

Reverend Alfred Blakey Edlestone
(1st September 1857 – 23rd March 1926)



Walking into Lightcliffe churchyard from the first Till Carr Lane entrance towards the west wall, you might just spot on your right this inscription on a partly tumbled down memorial. It is dedicated to another vicar. As it says the

FIRST VICAR

CHURCH OF S. CATHERINE BURNLEY

But why was this Burnley vicar, Reverend Alfred Blakey Edlestone, and his three Edlestone relatives, also remembered on the memorial, buried in Lightcliffe?

His family story begins in Halifax in 1810 with the marriage of his Edlestone grandparents. The 'e' on the end gets added later. A currier, William Edleston, married Mary Anne March on 24th September 1810 in the parish church in Halifax where they were both from. They had four daughters Elizabeth, Ann, Sarah and Ellen baptised at the same church on 6th October 1811, 17th June 1813, 12th September 1815 and 17th June 1817.

June 17	Ellen	Will ^m	Edleston	Halifax	Currier	Willmott
No. 2178.		Mary Ann				

Two boys, James on 12th April 1821 and Thomas on 18th April 1824 were also baptised there.

Apr 18	Thomas	Will ^m	Edleston	Halifax	Currier	Wright
No. 1388.		Mary Ann				

By 6th June 1841 the Edleston household looked like this.

1841 census

William Edleston 60 Dyer
 Mary Ann Edleston 50
 Ann Edleston 25 Dressmaker
 Ellen Edleston 20 ditto
 Thomas Edleston 15 Clerk
 Address Wards End, Halifax

The address was probably 17, Wards End as this was Ellen Edleston's address when her name appeared on the **1847 Directory of Leeds & the Clothing Districts** directory for Halifax. Also notice the name Jane Blakey at 16, Crown Street, Halifax.

MILLINERS, &c.
 Appleyard Sar A. 23 Orange st
 Aspinall E & M. A. 31 Gt. st
 Bairstow Sar. Ann, Broad st
 Blakey Jane (baby linen) 16
 Crown street
 Bland Jane, 24 Brunswick st
 Brier Eliz. 11 Hopwood In
 Brier Sar. Ann & Eliz. 14 St
 John's street
 Casson Har. & My. Kingers. st
 Cliffe Fanny, Hope street
 Cockcroft Sarah, Swine mkt
 Crowther Mary, 4 Lowe's ct
 Doughty Ann, Union st
 Edleston Ellen, 17 Ward's end

On 5th April 1850 Jane Blakey married Thomas Edleston in Halifax. This difficult to read marriage record says that Thomas, the son of William, was an 'Attorney's Clerk'. Jane was the daughter of a yeoman (farmer) William Blakey. No occupation was recorded for Jane Blakey despite what was recorded on the 1847 directory and then on the 1851 census.

1850. Marriage solemnized at—		in the Parish of <u>Halifax</u>			in the County of <u>York</u>			
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
135	April 5	Thomas Edleston	full	Mar.	Attorney's Clerk	Halifax	William Edleston	Owner
		Jane Blakey	full	Spinr	—	Do	William Blakey	Yeoman

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by Licence or after Edw. Standford by me,

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Thomas Edleston in the Presence of us, Ellen Edleston Edw. Standford Geo. Chambers David Marsh

Jane was from Thornshouse, Aysgarth in Wensleydale. This record from the Richmond Quaker Meeting House states that she was born on 28th September 1818, the daughter of a yeoman farmer, William and his wife Ann; the "parents not in membership".

28 th 9 th Mo 1818	Thornshouse Jane	Daughter William & Ann Blakey	Thornshouse Farmer
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parents not in membership

1851 census

William Edleston Head 75 Formerly Carrier
 Mary Edleston Wife 61
 Ellen Edleston Dau 33 Dressmaker
 Ann Pilling Servant 18 Servant
 William Kirkby [Visitor?] 23 B.A. of
 Cambridge 2nd master Heath Grammar School
 Address 58 King Cross Lane, Halifax

1851 census

Thomas Edleston Head 29
 Clerk County Court Office
 Jane Edleston Wife 32
 Baby Linen Manufacturer
 Elizth Barnes Assistant 20 Assistant ditto
 Ann Burrell Servant 21 Servant
 Address 17 Crown Street, Halifax

The Kind Cross and Crown Street addresses appear again on the **1853 White's Directory and Gazetteer of Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield and Wakefield**. The two sisters-in-law are listed under the heading of MILLINERS. Thomas Edleston's name appears twice under the headings of LINEN & WOOLLEN DRAPERS and then ACCOUNTANTS and AGENTS.

