

**Joseph Sugden**  
**1816 - 1877**

The Cemetery's other probable Brontë connection, concerns Joseph Sugden, whose obelisk-topped memorial stands near the Crossley vault.

In January 1848, Branwell Brontë sketched "The Rescue of the Punchbowl – a Scene at the Talbot," which he sent his closest friend, sculptor Joseph Bentley Leyland of Halifax (1813-51). Each man featured in the sketch was identified by a pseudonym: Leyland features as "Phidias," and Branwell as "St. Patrick." For years, it has been apparent that the typical identification of the character "Sugdeniensis" as the Talbot licensee, Dan Holgate Sugden (1794-1846), was incorrect, for the former landlord had died eighteen months before the event was sketched.

Dan's widow, nee Mary Heavysege of Luddenden, succeeded him as licensee at the Talbot, and it was she to whom Branwell Brontë owed money in July 1848. The only prospective Halifax candidate for "Sugdeniensis" seems to be Dan's youngest brother Joseph, who was very likely to have been on the family premises. Joseph Sugden, twenty-two years younger than Dan, was the same age as the group of young intellectuals who gathered at the Talbot. Highly intelligent, by profession he was a dry-salter.

In later life Joseph served as a Liberal Councillor and Alderman. He became the electoral agent for Sir Francis Crossley, and showed his artistic talent by sketching a number of splendid political cartoons, which he signed "Humphrey Thwackem."

Sugden died at Blackpool, and was brought back to Halifax for burial.

*Right: 1857 Election cartoon by Joseph Sugden, showing him as agent for Francis Crossley, represented as a racehorse*

