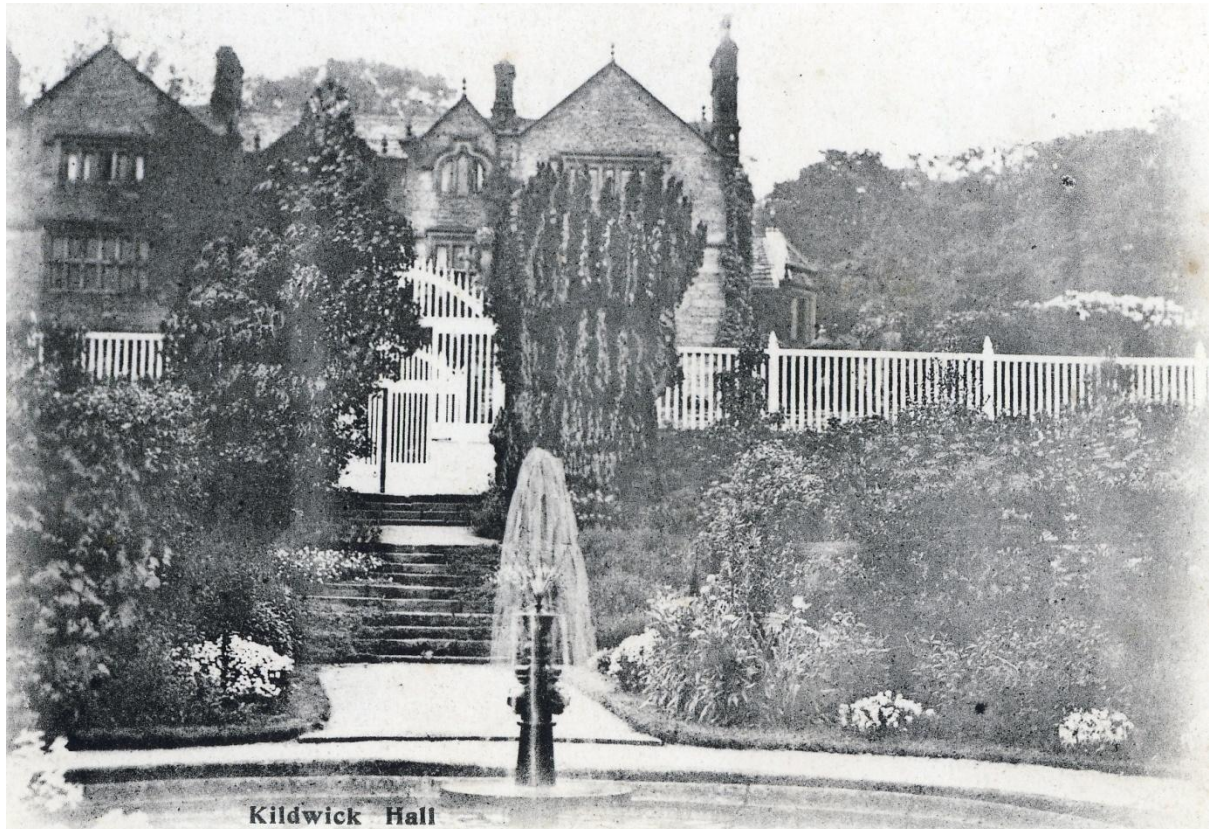


Haworth Currer and the gentrification of Kildwick estate

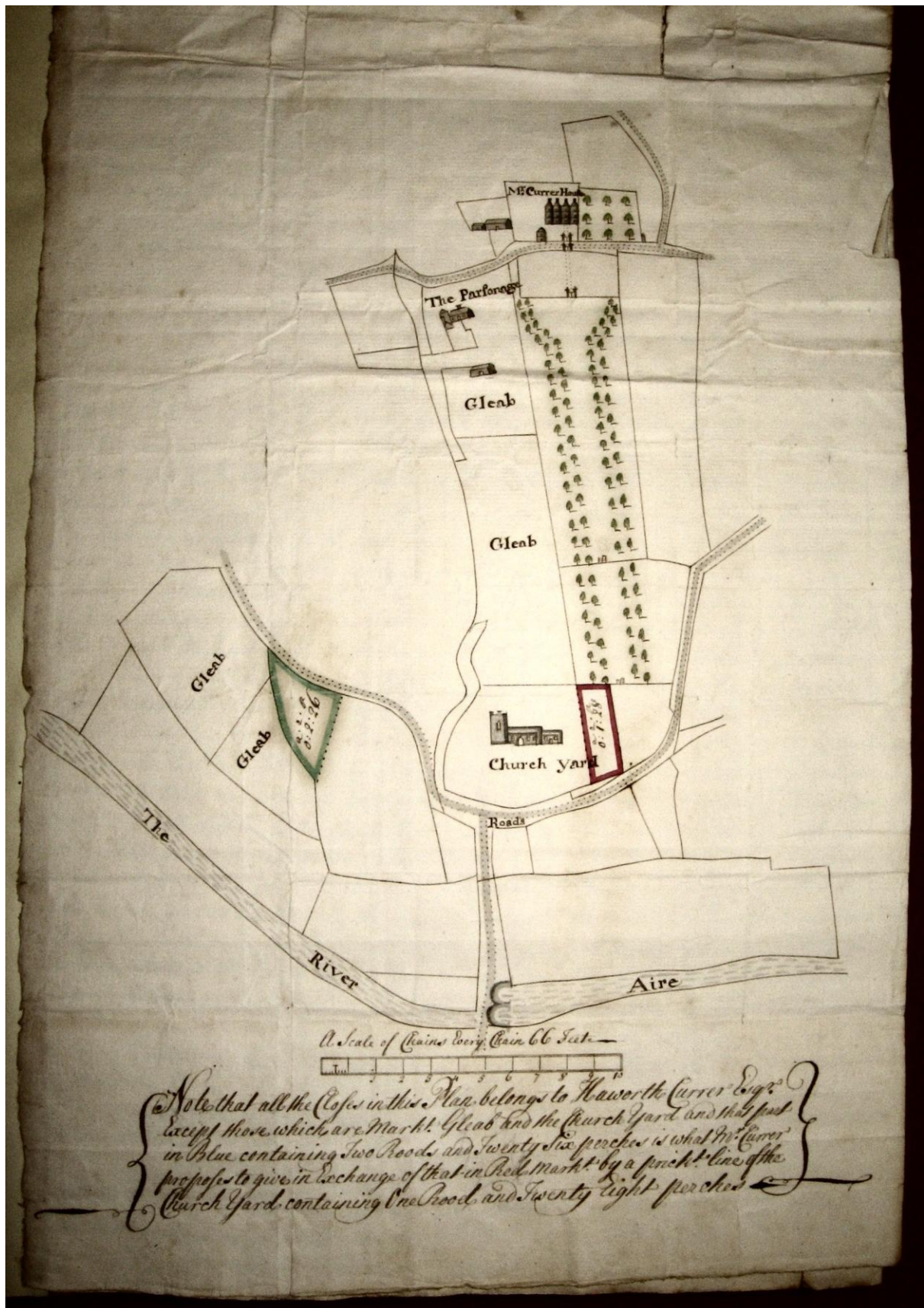
By the time Henry Currer (III) died and his only surviving son, Haworth Currer, took control of the estate, in 1722, the fashion for gentility and refinement was very much the rage.

Haworth Currer responded to this trend by creating a formal garden for Kildwick Hall. The existing road prevented it from being built immediately in front of the house – so it was placed on the other side of the road.



**The formal garden at Kildwick Hall, photographed in the early 20th century.
The garden was originally laid out by Haworth Currer.**

The History Group has discovered evidence that Haworth Currer intended a much grander addition to his home: a tree-lined driveway that would link Kildwick Hall with the centre of the village.



Haworth Currey's grand driveway plan
 - a substantial parcel of land in Farnhill (green) to be exchanged for part of the Churchyard (red).
 Reproduced by permission of Christ Church Oxford.

This picture shows a plan, dating from 1738, drawn up at the instruction of Haworth Currer, and illustrates his plans to significantly enhance the grounds of the hall. It shows Kildwick Hall (at the top), with gardens to the front and side; the Parsonage (which was then on Grange Road); the Church; and (at the bottom) the road coming over the river bridge and then dividing left towards Farnhill and right up Priest Bank Road.

Haworth Currer laid out his full intentions in a letter to the Archbishop of York, Lancelot Blackburne, where he asks if he could make use of part of the churchyard, shown in red, in order that the driveway could be extended as far as Priest Bank Road. In exchange, he was prepared to give the church a much larger parcel of land in Farnhill, shown in green.

