



Connections that changed lives

The relationships between
William Flack (1810-1892) and
Richard Parker (1823-1900)
that changed lives

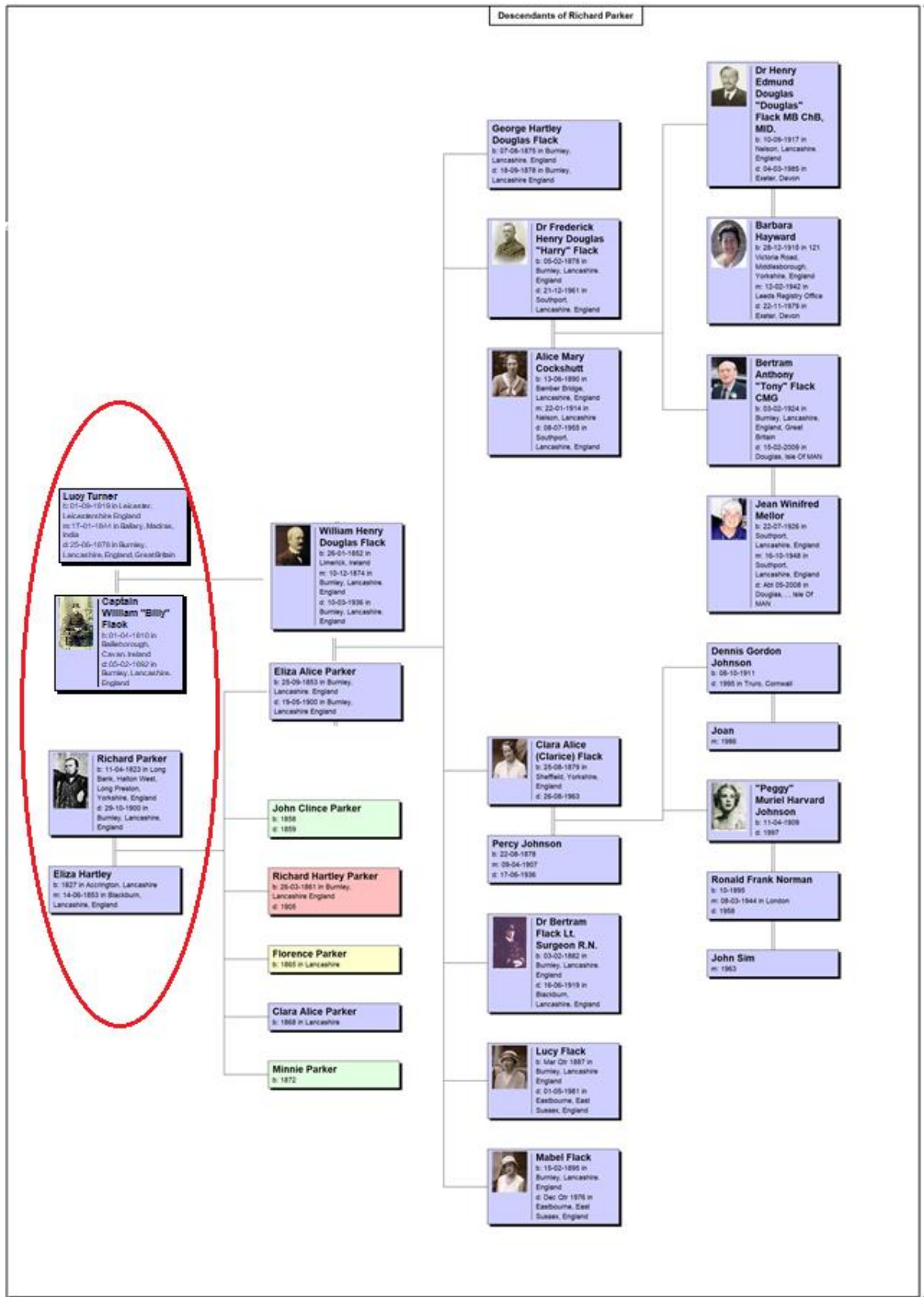


Ted (Edmund) Flack, PhD., JP



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Descendants of Richard Parker



The family and business relationships between William Flack (1810-1892) and Richard Parker (1823-1900)

One of the questions that has arisen since the early stages of my research into our family tree is "How did our Great-great Grandfather, William ("Billy") Flack, a retired Sergeant Major, on a pension, manage to prosper well enough to send his children to good schools - William Henry Douglas Flack, (1852-1936) becoming a Bank Manager and William George John Flack (1854-1929) becoming an ordained clergyman?"

