 'The old Red Lion'. Research by M Crosslet and B Hill tells us that in 1750, on the death of John Horne, the inventory taken on his death showed that this property was an inn with stabling. It was a few years later that the inn was being run by Joseph Steel and his wife Elizabeth Throup.

The research document also records that the land on which this and other



premises were built was purchased from the Earl of Cumberland in 1620. The other building has a date stone engraved with 'C J*A 1755' which presumably records the owners, Jonas and Agnes Clarkson and the year it was built. It became the Talbot Inn which seemingly ceased to be an inn when it was sold in 1771.

Charles, who had become a nail maker, and Ann had two children, Grace born in 1783 and William in 1786. They all lived with Ann's parents at the

Red Lion. Charles died in 1794 at the early age of 37 leaving Ann widowed at the age of 29 after only 12 years of marriage.

Joseph Steel had been born in 1741 and died aged 75 in 1816, the same year his grandson William Weatherhead married Elizabeth Gill. Elizabeth Steel, continued to be the innkeeper until about 1826. She was a year younger than her husband Joseph and died at the age of 85 in 1827. The Red Lion then passed to her daughter, Ann and her grandson, William, who, with their descendants, were destined to run the Red Lion for four generations.

No doubt, Ann would have helped her mother at the Red Lion and the Thomas Steel family history says, 'Joseph's wife Elizabeth later kept the Red Lion Inn at Silsden, as did their daughter Ann Weatherhead after them'.



It seems as if Elizabeth retained the Innkeeper's licence. Only in 1827, when Elizabeth died, did William hold the licence with surety provided by James Pickard. He was then 41. It therefore appears that Ann was not the licence holder at any time

Three sources explain the history of the Red Lion at this time; a Silsden directory of 1822 which gives Charles and Ann's son William, now 36, as 'vict. Old Red Lion' (vict. being victualler), a Calendar of Recognizances of 1826 which gives Elizabeth Steel as inn holder with surety of £20 provided by William Weatherhead and another of 1828 which

now shows William as inn holder (Elizabeth having been buried in February 1827).

One might have expected Ann to have remarried, but this did not happen. She died in 1832 at the age of 67.

The road, sometime later known as Towngate or Main Street and the forerunner of today's Kirkgate, perhaps little more than a track until it became part of the turnpike in 1826, provided access to these inns, several other farm houses and the corn mill, also to the ford across the beck and to hamlets east of Silsden.

The Red Lion still has the old stables and kennels. The wire mesh of the kennels gives an indication of its considerable age.



The Red Lion would have experienced a busy period. As mentioned above the canal was being built. Ahead of them were other busy periods. The second phase of the turnpike through Silsden would be completed in 1826. The Clog Bridge would be built in 1830 making the ford redundant, the railway would be built in 1846, opening August 1847, and new mills would be built. Further away reservoirs would be constructed. The population was growing and more houses were continually required. Furthermore, the Red Lion was a venue for many of the court, civic and recreational meetings and dinners until the Mechanics' Institute was commissioned in 1884.

Before moving on to Charles and Ann's two children, Charles' brother and sister are introduced, they are not direct line.

105 • • • Peter Weatherhead, N3. Peter, son of William and Grace, is recorded to have been baptised in October 1766 at Kildwick but neither his marriage nor his death have been found.

106 • • • Mary Weatherhead and James Spencer, N4. The first Mary born to William and Grace was born in 1762. But a second Mary was born in 1769 indicating the earlier Mary must have died as an infant. The surviving Mary married James Spencer in 1792 at Kildwick. He was a grocer in Addingham, where they probably lived. Their daughter Grace was born in 1793 and died, aged 20, in 1814. No other children have been found in the records. Mary died in 1819, although her abode is given as Heslinden, Lancashire she was buried in Silsden.

We now return to Charles and Ann's two children.

107 • • • Grace Weatherhead and John Jackson, O1. Grace, the daughter of Charles and Ann, was born in Silsden in May 1783, probably at the Red Lion. In 1809 she married John Jackson, a Brunthwaite farmer, the fifth of eight children born to Samuel Jackson and Margaret Gill. An entry for John's baptism reads 'Jackson John son of Samuel & Margaret of Foster Cliff a Farmer bapt 31.12.1780'. This is our first reference to Foster Cliff, a farm on Silsden Moor. Baptism records of younger siblings show that Samuel and Margaret Jackson moved from Foster Cliff to Brunthwaite in 1784.

So, John, born at Foster Cliff was farming in Brunthwaite, married Grace and, some time before the 1841 census, John and Grace had moved to Silsden Moor, most likely into Foster Cliff.

Foster Cliff is a farm house on Silsden Moor that was built in 1631 with late eighteenth century alterations and was made a Grade II listed building in 1985. At some early time, it became home to two families with the names of Jackson, Walker, Thompson and Steel appearing repeatedly.

The 1841 census showed that Grace and John did not have children. They had their niece Ann Weatherhead, aged 20, living with them as a female

servant. Also living with them in 1841 was Marmaduke Gill, aged 12, male servant. Marmaduke was born in 1828 and was the son of Thomas and Ann Gill of Silsden Moor. Ten years later in 1851 he is still living with Grace and John working as a farm labourer. The farm on Silsden Moor is now shown to be Foster Clough, a variation of Cliff.

Ages in the 1841 census are unreliable. In this case Grace and John were both quoted as being 55 whereas Grace was 58 and John 60. Ann was said to be 20 whereas she was 24. Marmaduke's age of 12 seems to be correct. Grace died in 1860 at the age of 77. John continued living at Foster Cliff with his nephew Manassah Walker, until his death in 1866 at 85.

The direct line continues with the next sibling.

108 • • • • [William Weatherhead and Elizabeth Gill, O2.](#) William, son of Charles and Ann, born in 1786, is in the direct line of descendants. William married Elizabeth Gill in 1816, and she was seven years younger than William. Elizabeth was the third child of Thomas Gill and Margaret Wade and had been given the same name as their first child who had died earlier that year in 1793.

At the time of their marriage William was a blacksmith. He is on record as holding the Red Lion licence in 1827 after his maternal grandmother had died. His name appears in the 1834 Pigot's Directory under the trade of blacksmith and also under the heading of taverns and public houses where the Red Lion is listed. Elizabeth's parents lived at Cringles.

In the 1832 Silsden Land Tax records William has two entries, both for land and tenements. One shows him to be the proprietor and occupier, with the sum of 3s 2d 'assessed and exonerated'. The other he is occupier with the Earl of Thanet as proprietor with the sum of 2s 6d 'assessed and exonerated'. This will be for the Red Lion hotel with additional land and tenement being rented from the Earl.

William is described as a blacksmith at the births/baptisms of child 1 (1817), 2, 3, 5 and 7, but innkeeper at births 4 (1824), 6 and 8. His maternal

grandmother Elizabeth Steel, who was the licensee of the Red Lion, died in 1827, a year or so after child 5, also named Elizabeth, had been born. So, it would appear that his mother Ann and his wife Elizabeth were running the hotel and he was keeping his blacksmithing business going as a second source of income. It was also around this time that the two pew plans show a William Weatherhead to be a St James' pew holder, pew number 14, and to have a place in the choir. As mentioned in narrative 102 and Appendix 2 this will have been William, O2.

The 1845 Tithe Map and Apportionment Book shows that William was renting field 754 from its owner and his brother-in-law John Jackson and that it was a meadow on Sykes Lane, near Mill Banks. It happens to be adjacent to the fields rented by Ann Driver. One wonders whether this field was used to provide hay for the Red Lion which had a small stable for four horses. The tithe map extracts are shown in Appendix 5.

William had other interests and in particular music. He drew together other local instrument players and there is mention of musical concerts being held at the Red Lion in Silsden in the 1820s. The Red Lion had, and still has, an upstairs room at the rear, which was used as a meeting room for various events. Internal access to it is by means of a narrow staircase perhaps 30 inches (76cm) in width from a lounge bar.

William, now innkeeper at the Red Lion, was keen to promote interest in music and education, both for his family and the wider community. He arranged a notable concert at the Red Lion in 1843 which was reported upon in the Bradford Observer. No doubt this stimulated the keen interest that his fifteen-year-old son Charles had in music. This is reported more fully in Appendix 3.

As will be seen when reading the narrative of William's son Charles, William was a Primitive Methodist, illustrating how individuals happily supported more than one church. William died in 1849.

Silsden was a village in which some inhabitants were prospering as a result of hard work and regular employment in both the nail making industry and

the weaving mills. With the desire to own their homes money clubs were becoming established and frequently were organised by the innkeepers.

Elizabeth is on record as having run one such club, probably known as the Weatherhead Money Club, which was open for business on the 3rd Monday in February, May, August and November at 7pm. These clubs were usually run on a mutual basis and were the forerunners of mutual building societies.

In 1851 the census shows that widow Elizabeth was still involved with the Red Lion. She is shown as 'Victual xx Inn Keeper' where the 'xx' is unclear and might be '&'. By the 1861 census Elizabeth was living with her twice widowed daughter, Margaret Blakey, and family in St John's Square, with no stated occupation, and in Main Street (Kirkgate) was son and innkeeper Thomas Weatherhead, age 30. For reasons explained in narrative 123 of Thomas Weatherhead and Grace Gill it may be that she continued to manage the Red Lion until 1856. Elizabeth died in 1866.

Silsden's development gathered pace. In the 1820s the second phase of the turnpike was being built involving Keighley Road, Kirkgate and Bolton Road to use their modern names. To this were added the Clog Bridge over the Silsden Beck in 1830 and in the mid 1840s the building of the single track railway and Steeton station just south of the river. The Clog Bridge provided easy access for traffic to and from Brunthwaite, Howden and the coal mine at Holden to enter the village rather than using the ford which would be impassable at times.

We now continue with the eight children of William and Elizabeth, O2.

109 • • • • Ann Weatherhead and Manassah Walker and Martha Thompson P1. Ann, not direct line, born in 1817, was the eldest daughter of William and Elizabeth, O2. We have already introduced Ann in that she was living with her Aunt Grace and Uncle John Jackson, O1, at the time of the 1841 census. Manassah, also found as Mannaseh, was born in 1814

and was the youngest child of Thomas Walker, a woolcomber, and Isabel Jackson of Foster Cliff, a seventeenth century farm on Silsden Moor. Manassah knew John Jackson as his mother's brother and Grace and John Jackson as his aunt and uncle.

Ann married Manassah Walker in 1846 and they had two children, Grace Jackson and John Jackson. Grace J was born 10.8.1846 and baptised 20.9.1846. John J was born 15.3.1851 and baptised 31.3.1851. The repeated use of the uncle and aunt's names emphasises the close tie between these family members. It appears that Ann was living with her aunt and uncle while pregnant with Grace.