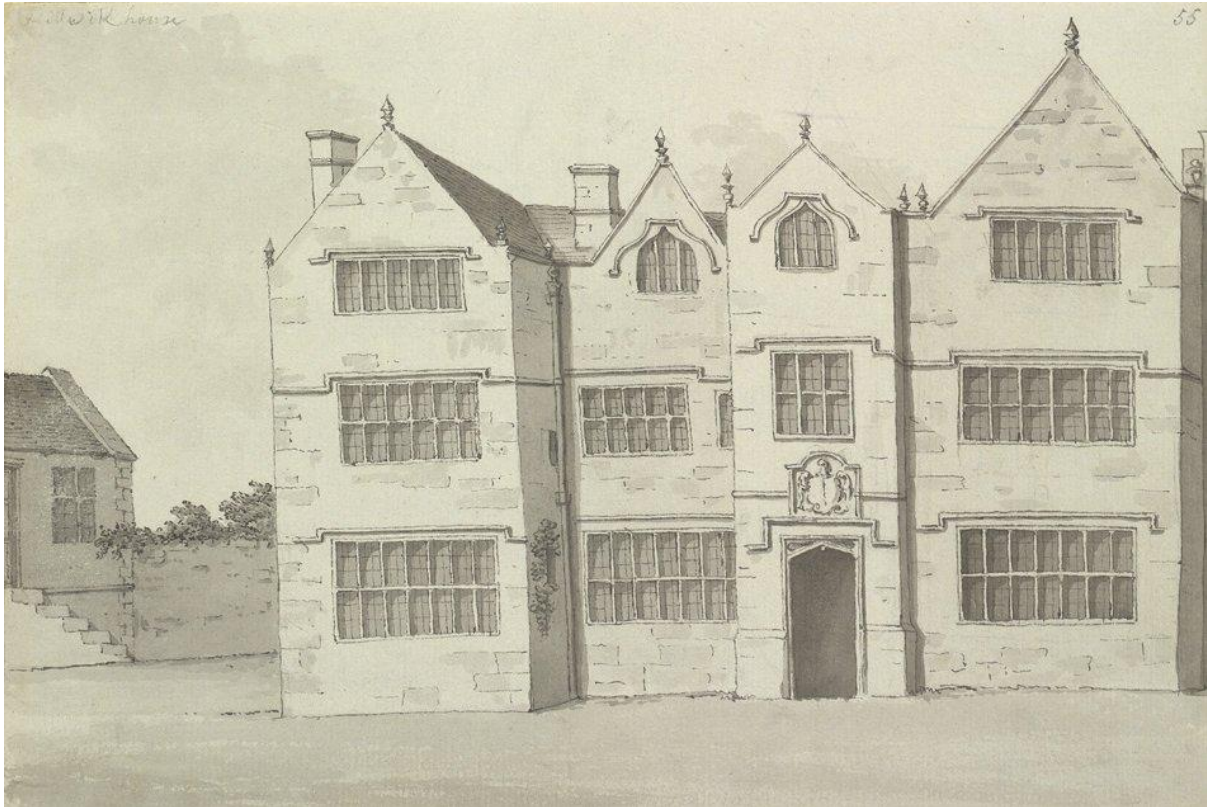
We don't have the Archbishop's reply and so we don't know whether the grand driveway was ever built. However there is good evidence that an avenue of trees was created, leading down from the Hall towards the graveyard.

Haworth Currer died in April 1744. His accounts for that year survive (they are held in the Brotherton Library in Leeds) and include two references to half-yearly payments of £10 each made to Anthony Holmes for "damages done by the young trees at the bottom of the avenue". The damage appears to have been done to Holmes's grassland – perhaps a loss of grazing or fodder for animals.

Whatever the reason for the payments, clearly an avenue of young trees must have been planted in the recent past.

But even if the driveway had been built, it would have been rendered useless when the canal arrived in the 1770s.

During Haworth Currer's time as lord of the manor of Kildwick, the area was visited by the Swiss landscape artists Samuel Hieronymus Grimm, who made a number of line drawings of Kildwick and Kildwick Hall, now in the British Library.