Edleston Ann, 49 Kingcross street
 Edleston Jane, 18 Crown street

Edleston Ths. (baby lin.) 18 Crown st

Edleston Thos. (estate & general) 15
 Cheapside; h 18 Crown street

Mary Ann Edlestone was born on 1st October 1853 but baptised much later as an adult on 16th March 1881 at All Saints, Salterhebble, Halifax.

Frank 16. Bar. Oct. 1883 No. 1877.	Mary Ann daughter F	Thomas Jane	Edleston	Salterhebble	Harrogate	St. Mary Warrington Chm.
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Her brother Arthur Blakey Edlestone who was born on 1st September 1857 in Halifax, also had an adult baptism at St. Peter's Church, Blackburn on 4th May 1873. From his baptism record it looks as if he was a master teaching at Blackburn Grammar School at the time.

1857 Sept. No. 915	May 4	Arthur Blakey	Thomas Jane	Edleston	Blackburn Grammar School (Halifax)	Sheriff's Office	Chloroform
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The [England, United Grand Lodge of England Freemason Membership Registers, 1751-1921](#) noted that Thomas Edleston, an auctioneer, was initiated into the Loyal Ancient St. James Lodge, Halifax on 3rd February 1858.

For the adult baptisms the Edlestone siblings' father was listed as a 'Sheriff's Officer' and then a 'Sharebroker'. Did this reflect his occupation when they were born or when they were baptised? Was the reason that the siblings did not have parish baptisms as youngsters have something to do with their mother's birth being recorded with the Society of Friends. Who knows!

1861 census

Thomas Edlestone Head 38
Auctioneer and Sheriff Officer
Jane Edlestone Wife 42
Alfred B Edlestone Son 3
Ann Blakey Sister [in law] 32 House Keeper
Address Brook House Lane, Skircoat, Halifax

1861 census

Annis Denham Head 32 Teacher
Jane Woodhouse Niece 21 Assistant Teacher
Sarah Jane Jubb Boarder 19 Governess
Elizh Denham Niece 9 Scholar
Mary A Edleston Boarder 7 Scholar
Address Church Lane, Hipperholme cum
Brighouse

Thomas Edlestone then disappears. No further records have been found for him. On 2nd April 1871 his wife Jane Edleston was a schoolmistress at the same 1861 address. And Ellen Edleston reappeared in Hipperholme with the retired teacher Annis Denham.

1871 census

Jane Edleston Head 52 Schoolmistress
Mary A Edleston Dau 17
Alfred B Edleston Son 13 Scholar
Ann Blakey Sister 42 House Keeper
Thomas K Kershaw Boarder 7 Scholar
Address
18 Brook House Lane, Skircoat, Halifax

1871 census

Annis Denham Head 42 Retired Teacher
Ellen Edleston 53 Annuitant
Address Bottom Hall, Hipperholme cum
Brighouse
[next door to Abraham Turner]

Alfred Blakey Edlestone went to study at Trinity College, Dublin.

1881 census

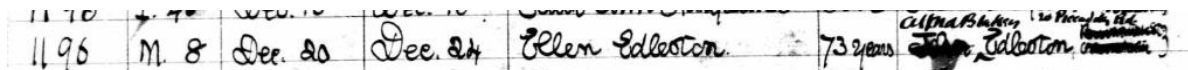
Jane Edleston Head 62 Schoolmistress
Marianne Edleston Dau 27 ditto
Ann Blakey Sister 57 Housekeeper
Mary J. Shaw Boarder 11 Pupil
Florence Shaw Boarder 9 ditto
Mary Sugden Boarder 12 ditto
Harry N. Wadsworth Boarder 10 ditto
Milford E. Wadsworth Boarder 8 ditto
Walter F. Butterworth Boarder 8 ditto
Arthur Butterworth Boarder 7 ditto
Address
18 Brook House Lane, Skircoat, Halifax

On 3rd April 1881 Alfred was visiting another undergraduate's family in Blackburn. His mother, Jane Edleston, had more boarders living with them as she appeared to run a small school with the help of her daughter Mary Ann Edleston and her sister Ann Blakey.