In the 1851 census, taken on 7th April, of John and Grace's household, Manassah is shown as widowed and nephew. Also present as a visitor is Hannah Walker, married and niece. Hannah was Manassah's brother's second wife. John J was present but only 3 weeks old. Very sadly Grace J had died on 12th February 1847 at the age of 6 months and mother Ann died on 28th March 1851, a fortnight after giving birth to John J and one week before the census was taken. Possibly Hannah was visiting to help with the baby. Then, the baby, John J died on the 19th May at the age of 2 months.

In 1861 the elderly Uncle John was still head of the household, aged 80, but Aunt Grace had died the previous year. Manassah, widower, an agricultural labourer, aged 49, was present together with two servants, Ellen Hartley and Thomas Hogg. Uncle John died in the early summer of the following year.

Although the following three paragraphs are not about family, they provide an interesting closure to Manassah's later life.

Hannah Walker had a daughter from her first marriage called Martha Thompson, born in 1831. Martha, as a spinster, had a daughter Hannah born in 1855.

Manassah married Martha Thompson in 1862 and they had five children. The first two of whom were twins and who were given exactly the same names as Manassah's previous two children by his first wife. Manassah and Martha continued to live at Foster Cliff. Manassah died in May 1873 and Martha, who was 17 years younger than her husband, died in 1909.

There is one other oddity. Perhaps a mistake made by the vicar John Marriner. In 1871 another Martha Walker was born and the church baptism record says that the parents were Manasseh and Ann (his first wife's name). Since this is not family the birth record has not been consulted.

110 • • • • • Margaret Weatherhead and Thomas Hollingdrake, and Thomas Blakey, P2. Margaret, sometimes written as Margret, was born in 1819 and was the second child of William and Elizabeth. Margaret was not direct line, nor were her next three siblings. In 1842 she married Thomas Hollingdrake, the son of a farmer of 60 acres at Hay Hills. Another branch of the Hollingdrake family were farmers at Foster Cliff farm. Sadly, three weeks before their second anniversary Thomas died, at the age of 25. Margaret and Thomas Hollingdrake did not have any children.

Margaret married again some six years later in 1849, this time to Thomas Blakey, who was a farmer of 20 acres employing one labourer, and although born in Keighley his farm was in Silsden. In 1851 they were living at an address given as Blakeys Place, later to become St John's Square.

Margaret was 31 in 1851 while Thomas was 48. They had two children with the eldest one, a boy born in 1850, inevitably called Thomas. Ellen was born one year later. Thomas, the father, died in 1856 leaving Margaret with two young children. In 1861, now described as a farmer of 10 acres, she had her mother, Elizabeth, living with her until she died in 1866. Margaret's children were both single and still living at home in 1871, but in the following decades she lived with her daughter and family (1881) and her son and family (1891 and 1901). Margaret lived to be 87, dying in 1907.

We now follow Margaret's children before returning to William and Elizabeth's third child.

111 • • • • • Thomas Blakey and Isabella Lambert, P2+. Margaret and Thomas Blakey's son, Thomas, married Isabella Lambert in 1873. Although he was a farmer, they were living in St John Street alongside the beck in the centre of Silsden. Just one year later Isabella's older sister, Mary Lambert married William Driver P1+. Thomas and Isabella's only child, a boy born in 1886, was called Tom, although ten years later he was recorded as Thomas. At the time of his marriage, he was described as a textile designer. Margaret, P2, was living with her son and daughter-in-law until she died in 1907. Then in 1912 Thomas died leaving Isabella a widow at the age of 60. Some thirteen years later in 1925, after her sister-in-law Ellen had died in 1923, at the age of 71, Isabella became the second wife of Richard Fletcher as described in the next narrative.

112 • • • • • Ellen Blakey and Richard Fletcher, P2+. Ellen, born in 1851, was the daughter and second child of Margaret Weatherhead and Thomas Blakey. In 1876 she married Richard Fletcher, thus linking the Weatherhead family to another well-known and honoured Silsden family. Ellen and Richard had two daughters, Mary born in 1877, and Elizabeth born and died in 1879, and two sons, William also born in 1879, who lived for 1 year and Charles T, born in 1882. These children were P2++.

Richard, following in the steps of both his father William and grandfather Joshua, was a leading and hard-working official of the Primitive Methodist Church in Silsden and of the PM Sunday School. Rev. Robson tells us that Richard, 'worthily filled the exalted position of Vice-President of the Conference'. He was a civic leader and became a Justice of the Peace in 1907, working alongside two other JPs, all of whom were Primitive Methodists. He established a business in the 'Bradford Trade', that is of woven fabrics, and this was inherited by their younger son Charles T Fletcher. The Fletcher Mill, after a number of amalgamations and name changes was the last in Silsden to close down in the 1990s.

Ellen died in 1923. Two years later Richard, at the age of 72, married his widowed sister-in-law, Isabella. Some six years later at the age of 79 Isabella died. Richard died at the age of 97 in 1949. We have a photograph in Appendix 3 of Richard when the Princess Royal visited Silsden in 1934.

Richard P2+ (b 1852) was half-brother of Charles H Fletcher Q8 or P6+ (b 1875). Richard and Charles H were also cousins by marriage since their wives both had William and Elizabeth Weatherhead as grandparents.

113 • • • • • Grace Weatherhead and Christopher Smith, P3.

Grace, the third child of William and Elizabeth, born in 1822, married Christopher Smith in 1841. He was a farmer of 30 acres employing one labourer. They lived at Woodside in Kildwick and had four children, Andrew, Elizabeth, Charles and Ann.

Christopher was born in 1816 and died in 1852. He was 35 when he died. Grace lived until 1894.

We now follow Grace's children before returning to William and Elizabeth's fourth child.

114 • • • • • Andrew Smith, P3+. Andrew was born in 1843 and died, unmarried, at the age of 25, in 1868. He is recorded as being an apprentice cabinet maker in the 1861 census in Leeds when he was 18. If this were a seven year apprenticeship from the age of 15, he would have become a qualified cabinet maker at the age of 22, only to die three years later.

115 • • • • • Elizabeth Smith and Hanson Bradley, P3+.

Elizabeth, born in 1846, became a bonnet maker after leaving school and before marrying Hanson Bradley in 1864. Hanson was a nail maker, following in his father's footsteps, the latter being a nail master employing 14 men and 11 boys. Elizabeth and Hanson had three children, Charles Irwin, born in 1865, Andrew Francis, 1869, and Minnie, 1877. Initially the family lived at Mill Banks and then at 40 Kirkgate.

Charles Irwin is shown in the 1891 census to be an assistant teacher and subsequently a head teacher at an elementary school in Cumberland. Andrew is shown to be a grocer's assistant and ten years later to be a grocer. In 1891 Elizabeth's widowed mother, Grace, was living with the family. She died in 1894.

In 1899 Minnie Bradley married Alfred Bradley, who was a timber merchant's salesman. Interestingly they were second cousins sharing the same great grandparents.

116 • • • • • Charles Smith and Elizabeth Laycock, P3+.

Charles, born in 1848, is shown to be a cabinet maker in the 1871 census. It is probable that, like his older brother, he had served an apprenticeship. In 1881 and 1891 he describes himself as a joiner. In 1871 he married Elizabeth Laycock, daughter of Jonas and Mary Laycock of Farnhill, and they had three children, Cyril, Marion and Arthur. One interesting detail is that Arthur appeared in the 1881 census, living with his parents, as '(Not named)' being 'under 1 month' old while the two other children were staying with their maternal grandparents in Farnhill. Elizabeth died at the age of 44 in 1892. Two years later Charles married Mary Jane Watson and moved to Keighley with his youngest son, Arthur. Sadly, just 7 years later daughter Marion died at the age of 25. Cyril and Arthur went on to marry, lived in Keighley and both named one of their children, Marion, after their sister.

117 • • • • • Ann Smith and Jacob Ellison, P3+.

Ann, the fourth child of Grace and Christopher, born in 1850, married Jacob Bailey Ellison in 1870. He was born in 1849 to Mary Ellison, no father's name was given.

In 1871 widowed mother Grace Smith was head of a household which included as yet unmarried Charles, with married daughter Ann and husband Jacob Ellison, a book keeper, plus granddaughter Edith who was 10 months old. They were living at Schedule 134 in Main Street (Kirkgate). Charles Weatherhead, Grace's younger brother and one of the direct line of Weatherheads, was living at Schedule 136.

Moving on a few years to 1878 Jacob, Ann and their two children are found to be owner occupiers of a terraced house in Aireview. However, three years later in 1881 Jacob and Ann are living at the top of Bolton Road, with three children, Edith, Winfred and Charles. Jacob was now a commercial clerk in a woollen mill. Mother Grace, now 89, was living in Kirkgate with daughter Elizabeth, her husband Hanson Bradley and their family.

We found that two other sons were born, Cuthbert Rathmill in January 1877 died before his second birthday in 1878. Then after the census in 1882 John Henry was born and lived until the age of 8, dying in 1890.

In 1884 Jacob is recorded as being secretary of the Silsden Permanent Benefit Building Society, one of the new mutual societies that were springing up to provide loans primarily for helping the new middle classes to become owners of their own house. Since this business only opened on a few days each month this was unlikely to have been a full-time occupation.

In the 1891 census Jacob and family are shown to have moved to Number 1 Daisy Hill and Jacob had again changed his work to become a worsted spinner and yarn twister. Ann had died age 35 in 1884 and Jacob's mother, Mary Ellison age 62, was living with them. She was to die the following year. The family were in the same house in 1901.

By the time of the 1911 census Winfred and Charles had married. Jacob described himself as a worsted spinner and an employer. He now had his own spinning business and the tax register shows him as the owner of the land and some of the buildings at Canal Works where his telephone number was Steeton 6. He was living with his unmarried daughter Edith Annie, who described herself as house keeper, and a 22-year-old servant. The address was now Howden Road, Silsden. Jacob became the Minister's warden for a while before handing that job onto Frank Driver Q6.

Jacob died in 1924 leaving an estate of a little over £26,000.

We now return to the children of William and Elizabeth, O2.

118 • • • • • Sarah Weatherhead and Francis Stirk, P4. Sarah born on 6th June 1824, was the fourth daughter of William and Elizabeth. She was still with her parents on census day, 6th June 1841 which was her 17th birthday, her age was rounded down to 15, and she was a worsted weaver.