In this research report, I set out the proposition that Sergeant Major William Flack was able to prosper as a consequence of the military, business and social relationships that he built in Burnley after he took his discharge from the 63rd Regiment of Foot in 1852.

Firstly, I review what is known about Sergeant Major William ("Billy") Flack's decision to settle in Burnley.

5TH ROYAL LANCASHIRE.

[EMBODIED.]

Head Quarters, Aldershot.

LIEUT.-COLONEL COMMANDANT.

Charles Townley, DL, JP.....16 Mar. 53

MAJORS.

John Townley, DL.....14 Apr. 53

Alan Chambre (10), JP, late

Capt. 17 Lancers.....15 Aug. 54

CAPTAINS.

James Greenwood.....19 Apr. 53

John Weld, DL.....19 Apr. 53

John Joseph Middleton.....20 Apr. 53

Thomas Goulburne Parker, DL.....21 Apr. 53

Edward Petre.....21 Apr. 53

George Decks Skingley.....22 Apr. 53

William Lister Sagar, JP.....22 Apr. 53

John Pickup Lord.....23 Apr. 53

Frederic Broadbent.....23 Apr. 53

Daniel Grant Brereton.....16 Feb. 54

Antony Buck Creek.....16 June 54

Edward Dwyer.....23 July 55

LIEUTENANTS.

Arthur Holden.....18 Feb. 54

Abraham Alfred Tweedale.....20 Feb. 54

Thomas Dunbar Quinlan.....18 Nov. 54

James Edw. Ford.....25 Jan. 55

Richard Fenton.....1 Feb. 55

Thomas Arthur Mills.....21 June 55

Fred. Jas. S. Brocklehurst.....22 June 55

John Bomford.....21 June 55

Richard P. Ridley.....9 July 55

Fred. A. C. Macdonald.....10 July 55

Charles Miller.....24 July 55

ENSIGNS.

James Nolan.....26 Jan. 55

Cornelius Russell Cruise.....2 Feb. 55

Alfred Lawless.....27 Feb. 55

Wm. Henry Ogden.....13 Apr. 55

333 **MI**

Anthony Sidney Bicknell.....21 June 55

Samner Mitchell S. Brockhurst.....22 June 55

Richard Horley.....22 June 55

Robert de Visme.....9 July 55

James Gunning Plunkett.....26 July 55

Fra. Edw. Hassard.....27 July 55

Walter Sydney Tucker.....28 July 55

Adjt. & Capt. — Chas. Hamilton

Fenton, (6) late Capt. 9 F. 16 Mar. 53

Captain.....18 Apr. 53

Paymaster. — John Holder,

late Lt. 12 F. 12 Jan. 55

Qr.-Mstr. — William Flack ..12 Jan. 55

Surgeon. — Edward Jackson,

MD. 19 Feb. 55

Assist. Surg. — Henry Hancox,

MD. 13 Apr. 55

Blue Facings.

Agents, Messrs. C. R. & W. McGrigor.

On 22 September 1852, Sergeant Major William Flack took his discharge from the regular Army after 21 years of service. Whether William and Lucy, his wife, visited William's birthplace in Bailieborough, Cavan to see any relatives is not known. (It is not known whether he had any living relatives in Ireland.) What is known is that by early 1854, William and Lucy were living in Burnley, Lancashire where their second son, William George John Flack was born on 4 February 1854. When William George John was baptised at St Peter, Burnley on 12 March 1854, the parents' address was recorded as "The Queens Buildings", Burnley. Just why William and Lucy decided to settle in Burnley is unknown, however it is known that both had been in Burnley during the latter half of 1850 with the Regiment and it seems possible that they had developed friends and contacts there, including contacts with the 5th Battalion of the Royal Lancashire Militia, in which he was later commissioned. There is no evidence that Lucy had any family connections in Burnley. The Births, Deaths and Marriages records suggest that her family came from Leicestershire and her brother John Turner was a Chelsea outpatient living at Derby in 1847.