1881 census

Ellen Edleston Head 63
Annis Denham Boarder 52 Retired Teacher
Mary Woodhouse Visitor 67
Address
Bramley Lane, Hipperholme cum Brighouse

Seventy-three-year-old Ellen Edleston died on 20th December 1890. She was buried in Lightcliffe plot M8 owned by her nephew Alfred Blakey Edleston of 20, Piccadilly Road, Burnley. Ellen Edleston had lived in Hipperholme for a number of years so presumably this was why she was buried in St. Matthew's churchyard.



The inscription for Ellen Edlestone is on the side of the memorial so may well have been added later when the final 'e' was added.



IN MEMORY OF
ELLEN EDLESTONE
ENTERED INTO REST DEC 20 1890
AGED 73 YEARS
R.I.P

On the night of 5th April 1891, Alfred, his mother, sister and another maiden aunt were living together at that Burnley address.

1891 census

Alfred B Edleston	Head	33	Clerk in Holy Orders
Jane Edleston	Mother	72	Living on own means
Mary A Edleston	Sister	37	
Ann Blakey	Aunt	61	Living on own means
Jane Broughton	Visitor	51	
Address 20 Piccadilly Road, Burnley			

Not long after the 1891 census was taken Jane Edlestone née Blakey passed away on 17th September 1891. The *Burnley Express* for 19th September 1891 had this announcement.

DEATH OF MRS EDLESTONE. – we regret to announce the death on Thursday, after a long illness, of Mrs Edlestone, late of Bank House, Halifax, mother of the Rev. A. B. Edlestone (curate of Burnley Parish Church). The deceased lady, who was 72 years of age, passed away at the residence of her son, 20, Piccadilly-road.

Jane Edlestone was also buried in plot M8 of St. Matthew's churchyard on 21st September 1891 with her sister-in-law, Ellen Edlestone.

1254 M 8 Sep 17 Sept 21 Jane Edlestone 72 yrs. Mrs Blakey Edlestone {20 Piccadilly Rd } Burnley

The memorial inscription on the side, again probably added much later perhaps after Alfred died, continues with the dedication to Jane Edlestone below that to Ellen Edlestone.



JANE EDLESTONE
ENTERED INTO REST SEP 17 1891
AGED 73
REST IN PEACE

According to the *Lancashire 1895 Kelly's Directory* Rev. Alfred Blakey Edlestone was still at 20, Piccadilly Road, Burnley in 1895 presumably with his sister.

Edlestone Rev. Alfred Blakey (curate of St. Peter's), 20 Piccadilly road

But by the time the census was taken on 31st March 1901 they had moved.

1901 census

Alfred B Edlestone Head 43 Clergyman (Church of England)

Mary A Edlestone Sister 47

Hannah M Peckett Servant 48 Housekeeper Domestic

Address 61 Ormerod Rd., Burnley

Mary Ann Edlestone died on 26th May 1908 as reported in these Lancashire newspapers.

Manchester Courier 27th May 1908

The death occurred yesterday morning of Miss Edlestone, sister of the Rev. A. B. Edlestone, vicar of St. Catherine's Church, Burnley. During the twenty-four years the rev. gentleman has been in Burnley as curate of the Parish Church, and first Vicar of St. Catherine's, Miss Edlestone has been a leader in all church work, and she will be very greatly missed by her brother and the congregation of St. Catherine's.