The church register shows that Sarah, daughter of William Weatherhead, innkeeper, married Francis Stirk a farmer of Cross Hills on 24th May 1847 in Silsden. Witnesses were Margaret Hollingdrake, her sister and Christopher Smith, her brother-in-law. It also says she was a minor. However, examination of the dates above shows she was 22. Interestingly, Francis was shown as full age yet he was 18. Francis Stirk's parents, Henry Stirk and Hannah Barrett, had an inn at Crosshills.

Sarah and Francis' family, who lived at Junction, Glusburn, present more difficulties.

In the 1851 census (30th March) Sarah is shown to be 24 but in fact would have been 26. Francis is shown to be 22. He was a farmer of 60 acres but also a butcher. The census also shows that Francis and Sarah had a son William age 2. The census shows two more in that household, a son John Smith age 2 months and a servant Henry Smith age 17. Research suggests that the above mentioned John Smith should in fact be John Stirk. Also, we found Henry Stirk, aged 3, living with his grandmother Hannah Stirk, an innkeeper, at Junction. A few years later, 1855, a daughter Margaret Ann was born, but died the following year.

In the 1861 census (7th April) Sarah is now shown as 36 which this time is correct. Francis is 34 and now an innkeeper and farmer. The Stirk children are Henry (13), John (11), William (9), and Margaret A (4). There were no Smiths living with them, but they did have a servant, an agricultural labourer, age 67, living with them.

Looking deeper into the records we found that their second son, William, born in 1849 and shown in the 1851 census died in 1852. The William shown in the 1861 census was their fourth son. Similarly, the Margaret A shown in the 1861 census was named after their recently deceased first

daughter whose death in her second year is recorded on the family memorial stone.

Sarah died in 1869, aged 45. By 1871 Francis had been a widower for two years and was an innkeeper, aged 41. He was living with four of his children at the Junction Inn at Glusburn. Sadly, both Henry and William died that year, aged 24 and 18 respectively, and Francis the following year.

119 • • • • • John Stirk and Margaret Hartley, P4+. John, Sarah and Francis' third child, at the age of 20 is shown in the 1871 census to be unmarried, a joiner, living with his widowed father, two brothers and one sister at the Junction Inn in Glusburn. In 1876 he married Margaret Hartley. Margaret was the fourth child and daughter of Joseph and Hannah Hartley who were innkeepers in Carleton. John and Margaret appear not to have had any family. John died in 1884 and Margaret was to die in 1902.

It was interesting to find the family memorial stone and this took us to a 1902 coroner's court report in which the verdict for the death of a Margaret Stirk said, 'Found dead at her bedside with slight injuries about her throat and head insufficient evidence as to cause of death'. We believe this to be Margaret, née Hartley, the widow of John Stirk.

120 • • • • • Margaret A Stirk and Edward Dalton, P4+. Margaret Ann was the youngest child of Sarah and Francis Stirk and was born in 1856. She was given the first name of Margaret, which had been her older sister's name but who died shortly before Margaret Ann was born. We are staying with calling the first one Margaret, which was the name on her birth record, and the second Margaret Ann, but note that, on the death record, Margaret was called Margaret Ann. In 1879 in Leeds Margaret Ann married Edward Dalton, a hosier. Edward was twelve years older than Margaret Ann. They were to have six children, four boys and two girls.

By the time of the 1911 census Edward, shown to be a retired draper, Margaret Ann, and three of their four sons, Horace M, Claude P and

William K were at home at 3 Kingston Place, Leeds. Their two girls, Carlotta M and Muriel and eldest son Francis E were absent.

Margaret and Edward lost two of their sons in WW1, firstly, William K in 1915 and in 1917 Horace M was killed in action in France. Claude P perhaps served in WW1 and returned home safely.

The eldest son Francis E, in 1910 and at the age of 29, had married Florence Amy Mary Jucks in Calcutta. When travelling to and from India in the 1920s he was shown to be a banker and working for Coutts & Co. It is very likely that during WW1 Francis was in India, but by 1939 they were back in England and living in Surrey.

Carlotta, the eldest girl, had married William Harold Watson in 1906 and was living in Sandal Magna, Wakefield, Yorkshire and had two children.

Muriel, at the time of the 1911 census, was away from home visiting a family in Skelton. In October 1913 Muriel travelled from Liverpool to Calcutta on the ship, City of Paris. In the passenger records it is stated that her country of permanent future residence would be India. Then in March 1922, aged 33, she was on the ship, Nankin, bound for Calcutta. A few weeks later, on 6th May and still in Calcutta, she married the recently divorced Noel Edward Ward, a tea planter, the son of Sir William Erskine Ward, previously Chief Commissioner of Assam. Edward was 15 years older than Muriel and also had been travelling to Calcutta on the City of Paris in 1913. In 1925 the birth of a son, Noel Erskine, was registered in India and then, in October 1926, we find Muriel returning to India from England with her infant, one year old Noel, accompanied by an Ayah.

In 1944 Muriel was 56 when her husband died in Shillong, India, at the age of 71. Their son, Noel Erskine, was serving in the Indian army. He later became a tea planter and passenger lists show that he and his family were living in India until at least 1959. We do not know when Muriel returned to England but she died in 1983 in St Austell, Cornwall where her son lived at the time.

Returning to the parents, Margaret Ann and Edward Dalton in Leeds, Edward died a few years after Muriel's marriage, in 1926, when he was 86. It was not until 1932 that Margaret Ann saw her son Claude, at the age of 46, marry Florence Walker. They had a daughter named Margaret. Mother, Margaret Ann lived in the Dalton family home until her death in 1942, also aged 86.

121 • • • • • Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Cockshott, P5. In 1851 Elizabeth, the fifth child and fifth daughter, was still living with her mother, Elizabeth, in Main Street Silsden at the Red Lion. She married John Cockshott in 1853 when she was 27. In 1851 John, then 28, was living with his mother, Margaret, and his siblings at their farm at Cringles. His father, Henry, died in 1842 so his mother was now the farmer. She had a farm of 80 acres and employed three labourers.

High Cringles is where Elizabeth and John lived all their married life. John's mother, Margaret, died in 1858. Elizabeth and John did not have any children but in 1861 they had a niece and nephew living with them. These were Ann and Thomas aged 18 and 13 respectively, and these teenagers were two of brother Thomas and Margaret Cockshott's six children who lived at adjacent Silsden Moor.

In 1871 the size of John's farm was half what it was ten years earlier. Ann and Thomas were no longer living with them. Living nearby was Henry Cockshott, John's younger brother, unmarried farming 39 acres. This suggests that their parents' farm in Cringles had been divided. This is as expected because Thomas was already farming at Haygill, also known as Aigill and Haigh Hills and youngest brother Lister had died at the age of 8. John and Elizabeth continued farming until the 1890s. Elizabeth died in 1892 and John in 1894.

We have now arrived at the direct line which resumes with the next sibling.

122 • • • • • Charles Weatherhead and Esther Summerscales, P6.

Charles was the sixth child, but first son, of William Weatherhead and Elizabeth Gill, born 28th November 1828 and baptised on 18th January 1829 by the Rector of the Anglican Chapel of Ease. The family lived at the Red Lion in Silsden.

Charles was first introduced to some family members of generation T via two items of memorabilia. The first was Charles' tiny book of sermons. In Tom Driver's household they knew that Charles had been a preacher and that his sermons were detailed and based on verses from the bible. This tiny leather-bound book is a memento of his dedication. The book



measures only 16 cm by 11 cm and is 2 cm thick. The writing is almost too small to read. The second item was a photograph of Charles sitting outside his grocer shop. This photo is shown later in this narrative.

We have three contradictory mentions of Charles' schooling. One reports Charles to be a self-educated man, another that he attended a Silsden Dame school, while, from another source, we read that Charles attended Giggleswick School, where he would have had to be resident. One thing we do know is that he loved books and was thoughtful in his choice of words.

The 1841 census, taken on 6th June, does not help in defining Charles' education. It shows Charles as 10, rounded down from his actual age of 13, but neither stating him to be a scholar nor suggesting he has an occupation.

Charles himself says that while he owed his first religious impressions to his father, William (O2), final consummation took place in 1838 at age 10.

"It was among these noble Christians that I threw in my lot when I was about ten years of age. There was at that time a great revival at the old chapel, then called 'Ranters' Chapel'. I, with some of my companions, attended the revival services. I was induced to go to the penitent form and there I was taken in hand by Joshua Fletcher, who took me between his knees and then sent up such a resonant glory as was enough to frighten a child. As a result of attending these revival services I was accepted as a member of the Primitive Methodist Society on trial."

From this we are assured that William and Elizabeth, Charles' parents, were Primitive Methodists.

In 1843, when Charles was only 15 his was the first name on the Committee of the Junior Primitive Methodist Exhorter's Plan of the Becks Circuit. Becks being the area of Silsden south of the canal.

There are many documents that relate to Charles and his energy dedicated to preaching the Primitive Methodist message in this part of Yorkshire. This involved walking mile after mile, visiting villages and preaching on arrival. This was a well organised process and is related in Appendix 2.

A couple of years later, in 1845, it was arranged by the Primitive Methodist Book Committee that Charles would spend time at their Book Room in London. He was to be met at Euston Station and advised to take a cab, at a

legalised fare as ascertained from a Table of Fares of about 3/-, to 13 Lower John Street. This was three years before the Bradford, Keighley and Skipton railway line was built so he would have caught the train at Leeds or Bradford. The PM Book Room had only recently moved, in 1843, from Bemersley Farm at Stoke-on-Trent to London. Charles spent a full year in London before returning to Silsden. He was 18 and about to start the adult phase of his life.

Whether Charles' collection of books started before or after his time in London is unimportant, but throughout his life he collected many books to which he is reported to have frequently referred and to have encouraged other young people to borrow.

Britain was experiencing a national awakening to the needs of society in general, and not just for those who could afford a higher standard of living, which eventually became addressed by Acts of Parliament. In 1832 the first Reform Act gave voting rights to small land and business owners. Further reforms followed in the following decades.

The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 marked the start of the gradual freedom of slaves in the British Empire, and it was also the year when the first of a series of Factory Acts was passed. This first one forbade employment of children under the age of 9.

In 1842 the government had issued a report on the sanitary conditions of the poor. In 1847 the Ten Hour Act, as it was known, was an attempt to limit the daily hours of work to a maximum of ten in textile mills, especially for women and children, and this was followed by further regulation in the next decades. This had been the subject of a public meeting in Silsden as a result of which a petition had been sent to Parliament.

In addition, various Education Acts were introduced.

So, this was the background of expectations as Charles started his working life and he took the opportunity to become a leader in the introduction and management of change in Silsden. Appendix 2 includes the part played by

the Primitive Methodists and reports on what some of these changes were and remembers Charles and others who were instrumental in achieving them. Further reference to Charles' work appears in Appendix 14.