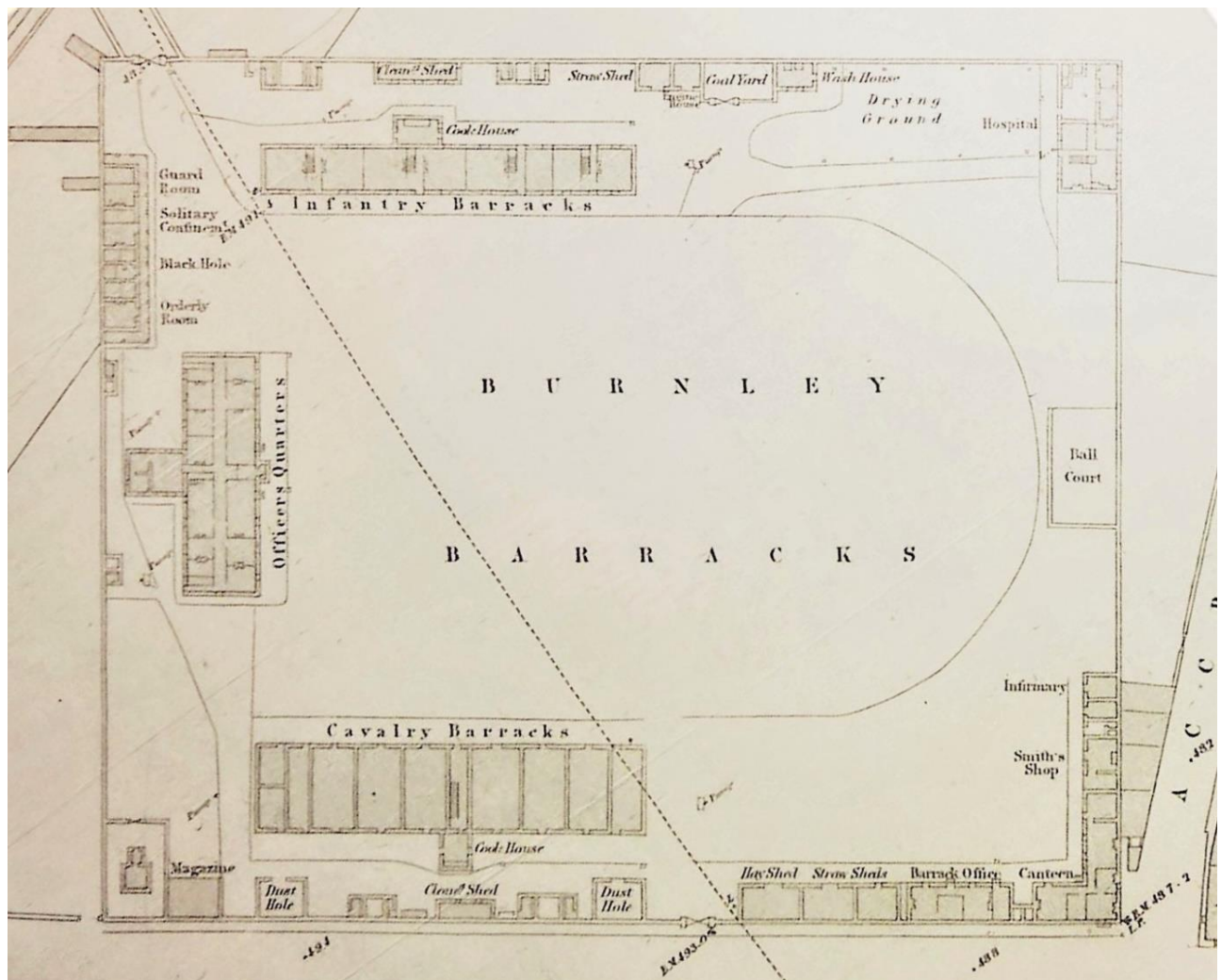
Perhaps a combination of circumstances encouraged William and Lucy and their three children to settle in Burnley. The 18th century saw the rapid development of coal mining and employment opportunities in the area. The shallow bell-pits of earlier centuries were replaced by deeper shafts, meeting industrial as well as domestic demand locally, and by 1800 there were over a dozen pits in the modern-day centre of the

town alone. By 1830 there were 32 steam engines in cotton mills throughout the rapidly expanding town.

Perhaps there were relatives or friends who had moved to Burnley during the Irish Potato Famine that had led to an influx of Irish families during the 1840s. At one time, the Park district (modern-day town centre, around Parker St.) was known as Irish Park.

It seems that the most likely explanation is that after his discharge from the 63rd Regiment in 1852, he re-enlisted in the Army in the 5th Royal Lancashire Militia when that Militia Regiment was embodied at Aldershot in April 1854. The records show William Flack as the Quartermaster in Aldershot from 12 January 1855. So it is likely that he and his family travelled with the 5th Royal Lancashire Militia Regiment to Burnley when it was posted to Burnley Barracks and continued in his role of Quartermaster.