Burnley Gazette 30th May 1908

FUNERAL OF MISS EDLESTONE

The funeral took place yesterday of Miss Edlestone, of Todmorden Road, sister of the Rev. A. B. Edlestone, who died at her residence on Tuesday. On Thursday night the remains were conveyed from the house to St. Catherine's Church, the body being received

by the Rev. H. P. Dempsey, vicar of Trawden, and a full choir. The final part of the burial service was then read and a beautiful cross from the congregation was placed on the coffin. The body remained in church all night and yesterday morning Requiem Mass was held, the celebrant being the Rev. H. P. Dempsey and the Rev. E. R. Hayes of Southport and formerly curate of St. Catherine's read the lessons. The funeral party then journeyed to Lightcliffe, Halifax where the interment took place, the Rev. E. R. Hayes officiating. A very large number of floral tributes were received.

The chief mourners were the Rev. A. B. Edlestone, Dr. Bird and Mr. Dobbing, church wardens, Miss Haworth of Blackburn, Miss Hoyroyd, Miss Scott, Miss Prince of Liscard, Miss Beckitt and Mr. Naylor. Fourteen of the male members of St. Catherine's acted as bearers.

As you will have read, Mary Edlestone was also brought back to Lightcliffe to be buried with her mother and aunt in plot M8 of St. Matthew's churchyard. In time her name would be inscribed on the Edlestone memorial under that for her brother.

1916 M8 May 26th May 29th Mary Edlestone says

EDLESTONE Mary of Saint Catherine's Vicarage Burnley spinster died 26 May 1908.
Administration Lancaster 18 June to the reverend Alfred Blakey Edlestone clerk.
Effects £132 11s

1911 census

Alfred B Edlestone Head 53 Clerk in Holy orders Vicar of St. Catherine's Burnley
Hannah Maria Peckett Servant 58 House Keeper Domestic
Address 141 Todmorden Rd., Burnley, LAN

1921 census

Alfred Blakey Edleston Head 63 Clerk in Holy Orders retired taking occasional duty
Address 28 Hale Road, Wallasey, Birkenhead

Then on 26th March 1926 the *Nelson Leader* reported Alfred Blakey Edlestone's death.

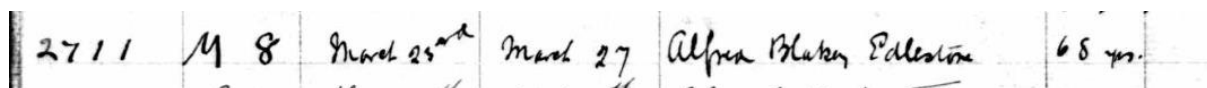
REV. A. B. EDLESTONE

DEATH OF FIRST VICAR OF ST. CATHERINE'S, BURNLEY

The Rev. A. B. Edlestone, a former vicar of St. Catherine's Church, Burnley, died at his home in Liscard, Cheshire, on Tuesday, at the age of 68.

Mr Edlestone, who was the first vicar of St. Catherine's, left Burnley in 1917 after a ministry of 27 years, his successor being the Rev. R. N. Usher, now of St. Mark's Blackburn.

During his ministry in Burnley, Mr. Edlestone who was a native of Halifax, was extremely popular with his parishioners, and his devotion to duty won him the highest regard of every section of the community. In his early days he was an assistant master at Blackburn Grammar School.



Details of his funeral at St. Mary's Church, Liscard in Wallasey parish, Cheshire and then the journey to Lightcliffe were recorded in a long article in the *Burnley Express* on 31st March 1926. The headline refers to the memorial service at St. Catherine's Church, Burnley advertised in the *Burnley Express* on 27th March 1926. Rev. Alfred Blakey Edlestone was buried in the family plot, M8 in St. Matthew's churchyard, Lightcliffe on 27th March 1926.