In 1847, Charles was 'recommended to the Barnard Castle circuit as a fit person to travel as an hired local preacher.'

In 1848 Charles, when he was 19, was a minister at Barnard Castle and he received a letter from his father. In addition to mentioning that they were to have a funeral dinner at their house of 80 or 90, William says the Court Leet met at their house the previous week. This house would have been The Red Lion in Main Street as it was then called. He also refers to the shortage of grass and that hay will be very light due to the lack of rain. He advises that trade has improved and there is more work.



However, later that year Charles was taking appointments for the Rev Sharpe, back in Silsden. The Rev Sharpe having gone to America between June and September. Also, Charles needed to return to Silsden due to business reasons. These are not explained but it may have been linked to

his family. We also read in the PM Leader magazine that Charles had doubts as to whether the ministry was to be the career for him.

In 1849 his father, William, died at the age of 63 leaving his widow Elizabeth to run the Red Lion, no doubt helped by family members. As will be apparent later she may have continued managing the Red Lion until about 1856.



We have the Primitive Methodist Preachers Plan for the 3rd quarter of 1849. See Appendix 14. This shows which of the 29 preachers would preach at which of the 10 villages, including Skipton, and at what time of day for the coming three months, on the Lord's Day and on week nights. It shows Charles was to preach about once a fortnight, usually at both afternoon and evening services, at locations such as Skipton and Ilkley and at all villages in between. The journeys to and from these venues were often long

walks but one wonders whether they were able to get a lift on some occasions. It has been estimated that Joshua Fletcher, who was a generation older than Charles and was one of the first members of Primitive Methodism in Silsden, during his life walked over 16,000 miles and preached not less than 3,000 times for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ.

Charles married Esther Summerscales on 25th March 1851 at St James Church, Silsden, where she was referred to as a minor. She was born on 27th August 1832 and baptised the following month and was therefore 18. She was four years younger than Charles. Esther was the youngest daughter of William Summerscales and Sarah Gill, Silsden farmers. Before this marriage both Charles and Esther had lost their fathers. Esther had two brothers, both farmers, and four sisters. Her brother, North, who was her witness at the marriage is mentioned in Appendix 3. Four months earlier Charles had been the witness at North's wedding, suggesting that the two men were friends.

In the census of 30th March 1851 Charles, 22, was shown to be at his parents' home, with his newly married wife, Esther, in Main Street. He was a grocer. He married Esther Summerscales five days before the census, but in the 1851 census her name is spelt as Easter and she was referred to as a daughter, but in fact she was daughter-in-law. Of Charles' five sisters, all older, only Elizabeth and his younger brother, Thomas, were unmarried.

The inspiration Charles gained from and the dedication he gave to Primitive Methodism set the pattern of his entire life and, while earning and supporting his growing family from his grocery business, he was the most generous of citizens.

But returning to 1853 we find that Charles faced a set-back. He, together with a few other shop keepers in Silsden, were prosecuted for have weights that did not comply with trading standards. Charles was fined £2.

Charles had a second passion which he had inherited from his father, and that was for music. Charles was a musician, apparently self-taught. So, it was interesting to find that living next door to the Red Lion, in 1851, was Edward Wilson who was a musical instrument maker.

As a young man Charles was among a band of music lovers who met at Thomas Hudson's house at Silsden Moor for rehearsal. When in full force they numbered nearly 20, both singers and players. Thomas Green would join the group and play his bass fiddle. Thomas Green who became choir

master at the church, would be invited to be choir master at the PM chapel and then go on to teach at the Sunday School. Thomas Green's niece was Mary Green who married Henry (Harry) Ripley Driver, Q5, in 1902. Thomas' brother and Mary's father, William Green, became the organ blower at the chapel.

Charles and Esther had eight children seven of whom were girls. Charles' passion for music was picked up by his children. His daughters all played an instrument. Fanny became a music teacher and both she and Ann were organists at the PM chapel. His son, William, shared the passion, he was commended in numerous documents and became the leading organist at the PM chapel. Charles taught other children, who were interested, to learn music. Likewise, he was to teach other children to read and write.

In 1860, Charles, with four children, was a grocer and in partnership with a young George Rishworth. In that year the London Gazette published a notice dissolving the partnership. It reads as follows: -

NOTICE is hereby given that the Partnership hitherto subsisting between the undersigned, George Rishworth and Charles Weatherhead, both of Silsden, in the parish of Kildwick, in the county of York, as Grocers, at Silsden aforesaid, was this day dissolved by mutual consent; and that the business will henceforth be carried on by the said Charles Weatherhead solely for his own benefit-

Dated this 27th September, 1860.

George Rishworth.

Charles Weatherhead.

Similar notices were found in the Leeds Times and Perry's Bankrupt Gazette.

In the 1861 census Charles, now 32, is shown to be a grocer and farmer of 8 acres. The 1861 and 71 censuses show the family to be living in Main Street Silsden and thereafter to be in Kirkgate. In fact, Main Street had

been renamed Kirkgate and the 1891 census shows the house number to be 50 Kirkgate. The fact that Charles was a farmer of a small acreage and lived in the centre of the village was not unusual. It is probable that Charles' main source of income was from the grocery business rather than farming. In the 1871 and later censuses he describes himself only as a grocer.

We also know that Charles, with his brother Thomas and a number of other Silsden businessmen, had been involved with the Silsden New Mill Building Company (Limited) by the fact that we have details of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the company held in November 1865 at which it was proposed to wind-up that business.

'SPECIAL-Resolution of the Silsden New Mill Building, Company (Limited) made and passed and carried unanimously at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Members of the Company, duly convened, and holden at the Independent Odd Fellows Hall, Silsden, in the county on Friday, the 24th day of November 1865 and confirmed at a subsequent Extraordinary General Meeting, also duly convened and holden in like manner at the Registered Offices of the said Company, School-house, Silsden, in the county of York, on Friday, the 8th day of December, 1865:

Resolved

1. That the affairs of the Silsden New Mill Building Company (Ltd) be wound up.
2. That - the following persons be appointed Liquidators. — Thomas Weatherhead, Inn Keeper, James Sugden, Nail Maker, James Lee, Surveyor, Joseph Clarkson, Coal Dealer, William Fletcher, Coal Dealer, John Sawley, Surveyor, John Clarkson, Coal Dealer, Charles Weatherhead, Grocer, George Baron, Nail Maker, William Fletcher, Chairman of the Meeting at which said Special Resolution was passed.'

The London Gazette notice, of the liquidators' proposed meeting for 6th April 1867, presented the final accounts.

During the mid to late 1800s the government was introducing many reforms that took powers away from local vestries and introduced local boards. Silsden set up a local Health Board of 12 members in 1863 and appointed an Inspector of Nuisances. Subsequently a Silsden Local Board was formed. The local school board of five members was formed on 27th August 1874. Charles was elected as chairman and he held that position until he resigned from the chair in January 1895. However, he was still one of the board members in 1904. In 1895 the Silsden Urban District Council replaced the Local Board and Charles was elected to serve as its chairman.

As already mentioned, between 1852 and 1870 Charles and Esther had eight children only one of whom was a boy. They were Ann, Sally, Fanny, Elizabeth, Florence, Esther, William and Margaret. In 1869 Sally at the age of 15 and Esther, age 5, both died in the same month with similar symptoms. All the others lived to be adults. Health issues and epidemics are addressed in Appendix 14.

In 1881 the Kelly's Directory listed Charles Weatherhead as draper and grocer. Since there is no mention of a draper in any Weatherhead census return this was perhaps one of his older daughters' occupations. It is a pity that there seems to be nothing recorded about Esther, but the family would not have succeeded so well in so many ways without the support of a loving and dedicated wife and mother. The role of women in the Primitive Methodist church was significant, running the school room and music. It is likely Esther held roles within the church.

In the 1887 PM Preacher Plan, reproduced in the narrative of John Driver, P4+, Charles, now approaching the age of 60, was preaching about once a month with younger members twice a month. Although the venues are fewer and more local Charles' commitment to the role was maintained. His name often linked to thanksgiving and commemoration services where Charles would give speeches.

In 1886 Charles and Esther became grandparents. This time in their lives would have been tinged with both joy and sadness. Ann's first children

born in 1886 and 1888 both died young. While Elizabeth's first children born in the same years survived into adulthood. With daughter Florence now married more grandchildren followed and within four years Esther had supported three of her daughters give birth to seven grandchildren.

In total Charles and Esther knew fourteen of their fifteen grandchildren.

We have this delightful photograph of four Weatherhead cousins in their early years. Although a number would have been teenagers at the time of Charles and Esther's deaths, we have no photographs of them in the early 1900s with their teenage grandchildren.



Four Weatherhead cousins
William Booth,
Arthur Driver, Charles Cockshott & Mary Booth

In addition to seeing their family grow through the arrival of grandchildren, Charles and Esther celebrated their two youngest children marry in 1898, as the century was nearing its close. Only Fanny remained unmarried.

In 1896, when Charles was 68, Silsden's Orchestral Society was set up, primarily organised by his son William, no doubt with Charles as a strong supporter, and the first rehearsal is recorded as having been held in the back of Charles' grocery shop, at 50 Kirkgate.

The photograph of Charles sitting on a box outside his shop with the butcher, Sam Bottomley, makes one wonder whether he would be reflecting on the many changes that had taken place during his lifetime. What would he have thought about a Silsden road named in his honour and the writing of a family history? Note that he is positioned on the two hinged wooden doors in the slightly raised portion of the pavement. The



doors provided access to the cellar and were most frequently seen at public houses where beer barrels were lowered down into and removed from the cellar.

His activities in Primitive Methodism and music no doubt earned Charles recognition, respect and many friends. However, he would not have been given the accolade of Civic Father if he had not been such a leading figure in the development and management of civic matters in Silsden. Charles spent his life ensuring the betterment of his community through his roles as Justice of the Peace, Assistant Overseer of the Poor, Educator, Lay Preacher and chairman of various committees and especially of the Urban Council. His name has also been found as a grand jurymen at the Leeds Assizes. This article is shown in Appendix 14.

And then, in 1906, tragedy struck again. Charles and Esther's only son, William, died at sea. This event is captured in William's narrative, number 143.

At no time did Charles give his occupation as retired. He was serving in his shop on the day before he died. Both he and Esther died within a few months of each other in 1907 after 56 years of marriage, Charles in February and Esther in April.

The net value of Charles' Personal Estate was £100.12s.1d although the gross value was over £3000.

The editor of the Keighley News said, 'It is not given to everyone to achieve honour in his own locality and amongst his own intimate associates, but this is what Mr Weatherhead certainly did. He was a man of sterling character, quiet in manner, simple in life, level-headed in business, and absolutely honourable in all his dealings. By his death Silsden loses a public man of the very finest type.'