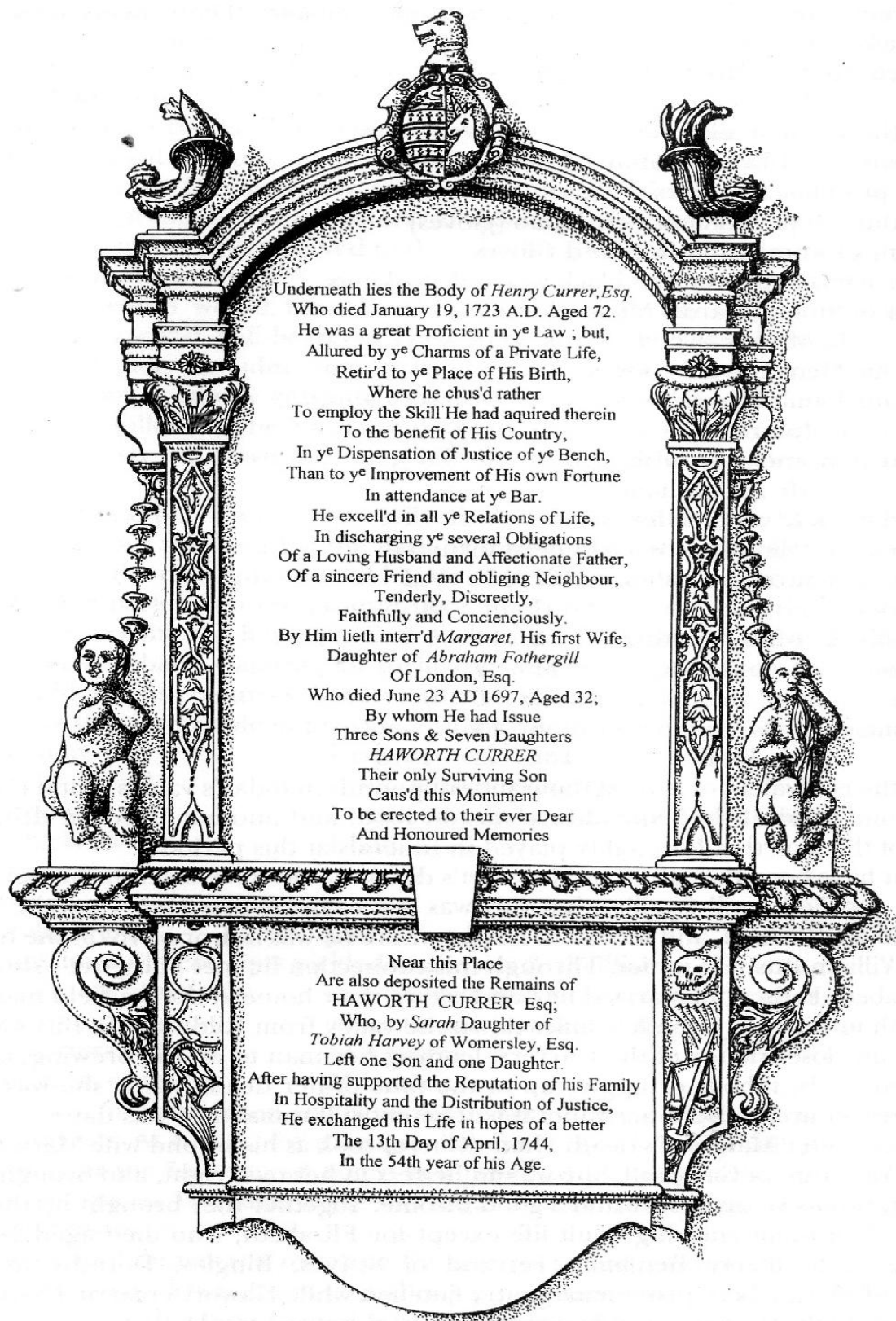
One of Richard Warburton's drawings of Kildwick and Kildwick Hall

John Jeremy Brigg noted that these drawings weren't particularly accurate. The scale and perspective are certainly a bit awry.

Haworth Currer also prettified the church, with a grand and elegant memorial to his father, positioned high on the north wall of the central aisle of the church. This was subsequently enhanced to memorialise Haworth Currer himself.