The records indicate that Quartermaster William Flack was resident in Burnley Barracks with his family from 1854 to 1860-61 after which the family moved to nearby civilian accommodation. When Lucy Louisa Catherine Flack was baptised on 27th July 1856, at Holy Trinity, Habergham Eaves, the address of her parents was recorded as "New Barracks" Burnley. When Frederick William Cadmore Flack was baptised at Holy Trinity on 23 May 1858 the address was recorded as "Barracks Burnley".



Whatever the reasons the Flacks chose Burnley, by 1861 they were no longer living in the Barracks and were now living at 3 West Gate Habergham Eaves.

It will be noted that when Sergeant Major William Flack settled in Burnley in 1854, the his family would have included:

- Lucy Flack, nee Turner, aged 34, his wife;
- Francis Elizabeth, aged 6, born in Chatham, Kent
- Mary Ann June, aged 4, born in Newcastle, Northumberland
- William Henry Douglas Flack, aged 2, born in Limerick, Ireland,;
- William George John Flack, aged a few months, born in Burnley, Lancashire.

Seven years later the 1861 Census records the family as follows:

29

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the											
Parish (or Township) of		City or Municipal Borough of		Municipal Ward of		Parliamentary Borough of		Town of		Hamlet or Tything, &c., of	
Habergham Eaves										Ecclsiastical District of	
										Holy Trinity	
No. of Schedule	Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House	HOUSES	Name and Surname of each Person	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb		
		Inhabited (H.)				Males	Females				
1	West Gate -	1	William Flack	Head	Mar.	34		Publican	Habergham Eaves		
			Mary	Wife		42			Lancashire, Warrington		
			John Ashworth	Son		12		House Servant	Burnley		
			Henry Francis	Head	Mar.	35		Labourer	Burnley		
2			John Groves	Head	Mar.	39			Burnley		
			Eliza	Wife		39			Burnley		
			Charles	Son	Mar.	6		School. Boy	Burnley		
3		1	William Flack	Head	Mar.	39		Quartermaster & Royal Gun Battery	Burnley		
			Lucy	Wife		41		at home	Burnley		
			Francis Elizabeth	Son		6		Schooler	Chatham Kent		
			Mary Ann June	Son		4			Northumberland Newcastle		
			William Henry Douglas	Son		2			Burnley		
			William George John	Son		0			Burnley		
			Elizabeth	Son		1			Burnley		
			Richard	Son		1			Burnley		
			Richard	Son		1			Burnley		
4		1	Richard Flack	Head	Mar.	37		Blacksmith	Burnley		
			Eliza	Wife		37			Burnley		
			William	Son		6			Burnley		
			John William	Son		4			Burnley		
			John Henry	Son		2			Burnley		

Total of Houses... 5

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE Reference: R.G. 9/3072

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Eng - Sheet 13.

During the Crimean War (1853-1856) Burnley Barracks was used as a busy recruiting Depot as the 5th Royal Lancashire Militia was brought up to full strength. Training took place from May 1854. When war against Russia was declared on 28 March 1854 the 5th Royal Lancashire Militia had already been embodied at Burnley, and they did duty at Aldershot, Dublin and Clonmel in succession from May 1855 to May 1856. For a time during the Crimean War, an Italian regiment from Piedmont was also quartered there.

In 1864, the British War Department decided to use Burnley Barracks as a transit barracks for regular infantry regiments and it is recorded that among the various regiments of lancers and hussars stationed at the barracks included the Scots Greys, 5th Dragoon Guards and the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons, and infantry such as the 33rd Regiment of Foot, Connaught Rangers and Black Watch.

In 1873 a system of recruiting areas based on counties was instituted under the Cardwell Reforms and the barracks became the depot for the 30th (Cambridgeshire) Regiment of Foot and the 59th (2nd Nottinghamshire) Regiment of Foot.

Throughout this period, it appears that Quartermaster William Flack continued to be associated with the Barracks since, on 8th October 1875, he received a Quartermaster Commission in the 5th Royal Lancashire Militia.

In the British Army, the quartermaster (QM) is the officer in a battalion or regiment responsible for supply. By longstanding tradition, they are always commissioned from the ranks and hold the rank of captain or major. The quartermaster is assisted by the regimental quartermaster sergeant (RQMS) and a staff of storemen.

In this section I set out what we know about the education of Billy Flack's children and his future daughter-in-law's Parker family.