In 1910, three years after Charles' death the following was written by the Rev Robson.

'His sermons always displayed careful preparation and wide reading, and were carefully written out. In the early days when the circuit was wide reaching as far as Grassington Mr Weatherhead, with others, tramped many weary miles to fulfil his appointments. He was a man of simple plain habits and quiet, reserved manner. He had a fund of quiet humour, a kindly smile, and an excellent spirit, untouched by improper pride or pretence. He was a life-long lover of good books and had a well-stored mind. He was also a musical enthusiast, and could play several musical instruments. In bygone years when there was no train connection with Silsden late at night he, along with other musical enthusiasts, walked home from Shipley, after attending concerts at Leeds or Bradford. He brought up his family to love the same beautiful art, and most of them have performed in public.'

With the death of both Charles and Esther, his five daughters were to inherit his estate, primarily the family home and business, in equal parts. Three years later, the 1910 tax ledger shows: -



- a) Mrs Hy Cockshott, that is Ann, to own land in Silsden and 40 Aireview
- b) Fanny to own 52 and 52a Kirkgate and also 36 Aireview,
- c) Mrs John Booth of Howden, that is Elizabeth, to own 42, 48 and 50 Kirkgate as well as 38 Aireview,
- d) Mrs Chas Driver, Florence, to own 39 Kirkgate and 7 Aireview, and finally
- e) Mrs C H Fletcher, Margaret, to own 35 and 37 Kirkgate and 34 Aireview.

Of the eight properties in Kirkgate seven were shops and five of them were houses (four being both).

Those in Aireview, numbers 7 and 34 to 40 inclusive, were all houses and all properties were let.

Number 52 Kirkgate, a house and shop, was let to a Mrs Hillman. There must have been a little movement since the M & A Hillman advertisement from a 1910 Bazaar programme says 50 Kirkgate. The tax return states that 52a Kirkgate, a shop, was let to a Miss Whittingham. In the advert shown as 52.

Following the death of her parents Fanny, who remained unmarried, went to live at Howden with sister Elizabeth's family, the Booths.

We know that Charles' grocer shop, number 50, was handed down through the family to generation R as it was part of the estate identified in the 1942 will of Charles Driver generation Q.



The 1911 census lists No. 50 Kirkgate as being occupied by the Hillmans and William Overend, a master grocer. Interestingly at No. 46 Kirkgate was Harry Thornber, a grocer. A few years earlier in 1906 Harry Thornber, a grocer's assistant, witnessed Charles' will.

It was a mark of Charles' role in Silsden life that he featured in Cathy Liddle's play, Right Up Our Street. The play was written

for Silsden Community Productions and was performed in 2010.

Most recently a blue plaque has been placed on the Red Lion. It reads 'This site has been an inn since the mid-1700s possibly earlier. At one time it contained a



blacksmith's shop with accommodation and stabling. The musical Weatherhead family were landlords of the Red Lion throughout the 19th century. They hosted concerts, self-improvement classes, Chartists meetings and early Friendly Societies. Charles Weatherhead Silsden's first civic leader was born here in 1828.' The photo shows David Mason, chairman of Silsden's History Group on the left, with the Red Lion landlord.

The Lancashire Evening Post of 6/2/1907 announced Charles' death as shown below, but the last words about Charles are left to the obituaries in

DEATH OF MR C. WEATHERHEAD

SILSDEN

Mr Charles Weatherhead J.P. of Silsden, died suddenly yesterday from pneumonia. He was a well-known and highly esteemed public man at Silsden. He was one of the members of the old Local Board, and was the first chairman of Silsden School Board, a position which he held for 30 years. He was also chairman for many years of the Silsden Urban Council, and invariably headed the poll at the elections. He died in harness, as he was chairman of the Education Committee and a member of the Council at the time of his death. He was a Primitive Methodist and an ardent Liberal. He was nearly 80 years of age.

the Leeds and Yorkshire Mercury newspaper and also in the address given by Rev Berry, Vicar of Silsden. These are presented in Appendix 14.

123 • • • • • Thomas Weatherhead and Grace Gill, P7. Thomas, the seventh child and second son of William and Elizabeth was born in 1831 and in the 1851 census is shown to be a blacksmith, as were his father and grandfather. He was unmarried, living with his mother, his older sister Elizabeth, plus newly married Charles and 'Easter' (Esther), and a lodger William Laycock. His father William had died in 1849. They were all living in Main Street Silsden. This would have been at the Red Lion.

The 1851 census shows that his mother, Elizabeth, who was now 57, was still involved with the Red Lion in that she is shown as 'Victual xx Inn Keeper'. From the list of bandsmen going to the Crimea (see Driver narrative 39) we find that Thomas was one of them. So, he was away from home for a couple of years returning in 1856. Later that year he married Grace Gill. Together they are likely to have settled at the Red Lion and enabled Thomas' mother Elizabeth, then 61, to have taken a back seat. By the 1861 census Thomas is shown to be the innkeeper with wife Grace, sons William and Herbert Henry (wrongly shown as Robert Henry). Thomas continued his father's tradition of organising live music at the Red Lion and in 1863, is also said to have been secretary to the Silsden band. Thomas' mother, Elizabeth, who had retired and was now living with her daughter Margaret Blakey, died in 1866.

Thomas and Grace experienced much sadness. In 1862 their eldest boy, William died at the age of 5. Second son, Herbert Henry, lived to be 69. Their third child, Charles, was born in 1863 and lived until 1866, which was the year that twins John and Thomas were born. Twin John died in 1866. Three years later another pair of twins were born, Edgar and Ernest, and not only did they both die but 3-year-old Thomas also died, all in 1869. We read that Edgar and Ernest were baptised by the Primitive Methodist minister Rev Jonathan Ayrton, whereas Thomas, the younger of the first set of twins was buried with the Anglican Vicar Rev Marriner officiating. It was this vicar who resigned in 1873 after being found intoxicated.

In 1872 Thomas and Grace had their next child, Emily, and she lived to have her own family. Then in 1873 Thomas the father, the innkeeper, died.

Grace was thus left with son Herbert, who in 1873 was 13, and Emily who was 6 months, plus the responsibility of the Red Lion. Grace continued as innkeeper for a few more years but then she arranged with her sister Elizabeth and brother-in-law James Ellison, that they would take over the Red Lion until Herbert was old enough to take on that task. To help follow these details the surnames are now included. James Ellison was recorded as being a railway clerk in the April 1871 census but one month later, in

May at the time of the baptism of his daughter Alice, he was a Gentleman (unemployed?). By the time of his next child Grace's baptism in 1873 he was a coal merchant in Silsden and the same in March 1875 when daughter Eleanor was baptised. Continuing this line of records shows James Ellison to be innkeeper of the Red Lion in February 1877 and again in April 1881 when the census was taken.

Grace Weatherhead and her two children had moved to Bolton Road and were there in the census of 1881, but at the time of Herbert Henry's marriage in February 1883 Herbert Henry is shown as now being an innkeeper. The return of a Weatherhead landlord to the Red Lion was confirmed at the time of the 1883 baptism of James Ellison's son, James Herbert, when James is shown as Hotel Keeper now living in Keighley. In the 1891 census James Ellison and family were back in Silsden living in Aireview and his occupation had changed to working for a hay and straw company.

After Herbert's marriage, Grace and Emily moved to Skipton Road, defined more precisely in Kelly's directory as Ash Grove. When Emily married in 1894, she and her husband continued to live at Ash Grove with her mother.

Grace died in 1907. In her will she left her estate ultimately in trust for her grandchildren, but it involved various trusts with four trustees (one of whom was Harry R Weatherhead a solicitor in Keighley who does not appear to be related). She owned two properties in Aireview and the gross value of her estate was £595 but the net value was only £34.5s.5d.

Grace's husband, Thomas Weatherhead, had been one of the investors in the Silsden New Mill Building Company. The winding up of this company in 1867 is related in the narrative of brother Charles, narrative 122.

124 • • • • • Herbert Henry Weatherhead and Mary Jane Shepherd, P7+. Herbert Henry, born in 1860, appears in the 1861 census as Robert Henry even though he was baptised as Herbert Henry. Later censuses have his correct name. He was the second child and only thirteen when his father died, and, as mentioned above, Grace brought in her

younger sister and brother-in-law to live at and run the Red Lion until Herbert Henry was old enough to take the reins.

It was during this Red Lion inter-regnum period that the 1881 Kelly's Directory tells us that the Red Lion had choice foreign spirits and well matured wines; bottled Burton ales and Dublin stout; good stabling; and that the publican was also an auctioneer, general valuer, appraiser etc. At this time Herbert was living with his mother in Bolton Road and was a wincy weft manager.

Herbert married Mary Jane Shepherd in 1883 and had become the innkeeper of the Red Lion. Mary Jane had been born in 1861 and her parents were George, a boatman, and Elizabeth Shepherd. The close connection between Weatherhead and Driver families is once again evident as Herbert and Mary's witnesses included Florence Weatherhead and Charles Driver who would go on to marry 5 years later.

In the 1891 and 1901 censuses Herbert and Mary Jane are shown to be at the Red Lion, 47 Kirkgate, where Herbert is the innkeeper, confirmed by the 1893 Kelly's directory. Although Herbert and Jane were married in their early twenties, no record of any children has been found.

By 1911 Herbert had relinquished his connection with the Red Lion and was living with his wife at 32 Ash Grove. Hannah Miller was the Red Lion hotel housekeeper and licenced victualler, together with her son-in-law, daughter and four grandchildren. The date of this change has not been established, but Herbert would have been in his 50s. The Weatherhead family connection with the Red Lion had therefore come to an end.

So, in 1911 we find both Herbert, retired innkeeper, and his now married sister, Emily Wilkinson and family, living nearby. Herbert lived until 1929 when he was 69. Mary Jane, who was one year younger than Herbert lived until 1945 when she was 84. By that time, she had moved to live at 70 Broughton Road in Skipton.

125 • • • • • Emily Weatherhead and Herbert Wilkinson, P7+.

Emily, born in 1872 was the eighth child born to Thomas and Grace and only the second one to survive childhood. In 1894 she married Herbert Wilkinson, a clerk at a steel works. They had two children, Tom Bernal and Sydney. In the 1901 census they were living with Emily's mother in Skipton Road and in 1911 they were in Ash Grove, most likely the same house. The census shows Ash Grove may have been in the process of being renamed since 2 Hothfield Street North was also given as the address.