IMPRESSIVE SCENE OUTSIDE ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH

The funeral of the late Rev. A. B. Edlestone, who was first Vicar of St. Catherine's Church Burnley, took place last Saturday, and was of the more impressive character. The remains of the deceased gentleman were removed on Friday evening from his late home to St. Mary's Church, Liscard. A very large congregation assembled in church for the service, which was fully choral. As the coffin was carried to the chancel before the High Altar, the choir sang "Hark the sound of holy voices!" After the body had been placed between six tall lighted tapers, the Rev. Father Wykes, of St. Stephen's Church, Liverpool, chanted the first part of the Burial Service, the Rev. Father Wilson, of St. Mary's assisting. At the close of the service, the Rev. Father Wykes recited the Absolutions of the Dead. At this service there were present : Dr. A. E. Bird, Mr. A. E. Naylor, Miss Prince, Mr. Prince, Miss Worsdall, Mr. and Mrs. McLean, Mrs. Jackson, Miss Sharples, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Bench, and Mr. W. Clegg. An all-night watch was kept over the remains until the Requiem Mass at 8 a.m. on Saturday, when the Rev. Father Wilson was celebrant. Again, there was a large congregation. At the close of this service the cortege left by motor, through Liverpool, for Lightcliffe, many manifestations of esteem and regard for the late priest being shown on the way.

The cortege reached Burnley about noon. A halt was made outside St. Catherine's Church for one minute. Here it was met by the Vicar. (Rev. T. H. Pullen, B.A.) and the church officers. A large number of people had congregated outside the church to pay a last tribute to one who had won the affection of his parishioners and townspeople generally when he was Vicar of St. Catherine's. A floral cross in the name of St. Catherine's congregation was placed on one of the motor vehicles.

On arrival at Lightcliffe, the remains were interred in the family vault. The chief mourners there were

Mr. R. H. and Miss Edlestone, Mr. W. Haigh, (representing Messrs W. Edleston), Dr. A. E. Bird, Mr. A. E. Naylor, Mr. G. R. B. Bancroft, and Mr. E. Craven (representing Messrs Huntriss and Huntriss). A good company of friends from St. Catherine's had assembled at Lightcliffe, and four of the late clergyman's old choir at St. Catherine's acted as bearers. The Rev. Father Ralph, of St. Columbus' Church, Liscard, read the collects and the Rev. Father B. R. Hayes (a former curate at St. Catherine's) conducted the committal. At the close of the burial service Father Wykes recited the Absolutions of the Dead. The Vicar of Lightcliffe was also in attendance.

The article goes on to list who the floral tributes were from. But then continues with details of the memorial service.

On Sunday morning an impressive service and choral communion were held, with the church full. The service opened with the singing of Psalm 130, "Out of the Depths." The memorial sermon was preached by the Rev. Percy Clegg, of Padiham, who for many years had been closely associated with the Rev. A. B. Edlestone. He spoke in great admiration of the wonderful personality and great gifts of the former Vicar. Mr Clegg recalled a number of stories to illustrate Mr. Edlestone's love for his lads, his splendid work amongst them, his fidelity as a priest of God, and the power of his personality. Finally, he urged his hearers to demonstrate practically the value of the teaching they had received by close attention to religious obligations. After the Rev. P. Clegg's excellent sermon, Mr. Edlestone's favourite hymn, "I love thee not because," was sung, and the final hymn was "Now the labourers' task is o'er."

The Vicar (the Rev. T. H. Pullen) announced that at the parochial meeting it was unanimously decided to place in the church some suitable memorial as a permanent witness of the deep respect felt for the late Vicar by the past and present members of the congregation. It was thought that a stained-glass window placed on the south side of the church would be the most appropriate tribute.

EDLESTONE the reverend Alfred Blakey of 28 Hale-road Liscard Cheshire clerk died 23 March 1926 Probate London 26 May to Albert Edward Bird physician and Alfred Edward Naylor clerk. Effects £828 2s 2d



ALFRED BLAKEY EDLESTONE

FIRST VICAR

CHURCH OF S. CATHERINE BURNLEY

1897 – 1917

ENTERED INTO REST MARCH 23 1926

R.I.P.

MARY EDLESTONE

THE DEARLY BELOVED SISTER OF THE REV. A. B. EDLESTONE

AT REST MAY 26 1908

R.I.P

When Arthur Blackburn transcribed the memorial inscriptions in St. Matthew's churchyard, - and other West Riding burial grounds - just a few years later he recorded the following words as apparently being under Alfred's memorial inscription, but they are clearly not there.

GRANT THEM LORD ETERNAL REST

AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM

Originally these words were above Alfred's inscription on the horizontal section of the cross, facing the plot. But as the broken cross now lies on this face the words are hidden from view, but the lettering is still there.



D. M. Barker

May 2025