The 1871 Census shows a further three children had been born to Billy and Lucy whilst they lived in Burnley.

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the											
Civil Parish (or Township) of		Municipal Borough of		Municipal Ward of		Parliamentary Borough of		Town of		Village or Hamlet, &c., of	
Haberghampton		Burnley		Burnley		Burnley		Burnley		Burnley	
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES In which the family is enumerated (B. 1)	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION	AGE of		Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN	1. Deaf and Dumb 2. Blind 3. Imbecile or Idiot 4. Lunatic	
						Males	Females				
1	Asperington Road Rose Terrace	1	Jane Rawcliffe	Head	W	52		Retired from Business	Lancashire, Padicham		
			Sarah Roberts	Wife	Widow	54			Lancashire, Burnley		
2	Do	1	John Preston	Head	Mar	40		Portrait Painter	Do		
			Mary Preston	Wife	Mar	35			Yorkshire, Hebden Bridge		
			Mary Do	Daughter	Widow	9		Scholar	Lancashire, Salford		
			Eliza Do	Daughter	Widow	7		Scholar	Do		
			Kate Do	Daughter	Widow	4			Yorkshire, Hebden Bridge		
			Ann Do	Daughter	Widow	2			Do		
3	Do	1	William Flack	Head	Mar	61		Out Pensioner from Chelsea	Do		
			Lucy L. Flack	Wife	Mar	57			Lancashire, Leicester		
			Walter H. Flack	Daughter	Widow	23		Banker's Clerk	Do		
			Mr. H. D. Flack	Son	Widow	19		Banker's Clerk	Do		
			Mr. G. S. Flack	Son	Widow	17		Pupil Teacher	Lancashire, Burnley		
			Lucy L. C. Flack	Daughter	Widow	14		Pupil Teacher	Do		
			John W. C. Flack	Son	Widow	13		Scholar	Do		
			Augustus W. C. Flack	Son	Widow	11		Scholar	Do		
4	Do	1	John Walmsley	Head	Mar	43		Cotton Manufacturer	Lancashire, Church		
			Sarah Do	Wife	Mar	41		Employing/Manufacturing	Do		
			George Do	Son	Widow	19		Book Keeper	Do		
			John Do	Son	Widow	16		Do	Do		
			Helina Do	Daughter	Widow	9		Scholar	Do		
			Emma Do	Daughter	Widow	7		Do	Do		
			Thomas Do	Son	Widow	6		Do	Do		
			Minnie Do	Daughter	Widow	3		Do	Do		
Total of Houses		4	Total of Males and Females			10	14				

* Draw the pen through such of the words as are inappropriate.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE					
1	2	3	4	5	6

Reference —
RG10/4151

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Eng- Sheet P.

Perhaps the surprising aspect of the 1871 Census record is the occupations of three of the children:

- William Henry Douglas, aged 19, Banker's Clerk
- William George John, aged 17, Pupil Teacher
- Lucy Louise C, aged 14, Pupil Teacher.

The question arises – How did William Flack, recorded in the 1971 Census as an “Out Pensioner from Chelsea” and who signed on in the British Army in 1831, aged 21, with “his X mark”, afford the quality of schooling inferred by his children’s occupations?”

We know that Quartermaster William Flack’s two sons, William Henry Douglas Flack, and William George John Flack, attended Carlton Road School and the Burnley Grammar School and attained high standard results¹.

In a Directory published in 1867 entitled “Our Schools and Colleges. Containing the principal particulars respecting endowed Grammar Schools” by Herbert Fry, the two schools are described as follows:

Burnley (Lancashire), Carlton Road School. Instructs in Latin, Mathematics, and English course, 90 boys, all day pupils, at Four to Nine Guineas per ann. W. M. Grant, Master.

Burnley (Lancashire) Grammar School. Prepares for University Local Examinations. Rev. J. Butler, Master.

Two of their sisters also excelled at school becoming teachers in adulthood. It seems probable that the family received some kind of financial assistance to be able to afford this standard of schooling.

In this next section, I explore likely explanations based on Quartermaster Billy Flack’s business and social relationships in Burnley.

When Quartermaster William Flack arrived in Burnley Barracks in 1854 with the newly embodied 5th Royal Lancashire Regiment in the midst of the Crimean war, one of his key tasks would have been to negotiate a reliable supply of food for the garrison.

In the late 1850’s the largest grocery business in Burnley was owned by Richard Parker, Wholesale Grocer of Hargreaves Street, Burnley.