The 1939 register confirms the address as 2 Hothfield North. However, in 1944 a newspaper article states that they were celebrating their Golden Wedding anniversary at Ash Grove. From this article it is clear that both were prominent members of Silsden society; Herbert having chaired the District Council and Emily 'played a prominent part in the work at Silsden church, was a Silsden District Nursing Committee member for 30 years and secretary of the ladies' section of the Silsden Conservative Club since its formation in 1910'. Herbert died a few months after in March 1944 and Emily lived until the age of 94 dying in 1966.

126 • • • • • William Weatherhead, P8.

William was the eighth child of William Weatherhead and Elizabeth Gill. It is sad to record that, like so many born in the late Georgian and early Victorian period, he died in childhood. William was born in 1833 and died three years later. It was good to find that there is a memorial stone in Silsden graveyard with his name added. Interestingly the stone was originally used for his great grandparents Joseph and Elizabeth Steel, generation M. It reads: -

IN MEMORY of Joseph Steel of Silsden who died November 11th 1816 in the 75th Year of his Age

ALSO Elizabeth Widow of the above said Joseph Steel who died February 22nd 1827 in the 86th Year of her Age

Also of William Son of William and Elizabeth Weatherhead who died May 18th 1836 in the 3rd Year of his Age.

We now return to the eight children of Charles and Esther.

127 • • • • • Ann Weatherhead and Henry Cockshott, Q1. Ann, born in 1852, the oldest child of Charles and Esther is shown in the 1881 census to be 29 and a music teacher. She is also on record as playing the church organ, this being at the Primitive Methodist Chapel, where she was also a teacher. She married Henry Cockshott, a dairy farmer, in 1885 when she was 33 and Henry was 41. Henry was born in 1844 at Silsden Moor to Thomas and Margaret Brear. When married Ann and Henry lived at a farm at High Cringles, where it is said that there was a pipe organ in the hall. They had three children. The first child Thomas was born and died in 1886. In the 1891 census their other two children are recorded, Esther aged 3 and Charles Henry aged 1 month. Esther died later the same year from influenza meningitis and from the death certificate it would seem that aunt Margaret, Q8, was helping Ann and therefore registered the death.

In 1891 Ann and Henry were living in High Cringles near to Ann's aunt Elizabeth and Henry's uncle, John Cockshott, P5.

Also living with Ann and Henry were nephew Thomas Cockshott age 25, coach painter, and niece Caroline Cockshott, 23, nurse and domestic servant. These two were born in Salop and Worcestershire respectively and were the children of John Breare Cockshott, Henry's step brother.

According to the 1910 tax ledger Ann was the owner of some land in Silsden but its location is not provided. It is most likely that this came about as a share of her father's estate.

At the time of the 1911 census Henry is described as a dairy farmer living with Ann and their only remaining child. Charles Henry, who was shown age 20, was working as a clerk at a weaving mill. Also in the household is farmer's man John Pickering.

In 1921 Henry, aged 76, was still farming at Cringles with Ann, and employed a 67-year-old servant, William Chapman, to work on the farm. Henry died first in 1926 and then Ann, aged 77, in 1929.

128 • • • • • Charles Henry Cockshott, Q1+, the third child born to Ann and Henry Cockshott in 1890, lived at Cringles. His baptism at St James Church, Silsden was at the same service as his cousin, Arthur Driver, being born just six days apart. Although the third child, Charles grew up as an only child following the infant deaths of both his siblings. He was photographed, see narrative 122, as a young boy with his cousins, Arthur Driver, William and Mary Booth, all children having had Weatherhead sisters as mothers. Charles' older sister Esther was born the same year as Mary Booth but died in May 1891, when Charles was nine months old suggesting the photograph was taken in 1891.



In the 1901 census, although not stated, Charles was most likely still attending school. By 1911 he was working as a clerk in a fancy goods weaving mill continuing to live with his parents on the dairy farm at Cringles. In 1912 he was one of the founder members of Silsden's golf club, where, once again, he was pictured alongside his cousin, Arthur. See Appendix 3.

Unlike Arthur, we believe that Charles did not join the army in 1914.

From the 1921 census we see that Charles was an under clerk for a dress goods manufacturer. He was working for his uncle, Mr Charles H Fletcher, Q8, at Airedale Shed.

By 1929, aged 39, Charles was the only surviving member of his family. He continued working in the textile industry and in the 1939 register he was recorded as a textile order clerk. Louisa Whittam, a 59-year-old, being paid for domestic duties lived at the same address. Charles continued to live at Cringles until his death in 1941, aged 50. He had no children.

129 • • • • • Sally Weatherhead, Q2. Sally was born in 1854 and was the second daughter of Charles and Esther. She died at the age of 14 in 1869 and is likely to have left school and be helping in her father's grocery business while he was engaged in his many other activities. Sally died of scarlet fever in May of that year.

130 • • • • • Fanny Weatherhead, Q3. Fanny, the third daughter, was the one who stayed at home. She was born in 1856 and is found in 1871 to be still a scholar at age 14, and in 1881 to be a music teacher, as was her older sister Ann. Primitive Methodist teacher plans show Fanny

teaching a number of bible and music classes. We know that the Charles Weatherhead family were running a draper's shop in 1881 and this may have been a role for Fanny. In 1891 she was grocer's assistant helping in her father's shop. In 1901 she was her mother's help living with her mother and father at 50A Kirkgate. Her parents both died in 1907. Fanny then moved to live at Howden House with her younger sister Elizabeth and family until she died in 1918. In Fanny's will she left legacies to her nephews and nieces and her residual

estate was passed to her sisters. In the will Mary Booth was called May Booth. Her executors were nephews William Booth and Charles Henry Cockshott.

131 • • • • • Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Booth, Q4. Elizabeth was the fourth daughter of Charles and Esther and was born in 1859. She married John Booth in 1885. The 1891 and subsequent censuses show them to be living at Howden House, where John's mother, Mary Booth (born Mary Ann Teal), was head of household until she died in 1893. John was a dairy farmer of 31 acres, and employed a cow man, Thomas



Gregson, who was with them for many years. By 1901 they had four children, William born in 1886, Mary born 1888, Thomas born 1892 and John born 9 years later in 1901. Elizabeth had the help of two house servants.

There is a photograph of a young person in what looks like a straw hat driving a pony and trap, with the trap having the address Howden House on it. There is some question as to whether this is a girl or a boy. Assuming that the pony and trap have not been lent to a friend, the boy would have been Elizabeth's son, William Booth, b.1886 and the girl would have been his sister, Mary, b.1888. The photo having been taken in the late 1890s.

The two following pictures are portraits of Elizabeth and John painted by a Mr Hayward, a professor at the Royal College of Art (RCA). It is believed that he was introduced to the family by a friend of Elizabeth's, Augustus (Gus) Spencer, a principal at the RCA, born in Silsden and who died in 1924 at Howden House.



In the 1911 census we find that Elizabeth's older sister, Fanny, unmarried and aged 54 was living with them at Howden House. She was said to be of independent means. At that time none of Elizabeth's children were married and were living at home. Fanny died in 1918.

We have other photos that were taken at Howden. Two of which were of Frank Littledale Driver, one with a telescope and the other of him holding a pigeon, and probably taken in the early 1920s. Elizabeth was his aunt and would have been in her early 60s. Her youngest son, John, a couple of years younger than his cousin Frank was still at home.

Elizabeth died in 1937 at the age of 78 and John, died in 1929.

132 • • • • • William Booth and Elsie Denison, Q4+. William, the eldest son of Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Booth, born in 1886, grew up at Howden House. By the age of 14, in the 1901 census, he was listed as a farmer's son. In 1911, at the age of 25, William was a wool merchant.

In October 1912 William, by this time a timber merchant, married Elsie Denison, a school friend of William's sister, Mary. It was a large wedding with over 100 guests, all photographed outside the bride's home, Cliffe House, Yeadon. There was a full write up in the newspaper of 'The pretty wedding at Yeadon', including the many presents given, and the honeymoon taken in Paris.



Elsie's father, Edward Denison, was a pioneer in building the Westfield Mills using electrically powered looms. Her mother, Christina was a pillar of the community and, with her husband, erected and unveiled a War Memorial window in the United Methodist Church in Yeadon, to commemorate the men connected with the church who died in the 1914-18 war.

The wedding photograph shows the Weatherhead cousins, uncles and aunts all enjoying the occasion together. One month after their own wedding William and Elsie attended the wedding of their best man, Evelyn Dixon, to their bridesmaid Mary, William's sister.

As a timber merchant William bought trees from across the country, cut them and took them away on horse drawn low loaders to his timber yard at Steeton. Much of the timber was used in mines as pit props.

William and Elsie, living at Spring Mount in Bingley, had two daughters, Christina and Mary. Tragically, after six years of marriage, in 1918, William died from influenza. His children were just 4 and 2 years old. William was buried at St James Church, Silsden. Elsie stayed at Spring Mount until 1920 and then moved the family to Tarn Villas, Cowpasture Road near Ilkley Moor. She lived there through the 1930s. At the time of the 1939 Register Elsie was resident at the Royal Hotel in Ilkley, Christina was living in Skipton and Mary, now married, was in London. By 1947 Christina was married and Elsie was living in Middleton Villas in Ilkley. Elsie did not remarry and died in 1969 in Windsor.

133 • • • • • Mary Booth and Clarence Evelyn Dixon, Q4+. Mary, the second child and only daughter of Elizabeth and John, born in 1888 was living at Howden House in 1911, aged 22, with no occupation listed. From photographs of this time, we see Mary, alongside her brother's fiancée, Elsie Denison, with many friends. See Appendix 19. Mary and Elsie shared the same year of birth. In November 1912, aged 24, just one month after her brother's wedding, Mary married Clarence Evelyn Dixon, known

as Evelyn, a farmer of Harewood House, Steeton. The wedding was described in Silsden's Parish Magazine.

'The church had been decorated by friends with flowers and plants, and Mr B Longbottom played selections of wedding music on the organ. Mr Booth having been one of the chief donors when the peal of bells was provided, the Ringing Company rang peals as the wedding party left the Church, and also at intervals later in the day. A large reception was held at Howden House during the afternoon, and Mr and Mrs Dixon left for London and Bournemouth. Many good wishes go with them to their new home at Malham, which they enter upon after Christmas.'

Evelyn's father, a farmer and breeder of cattle, was also a director of various diamond and gold mining companies. He died in 1907. In the newspaper at the time Evelyn's occupation was given as mechanical engineer but after his father's death it appears that Evelyn took over the running of the dairy farm as, in the 1911 census and on his marriage certificate, he was shown as a dairy farmer.