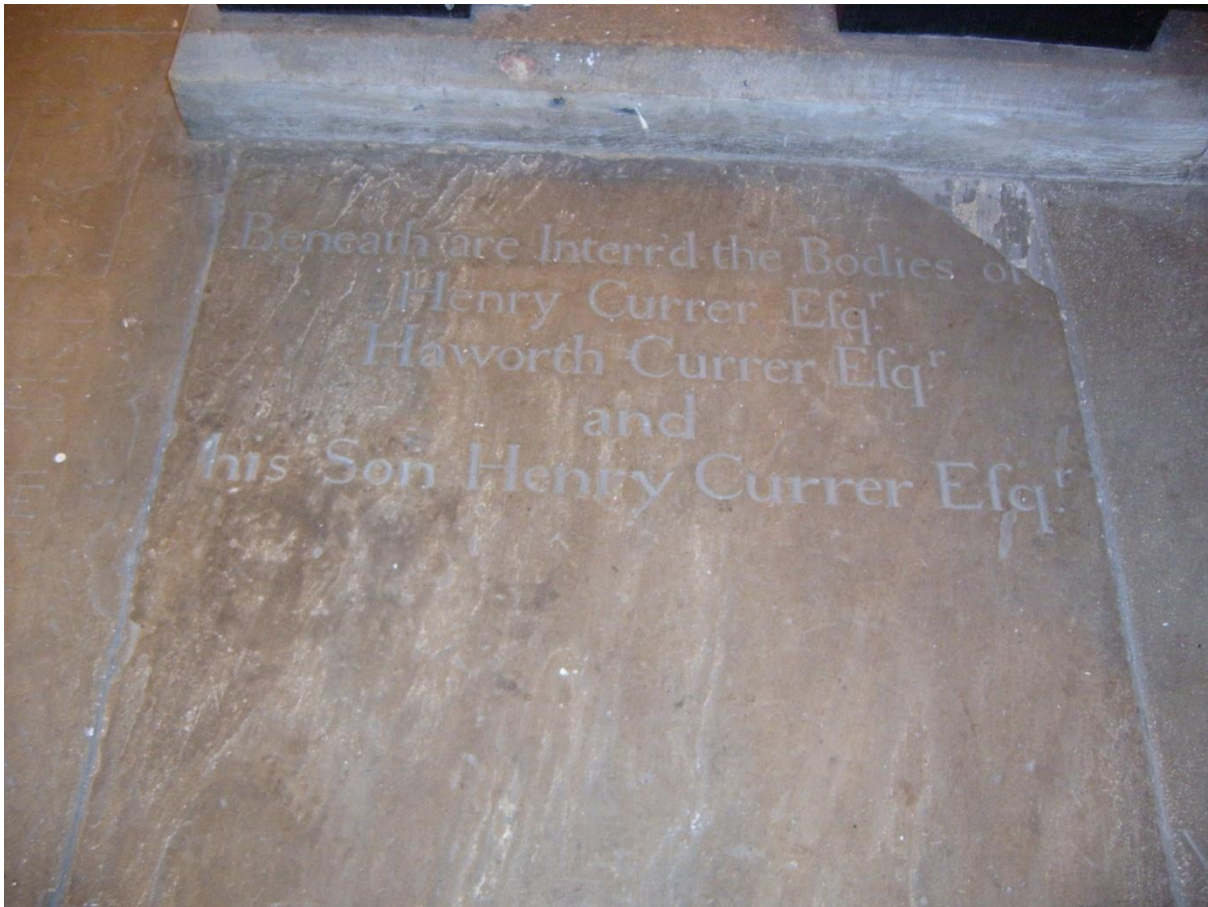


The memorial to Henry Currer (upper section) and Haworth Currer (lower section)



The memorial to Henry Currer (upper section) and Haworth Currer (lower section)

The slab covering the grave of Henry Curre (III), Haworth Curre and Henry Curre (IV), on the floor of the central aisle below the memorial, is much simpler.



Gravestone of Henry Curre (III), Haworth Curre, and Henry Curre (IV)

It has been suggested that Charlotte Brontë would have seen the memorial to Haworth Curre when she worshipped in the church during her time as a governess at Stonegappe and that this might be the source of her pseudonym "Curre" Bell.

This suggestion is made by people who don't know that:

- (a) There is no evidence that Charlotte Brontë ever visited Kildwick Church – why should she when her employer had, just the previous year, helped build a church in Lothersdale which is much nearer ?
- (b) That the name Haworth Curre was already known to the family and his name had already been used for a character in one of their early pieces of juvenile fiction.
- (c) There is a far better option for the origin of the Curre name.

Sources

[Kildwick Hall Historical Sketch, by J.J. Brigg](#)

History of the Ancient and Historic Church of S. Andrew Kildwick-in-Craven, by Rev. E. W. Brereton

The story of Haworth Currer's plans for a grand driveway can be found in our article [Haworth Currer's plan for a grand driveway for Kildwick Hall](#)

The various connections between the Brontë family and Kildwick are examined in our article [Kildwick and the Brontës – True or False ?](#)

[Country Life visit Kildwick Hall \(1911\)](#)