¹ See William Henry Douglas Flack’s Obituary, p.26, “A Burnley Worthy” at tinyurl.com/ytyvd56k

Richard Parker was a prominent citizen in Burnley. His Obituary in the Burnley Express dated 27 October 1900 states:

DEATH OF A FORMER BURNLEY ALDERMAN. News reached Burnley yesterday of the death of Mr. Richard Parker, formerly very active and well-known public man in the town. Mr. Parker was for many years a wine and spirit merchant and was member of the old body Commissioners, and after the incorporation of the borough entered the Council as one of the representatives of the old St. James's Ward. He was a vigorous speaker, and was chairman of the Markets Committee at the time the foundation stone of the present market hall was laid. For his active services he was created an alderman, and gave a great deal of time to municipal affairs, in which he manifested the deepest interest. Mr. Parker left Burnley many years ago, and the closing period of his life has been spent Ribblesdale, near Preston. He lived at Ivy Villa, in that suburb of the proud town. He had attained the age of 77, and had been apparent for some time past that his health was failing. He took his bed a fortnight ago, and the end came somewhat suddenly noon on Thursday. His remains interred on Monday next at the Burnley Cemetery. Mr. Parker leaves one son—who is active worker in the Conservative cause in Burnley—and three daughters.

Not recorded in his Obituary however was his membership of the “Borough Lodge” of Freemasons in Burnley where he had been the Master Mason in 1866.

I have not yet been able to confirm whether or not Quartermaster William Flack had been a member of the Freemasons in Burnley during his lifetime, although there is circumstantial evidence to suggest that he probably was.

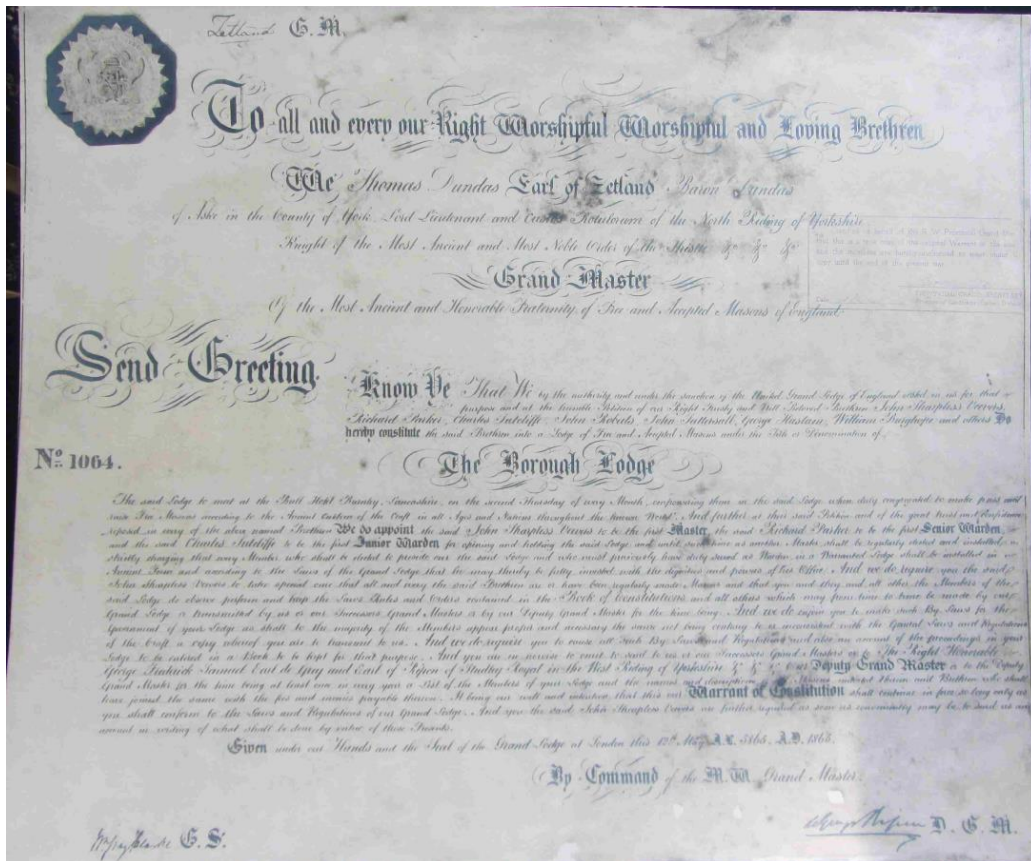
FOUNDER MEMBERS

The following names were agreed at a meeting of
Freemasons at the Bull Hotel, Burnley, on the 19th day
of April 1865