Living at Malham, Mary and Evelyn had three children; John Booth, Evelyn who died in his first year, and Thomas Geoffrey. The 1929 electoral register gave their home as Scothrop House, Bell Busk, Malhamdale. However, one year later, in 1930, Evelyn was on a ship returning from Canada and gave his address as Howden House, Silsden. It is interesting to note that on the ship's record Evelyn indicated that his intended future permanent residence was not England but, 'Other parts of the British Empire'. However, in 1939 Mary, Evelyn and John B were shown as resident at both Howden House and Eshton Grange, a dairy farm in Malham, where son John B was shown as the stockman.

This would suggest that following John Booth senior's death in 1929, Mary and Evelyn left Scothrop House and moved back to Howden House to support Elizabeth, Mary's mother.

Shortly after Elizabeth's death in 1937 there was an auction of the contents of Howden House and of the farm livestock. Later the property itself was advertised for sale. It may be that no sale took place as in 1939 the property was advertised for let with tenders to be sent to Clarence Evelyn Dixon at Eshton Grange or his brother-in-law, John Booth, at Lanes End, Steeton. Interestingly during WW2 Howden House was requisitioned by the army.



Mary and Evelyn continued to live at Eshton Grange until their deaths in 1949 and 1950 respectively. Mary aged 61 and Evelyn 65.

134 • • • • • Thomas Booth and Mary Hirst, Q4+. Thomas, the second son and third child of Elizabeth and John Booth was born in 1892. By the age of 18, in the 1911 census, he was a worsted spinner. With the outbreak of war in 1914, aged 22, Thomas left working in the mills to join the army. He was photographed alongside his cousin, Arthur Driver, in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in 1915. They were both 2nd Lieutenants in the 1/6th DWR and attended the Leeds University Officers training course together.

Thomas was invalided home from France on the 27th April 1916 with Myalgia, a muscular condition, on the hospital ship St Patrick. Most of his records have not survived, however his discharge or hospital record showed that he had been in the army for 1 year 6 months and 'with the



field force' for 6 months. He returned to active service and in 1917 was promoted to Lieutenant.

1918 was a year of very mixed emotions for Thomas. In September his future wife's brother married but the following month was killed in action in Italy. In November came the end of WW1 but tragedy happened 13 days later when Thomas' brother, William, died of flu. We do not know how these events affected Thomas' plans but a month later, on the 14th

December, he was married. This was to Mary Hirst in Ilkley. At this time Thomas returned to work in the mills as a worsted top spinner.

Mary's father, who had died in 1912, was Joseph Briggs Hirst of J. B. Hirst manufacturers, Bradford. She was the youngest child of seven living at Woodville, Ilkley.

By 1921 Thomas and Mary had a son, Brian, born 1920. At that time the family were living at Hawthorne Villa, Ilkley with Thomas employed as a wool merchant working at J. B. Hirst Ltd. Second son, Francis Eric, followed and by 1939 Thomas was the manager of a worsted factory living at 'Lynden' in Clifford Avenue, Ilkley.

Online family history account states that Thomas retired early and was a keen climber. In addition, other family members state that Thomas was an expert fly fisherman and that he tied flies perfectly despite having short stubby fingers! He is described as being one of the nicest people.

Thomas died in 1955 at Clifford Avenue, aged 62. Mary died in 1969, aged 76, at the home of her son, Eric, in Freshfield, Lancashire.

135 • • • • • John (Jack) Booth and Dorothy Stell, Q4+. John, known as Jack, was the youngest of the four children of Elizabeth and



John Booth and was born in 1901. In the 1911 census he was shown as a scholar, aged 9. He lived at Howden House until 1928 when he married Dorothy Stell from Steeton. At that time John was the manager and secretary of the Rhone Spinning Company in Keighley.

Dorothy's father Alfred Stell, was a textile machine manufacturer, probably with Prince and Stell also in Keighley. The wedding reception was held at the bride's family home and the two honeymooned in Switzerland.

By 1930 Jack and Dorothy were living in Overdale in Silsden. Their first child was a daughter, Josephine Mary Stell. Their son, John Netherwood, was born in 1939. In that year the family were living at Lane Ends, Summerhill Lane, Steeton. At that time John was a salesman and manager at a worsted spinning mill as well as being a Special Constable. They continued to live in the Skipton area. Dorothy died in 1984, aged 82, and Jack in 1994, aged 93.

136 • • • • • Florence Weatherhead and Charles Driver, Q5. When Florence, the fifth daughter of Charles and Esther, married this was where the Driver family and Weatherhead family united. Florence and Charles both had an interest in music and had performed in public together. Details of their life are in the Driver section where Charles is Q3, narrative 46.



The narratives of descendants of Florence and Charles are to be found in the Driver section and are not reproduced here. They appear under numbering 52 to 56 and 65 to 73.

137 • • • • • Arthur Driver, Q5+, Driver narrative 52

138 • • • • • Sarah (Sally) Driver, Q5+, Driver narrative 53

139 • • • • • Morris Driver, Q5+, Driver narrative 54

140 • • • • • Frank Littledale Driver, Q5+, Driver narr. 55

141 • • • • • Florence Elizabeth Driver, Q5+, Driver narr. 56

142 • • • • • Esther Weatherhead, Q6. Esther, the sixth child and sixth daughter, of Charles and Esther was named after her mother. She was born in 1864 and died some five years later. Esther's cause of death was given as Febris gastrica and meningitis. Esther died the same month and year as her older sister Sally, namely in May 1869.

143 • • • • • William Weatherhead and Jane Liggins, Q7.

William, born in 1867, was the seventh child of Charles and Esther and their only son. As with all their children he was brought up as a Primitive Methodist. He was another of the family to have a musical flair. Older sisters Ann and Fanny, the music teachers, Elizabeth, Florence, William and younger sister Margaret were all musicians who performed in public.



William in the 1881 census, when he was 14, was still a scholar. At the age of 24 in the 1891 census William was shown as being one of three grocer's assistants which seems to indicate that their father's business was doing well. It could also be caused by the fact that their father was taking a very active role in Silsden's civic work as well as in Primitive Methodism and preaching. In the 1901 census William had his own business in Silsden as a

musical instrument dealer, and was still a grocer's assistant. In the 1901 census William was one of the enumerators for the village.

In 1896 William, now 29, held a key role in setting up the Silsden Orchestral Society. He was elected to be its president and held this role until 1906. In the early days the orchestra rehearsed in the back room of Charles Weatherhead's grocer shop. William was well known in musical circles in the Keighley district. He was an accomplished organist and pianist and played many other musical instruments. Initially he was the conductor of the orchestra. Ill health forced him to resign from this role. Yet his knowledge on matters pertaining to anything musical was always at the service of the orchestra society's members. He was highly respected by all who knew him.

In 1898, a couple of years after establishing the Silsden Orchestral Society, William married Jane Liggins in Paddington, London. Jane was the only daughter of Thomas Pearson Liggins an accountant and his wife Jane Shields, who came from Great Ouseburn, east of Harrogate in Yorkshire. William and Jane (Jnr) lived at 58 Skipton Road in Silsden. One wonders how he met Jane. Could it be that he had been visiting London in connection with his new business and met Jane there? Or was Jane visiting Yorkshire? Jane, born in London, was living with her parents at 134 Portsdown Road in Edgware. William on his marriage record states he is an organist resident in the Parish of St James Silsden.

William and Jane did not have any children. As a consequence, this branch of the family name of Weatherhead was not carried forward, and may explain why we have no photograph of Jane.

We learn that William had been in ill health for some time and that to improve his health

he had gone on a voyage in 1906. A report written by his friend Rev W J Robson in the book, Silsden Primitive Methodism. Historical Records and Reminiscences, says 'Mr Weatherhead had been in ill health for some time, and about two months before decided to have a tour of the Canary Islands, Madeira and Morocco, with a view to recuperating his health. A similar voyage some time ago was the means of building up his health considerably and, thinking that he might receive further benefit he resolved to make another journey.' In researching this we found that a Mr Weatherhead and wife had travelled from Liverpool to Gran Canaria on SS Bathurst on 2nd September 1903.

Reverend Robson's report, referring to their later cruise in 1906, continued, 'His health was improved a little by his stay in Madeira, but after going on board ship for the return journey he became worse and eventually died in peaceful slumber on Wednesday 22nd. The remains were interred at sea the following Friday and it was not until the vessel arrived in England that his widow, who had accompanied him, was able to send the sad news home.' The news reached Silsden on November 26th 1906. William was only 39. There is slight confusion as to his death as the Wednesday was in fact 21st of November. The cruise ship was The SS Morocco and took 40 first class passengers. It was a Thomas Cook cruise advertised in the London

REGISTER OF				DECEASED PASSENGERS.						
11. Age.	12. Date of Death.	13. Place of Death.	PARTICULARS		CONCERNING DECEASED					11. CAUSE OF DEATH.
			14. Christian Name.	15. Surname.	16. Sex.	17. Age.	18. Rank, Profession, or Occupation.	19. Nationality, or Birthplace.	20. Last Place of Abode.	
boy	18. 11. 06	14. 12. 06 52 07 E	Nazra	Mahomed	M	70	Pilgrim	Indian Cabal	Cabal	Old age & general debility
	19. 11. 06	13. 11. 06 48 13 E	Mahomed	Amin	M	60	"	" Buhhan	"	"
man	22. 11. 06	22. 11. 06 Long 9 40 W	William	Weatherhead	M	39	Musical Instrument maker	Silsden, Yorks.	58 Skipton Road, Silsden, Keighley, Yorks	Diabetes & heart failure

Evening Standard and it mentioned that there would be a doctor and stewardess on board. The SS Morocco travelled from London on the 1st November 1906 and visited Dartmouth, Rabat, Larache, Gibraltar, Tangier, Casablanca, Mazagan, Saffi, Mogador, Tenerife, Las Palmas and Madeira.

The extract below from the Register of Deceased Passengers of the SS Morocco and William's occupation, presumably given by his wife, states him to have been a musical instrument maker. The cause of death is stated to be diabetes and heart failure.

A correspondent, name unknown, wrote to the Pioneer, which was a predecessor of the Craven Herald, reporting that on Sunday December 2nd 1906 there was an impressive memorial service held at Silsden's Primitive Methodist Church in Kirkgate. The report of that event has been included in full detail in Appendix 2. In it there is a great tribute to William which might well have been included here but really needed to be kept in its original context. It describes the service in some detail.

The tribute made by this friend and reported in the Primitive Methodist book, published in 1910, offered sympathy to the family. However, it is a little strange that the correspondent did not mention William's mother when writing, 'How deeply we sympathise with the grief-stricken wife, father and sisters who are left.' Charles died 11 weeks after William in February 1907 and Esther followed a couple of months later in April.

In searching for Jane Weatherhead, widow, in 1911, we found her living at 58 Skipton Road, with her mother. This was the address that William and Jane had lived at in Silsden. Jane's mother, Jane Liggins, born in Yorkshire, was probably living with her daughter until Jane senior's death in January 1916. A memorial stone for her exists at St James Church. It was in 1916 that Jane junior remarried as reported in the next narrative.

144 • • • • • Margaret Weatherhead and Charles H Fletcher, and Jane Weatherhead, Q8. Margaret born in 1870 was the eighth and last child of Charles and Esther. In 1891 she was living with her parents at 50 Kirkgate and described, like Fanny and William, as a grocer's assistant. Then

in 1898, at the age of 28, and just a few months before her brother's wedding, Margaret married Charles Henry Fletcher. Charles, aged 23, was the second son of William Fletcher and his second wife Mary Ann Dawson. William, the lifelong friend of Margaret's father Charles, was the superintendent of the PM Sunday School, suggesting that Margaret would have known Charles H's family well as she was growing up. However, William died in 1886 when Charles Henry was just 11 and Margaret 16. Charles H was the step brother of Richard Fletcher, P2+.



Charles was manager of a cotton and worsted weaving shed and later became a worsted coating manufacturer and a mill owner. Charles and Margaret lived at Becks House in Silsden and did not have any family. Newly married, in 1900, they were both involved with events at the Primitive Methodist Grand Oriental and Carnival and Fancy Fair. Appendix 3 details how a few years later in 1910 Margaret was the Hon Secretary (Ladies Section) of the fund-raising Grand Bazaar alongside Charles, the Hon Secretary for the event. Charles being one of the founder members of the recently formed bowls club. Margaret would have had many roles

alongside her husband's involvement with the church, scouting and Silsden Free Library lectures.

Also, in the early 1900s, we know that Charles' mother, Mary, spent her closing days at Becks House, being cared for by Margaret and Charles. Mary died in 1905.

Margaret died at Becks House in 1914 of pneumonia at the early age of 43. Unfortunately, we have been unable to find a photograph of Margaret, but we believe that we have identified her in the 'Ladies in Hats' photograph shown in Appendix 19.

In 1916, a couple of years after Margaret's death, Charles Henry Fletcher married Jane Weatherhead, his sister-in-law. This event took place in Rochford, Essex where Jane's eldest brother, Edward T Liggins, and his family were living. Charles and Jane also did not have any children. Charles died suddenly just 8 years later in 1924, at the age of 48. Jane, widowed for a second time, sometimes known as Jennie, outlived Charles by 31 years, dying in 1955. Her home at that time was 7 Elm Grove, two doors down from her nephew Arthur Driver.

We now narrate generation Q4++ i.e., the grandchildren of Elizabeth Weatherhead and John Booth (Q4).

145 • • • • • Christina Booth and Arthur Forber Seddon, Q4++. Christina, the oldest child and daughter of William and Elsie Denison was born in 1914.

In 1939, aged 25, she had left home and was living in Skipton with the Holmes family. Edward, the head of that household, was a wool merchant and Air Raid Precautions (ARP) Warden. Christina's work was given as



unpaid domestic duties, the same as Edward's two daughters still living at home. Christina was also shown to be an ARP Ambulance Driver.

In 1946, she married Arthur Forber Seddon in Ilkley. Arthur, born in Lancashire was living in Nuneaton in 1939 while working as a dental surgeon. Arthur and Christina lived in Warwickshire together with son, Peter. Arthur died in 1987 and Christina in 1995. Peter in 1969 married Rachel Saxton and they have two children, Juliet and David, and three grandchildren.

Peter, Rachel, Kate and Ian have met to share family history information.

146 • • • • • Mary Booth and Ronald C T Clark, Q4++. Mary, the second daughter of William and Elsie Denison, was born in 1916.

In 1938, shortly before the start of WW2, aged 21, she married Ronald Cuthbert Tremayne Clark in Kensington. Ronald was born in Wimbledon in 1905, his father was a furniture maker. The following year the couple were living at 6 Prince's Gate Mews, London SW7. At that time Ronald was a policeman in the Police War Reserve and Mary was a general secretary. By the 1950s they were living in Princes Way, Wandsworth, with their two children. Christine married Salvatore Tuccio Visconti and they have two married



children, Aurora and Marina, and two grandchildren. Linda married Rodrigo Sotomayor and they have a married daughter, Carolina.

147 • • • • • John Booth Dixon, Q4++, the first of three children of Mary and Evelyn, was born in 1914, the same year as his cousin Christina. He lived with his parents and worked on the farm as a stockman. He continued to farm, as a single man, at Eshton Grange. John died in 2001 in the district of Burnley and Pendle.

148 • • • • • Thomas Geoffrey Dixon and Constance Muriel Green, Q4++. Thomas Geoffrey, born in 1917, was the third child of Mary and Evelyn, the second child having died in infancy. He was known as Geoffrey and went to school at Ermysted's Grammar School in Skipton. He played rugby, a forward for the Skipton team and at times played for Yorkshire. In 1940, aged 23, Geoffrey was shown as living at Grange Farm, Eshton, with the rest of the family living at Eshton Grange. Aged 23 years and a sub lieutenant in the Duke of Wellington's regiment, he married Constance Muriel Green in Kildwick. The following year their son Patrick Geoffrey was born.

By 1942 Geoffrey was on active duty with the RAF. A few months before the birth of his second son, Peter, Geoffrey died in the Scilly Isles, aged 26.



RAF Flying Officer Thomas Geoffrey Dixon was a pilot of a Liberator bomber. On 23rd February 1944 he was making a forced landing due to lack of fuel at the end of a sortie. This sortie is likely to have been a long-range flight over the Atlantic protecting shipping convoys from U-boat attacks. This landing was on a small runway at Old Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly. The plane overshot the runway and crashed. He was killed by one of the plane's four propellers breaking off and flying into the cockpit. His death date is shown as the 24th so he might have died of wounds some hours after the crash. His crew of seven and a passenger survived. Geoffrey is remembered on a memorial at Cononley churchyard in the West Riding. At this time Constance was living in Cross Hills, possibly with her parents.

In 1946 Constance, then living at Rose Cottage, Halton East, Skipton, married Douglas Ferrier Miller of Teviotdale Lodge, Roxburghshire. Douglas had been a lieutenant in the Highland Light Infantry and was now running a hotel in Hawick, Scotland. Constance died in 2012 in Cockermouth. She is remembered with her first husband on the Dixon tomb in Cononley, where she was born.

Geoffrey and Constance's sons both married. Patrick emigrated to Canada, married Barbara Hardy and had three children and two grandchildren. Peter married Daphne Ruth White and had a career playing, and on one occasion captaining the England Rugby team. He was selected to play in the Lions 1971 tour of New Zealand. He became a university academic at Durham working in international development.

149 • • • • • Brian Booth and E. Elizabeth Gillies, Q4++, the oldest son of Thomas and Mary Hirst was born in 1920. Online family history accounts show that in 1931, at the age of 10, he was at Loretto School, Midlothian in Scotland. He stayed through to senior school passing his Highers. Chemistry and maths were his favourite subjects. He was a house prefect and was a sergeant in the Officers Training Corps.



Leaving school in April 1939 he went to Leeds University to study mining engineering, including a practical stint working down the mines. The war

started at the same time as he started at Leeds University. He did not complete his degree but joined the army instead. Interestingly this is a similar process to that of his second cousin, Tom Driver, S1. In WW1 Brian's and Tom's fathers had stood together in a regiment photograph and now their sons were signing up during WW2.

Brian took the Naval Academy exams and passed with flying colours but his colour blindness let him down and he was not allowed to join so he opted for the Royal Artillery instead and spent most of the war on fighting ships. He took part in Normandy invasions and was then posted to Hong Kong and later to Singapore.

After leaving the army he joined British Petroleum which controlled the Anglo Persian Oil Company in Abadan, Persia, now Iran. BP withdrew their staff in autumn 1951 and Brian was kept on payroll in London for a year before being assigned to Swansea Refinery. During this time, he met Emmeline Elizabeth Gillies. They had previously met when Brian had been on leave in 1944. In 1945, known by her middle name, Elizabeth had been in the WRNS, often referred to as the Wrens.

In 1952 Brian and Elizabeth were married in London and lived with her mother, Evelyn Gillies, in Brompton. After moving to Swansea their son Peter was born. They moved to Aden returning to live in the UK in 1957/58. Brian worked at the grain refinery in Kent. As well as Peter they had three daughters; Denise, Kathryn and Alexandra.

Elizabeth died in 1977, aged 51, the year that their son, Peter, married. Brian died in 1987, aged 66. Their four children have eleven children.

150 • • • • • Francis Eric Booth and Anne Hewitt, Q4++. Known as Eric he is the second son of Thomas and Mary Hirst. Like his brother he went to Loretto School. On leaving school he joined the navy and was aboard HMS Woodstock, a minesweeper on Atlantic convoys, during WW2. The ship was sent to take part in Operation Neptune (D-Day landings) but had a collision and was taken out of service. However, Eric was there at the Normandy invasion and spotted his brother's ship on



which Brian was a Royal Artillery Officer. Later in the war Eric was on board one of the ships at the Japanese surrender in September 1945. The brothers ran into each other again, after the war, in service at Hong Kong in the winter of 1945/1946.

On returning to England Eric went to Liverpool University to study architecture. Between 1947 and 1950 the electoral role shows Eric living with his parents in Ilkley. By 1955 he was in Liverpool living in Gresford Avenue, we believe working as

an architect for Liverpool City Council. Eric married Anne T Hewitt in 1973 in Birkenhead and they have two children, Thomas and Joseph.

151 • • • • • Josephine Mary Stell Booth and Peter Waring, Q4++. Josephine, the oldest daughter of Jack and Dorothy Stell married Peter Waring in 1952. They lived in Hadfield House, Cononley and had one daughter Jacqueline, who in turn married John Briggs. According to one family history account during the 1960s Josephine rescued racehorses and rehabilitated them. Peter Waring died in 1965 at the early age of 36. Josephine married Geoffrey Stapleton the following year and it is believed had one child.

152 • • • • • John Netherwood Booth and Corinne Carter, Q4++. John the second child of Jack and Dorothy Stell was born in 1939. He was the fourth successive generation to be given the name of John and his second name revived his great great grandmother's maiden name of Netherwood. John married Corinne Carter in 1963 and they had two children. John died in Micklethwaite in 1982 at the age of 43 and Corinne in 2018 when she was 80.

This completes the narratives of the Silsden Weatherhead family and sadly there is no male descendent to carry the surname forward.