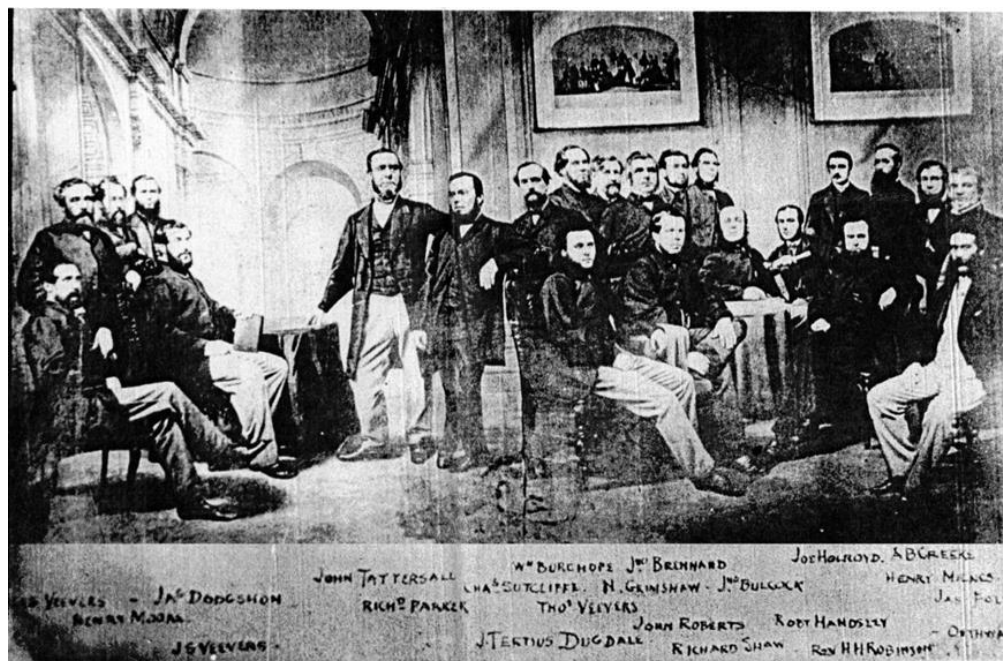
<i>John Tattersall</i>	<i>Henry Milnes</i>
<i>Charles Sutcliffe</i>	<i>George Haslam</i>
<i>Thomas Veevers</i>	<i>William Burghope</i>
<i>John Roberts</i>	<i>George Slater</i>
<i>Richard Parker</i>	<i>Harry Creeke</i>
<i>James Coates</i>	<i>John S Veevers</i>

PAST MASTERS OF THE BOROUGH LODGE No. 1064

1865 John S Veevers
1866 Richard Parker
1867 Anthony B Creeke
1868 Rev Herbert Robinson
1869 William Outhwaite



When the Borough Lodge was founded on 12 May 1863, Richard Parker was appointed Senior Warden, (the second most senior member) suggesting that he had previously been a member of a Masonic Lodge somewhere else.



Members of the Borough Lodge, Burnley dated 1866

First, it is well recorded that most British Army Regiments serving overseas had Masonic Lodges embedded in them during the 19th Century². The 63rd Regiment of Foot in which William Flack served for 21 years also included a Masonic Lodge whilst stationed in Bellary in India during the period 1843-1846³.

Second, it will be recalled that William Henry Douglas Flack, Quartermaster Billy Flack's son had been born in Limerick in Ireland while the Regiment was stationed there in 1852 and that he had arranged his son's baptism in the Presbyterian tradition. At the time, Freemasonry was largely restricted to those of a Protestant persuasion because of Papal Decrees prohibiting Catholics from becoming Freemasons⁴.

Third, there is a long tradition within Freemasonry of helping poorer members of the Lodge to fund private school fees⁵.

There is clear evidence of a close association between the Parker family and the Flack family in that in 1874, Eliza Alice Parker married William Henry Douglas Flack at Holy Trinity Church, Habergham Eaves.

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Race or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Race or Profession of Father.
488	Dec 10 1874	William Henry Douglas Flack Eliza Alice Parker	Full 21 21	Bachelor Spinster	Quartermaster Barracks	Habergham Eaves Burnley, Lancs	William Flack Richard Parker	Quartermaster Barracks

Married in the Holy Trinity Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by Licence or after by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, William H. Douglas Flack in the Presence of us, John J. Moore Edward A. Appleby

Further evidence of the close relationships between the two families is the burial of George Flack, aged 3, in the Parker Family Vault in Burnley Cemetery on 17 September 1878. It is also of interest to note the close proximity of the Burnley Barracks where Captain Billy Flack was Quartermaster, Fern Hill House, where the Parkers lived and Rose Terrace and Holy Trinity Church where the Flack family lived.

It seems reasonable to assume that Billy Flack and his family knew the Parkers both through their business and through their membership of the Masons. It seems likely that his children benefited from private school education at least partly funded by the Burnley "Borough Lodge" in which Richard Parker, Eliza's father was a member.

² Thomas, W. (1935). Freemasonry in the British Army. Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research, 14(53), 24–32. Retrieved from JSTOR.

³ The Life and Times of Captain William Flack. Retrieved from tinyurl.com/yyurbogs

⁴ *In eminenti apostolatus*. (2018). In Wikipedia. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=In_ementi_apostolatus&oldid=838771347

⁵ TalentAid. (n.d.). Retrieved 1 January 2020, from Masonic Charitable Foundation website: <https://mcf.org.uk/talentaid/>

There is however a sad epilogue to this story, for in March 1872 the wholesale grocery warehouse at 60 St James Street and Bull Street, owned by Richard Parker, suffered a serious fire at the Bull Street premises causing tremendous damage to this property, and probably lead to Richard Parker's bankruptcy.

Richard Parker was forced to sell the "Fern Hill" home he had built (nicknamed in the early days "Buttertub Hall"). The Burnley Gazette of 9 November 1872 reports that he was indeed declared bankrupt...as follows.'

"Meeting of Creditors.—The creditors of Mr. Richard Parker, wholesale grocer, Burnley, held a meeting on Wednesday afternoon, at the offices of Mr. J. W. Addleshaw, solicitor, King-street, Manchester. The statement of affairs, prepared by Messrs. Nicholson and Milne, accountants, Norfolk street, showed liabilities, £3,300, and assets £1,500. Liquidation by arrangement was resolved upon, and Mr. Nicholson was appointed a trustee, the debtor to receive his order of discharge as soon as the estate has realised 8s. in the pound"

Richard had previously instructed a Mr Rawcliffe to catalogue his furniture and goods at Fern Hill to put it up for sale in September 1872.



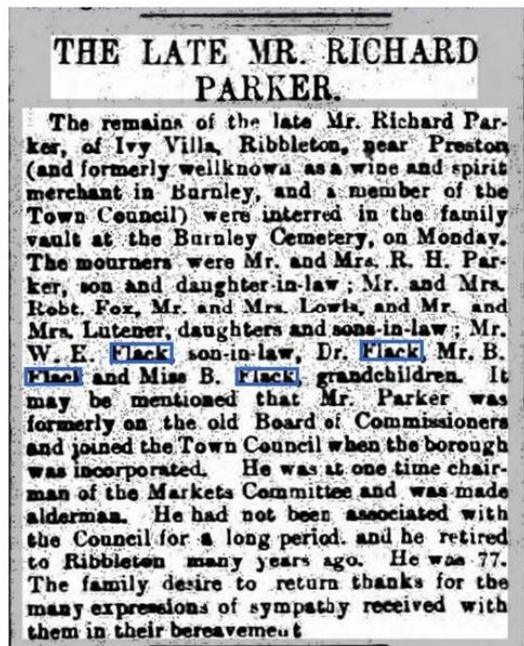
A modern picture of "Fern Hill", 147 Manchester Road Burnley, now an Aged Care home.

Despite difficult times, by March 1878, Richard Parker had settled his debtors and was again in business, trading as a wine and spirits merchant at 45 St James's Street Burnley. The "Borough Lodge" 1887 membership records list Richard Parker, Spirit Merchant of Chancery Street Burnley.

Richard Parker's passing is recorded in the Burnley Gazette on 31 October 1900 as follows:

Burnley Gazette - Wednesday 31 October 1900

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Richard Parker's Grave in Burnley Cemetery

Conclusion

In this research report, I have attempted to explain how Quartermaster Billy Flack was able to give his children a sound education and allow them to go on to pursue professional careers and establish themselves in economic security, despite his own lack of education and humble Irish origins.

In this report I have set out what I think is a credible explanation based on the military, business, social and religious circumstances he found himself in Burnley in the period 1854-1870.