

The Ecclestons, Marine Store Dealers

William Grundy Eccleston, born in 1847, was born in Preston to **John Eccleston**, an odd jobs man and his second wife **Nancy Fleetwood**. William became a 'general dealer' and married **Mary Howley** from Kilkenny in Ireland in the 1870s. It's possible Mary came over to Yorkshire with her father **John Howley** and brother **Patrick Howley** when her mother died. William and Mary travelled around. Daughter **Annie/Nancy Eccleston** was born in Jarrow and son **William John Eccleston** was born in Blackpool. Then they moved to Skipton, probably with a few other places in between. Mary's bachelor brother Patrick lived with them in Skipton — unfortunately he ended up in Skipton workhouse.

In Skipton, daughter Annie/Nancy Eccleston married a local weaver **Richard Stott** and they lived next door for a while. In 1904 son William John Eccleston married **Florence Lister** from a Skipton weaving family. In 1906 William, Mary with son William John and Florence and the first two of their ten children moved to the Folly. Yes 10 children! They stayed at the Folly for the rest of their lives and their neighbours for all that time were the **Grisedales**. Their descendants would become part of Settle's backbone.

At the time of the 1911 census William explained (in quite poor handwriting) that he and son William John were 'Marine Store Dealers', which might seem strange at first, Settle being so far from the sea.

William Eccleston	Head	60		Married	5	3	2	1	Marine Store Dealer
Wife, Mary Eccleston	Wife	63		Married	34	3	2	1	Marine Store Dealer
Son, John Eccleston	Son	30		Married	7	4	3	1	Marine Store Dealer
Daughter, Annie Eccleston	Wife	25	25	Married	7	4	3	1	Wife
Edward Eccleston	Son	7							School
Arthur Eccleston	Son	5							School

A 'marine store dealer' was originally the proprietor of equipment for mariners including components of old ships such as sails, cordage, ironwork. However, as time went by marine store dealers began to deal in scrap materials – the early 'rag and bone' men. They were the hub of a barter economy, buying and selling used goods.

A search of nineteenth century newspapers numerous court sessions in which marine store dealers were accused, and often found guilty of theft. Authorities found them hard to supervise as they often 'moved on'! The government passed various Acts of Parliament related to 'Merchant Shipping, Prevention of Crimes, and Public Health'. In particular an Act in 1903 stated, 'A Marine Store Dealer is 'a person dealing in, buying, or selling any of the articles following, that is to say, anchors, cables, sails, old junk, or old iron, or other marine stores of any kind. Such a person must have his name, together with the words "dealer in marine stores", distinctly painted in letters not less than six inches in length, on every warehouse and place of deposit belonging to him. If he fails to do so, he becomes liable to a fine not exceeding £20. He must also, under a penalty of £5, register his name and place of abode with the local authority. Every marine store dealer must keep proper books. For default in this respect he will incur a fine. An inspector of the local authority is entitled to enter his premises at all reasonable times.'

Whilst this may have helped, there were still many reports of problems after this, in Nottinghamshire, *'The Watch Committee have been informed that considerable difficulty has been experienced in keeping efficient control of the dealers'* [1].

Unsurprisingly, marine store dealers featured in the works of Charles Dickens, in *'A Christmas Carol'* featuring the character Old Joe. *'They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognised its situation and its bad repute. The ways were foul and narrow; the shop and houses wretched; the people half naked, drunken, slipshod, ugly. Alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell and dirt, and life upon the straggling streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery.*

Far in this den of infamous resort, there was a low-browed, beetling shop, below a penthouse roof, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal were brought. Upon the floor within were piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Secrets that few would like to scrutinise were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupted fat, and sepulchres of bones. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, by a charcoal stove made of old bricks, was a grey-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age, who had screened himself from the cold air without by a curtaining of miscellaneous tatters hung upon a line and smoked his pipe in all the luxury of calm retirement. This was Old Joe, the marine store dealer.' [ph1]

Back in the Folly in Settle, the Ecclestons appeared to keep themselves on the right side of the law complying with the regulations with signs adorning the shed/garage to the left and on the far right sections of the building. The shed was used for storage [ph3]. They advertised as *'Wool and Iron Brokers'* [LSA]

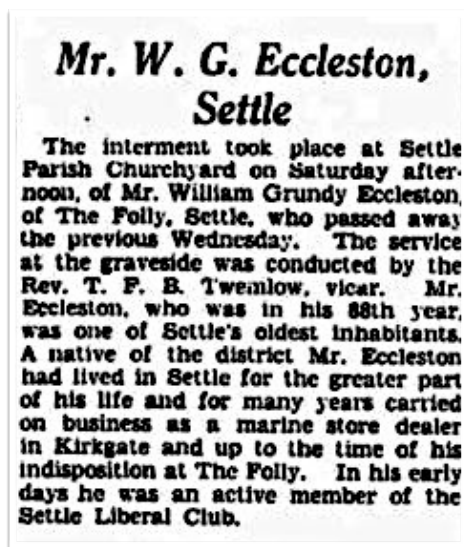
Mary died in 1919, aged 70 and William lived for another 20 years, dying aged 88 in 1939. They are buried in the unmarked grave *Old FX17* with infant granddaughter **Mary Jane Eva Eccleston** who died in

MARINE STORE DEALERS.
NOTTM. WATCH COMMITTEE AND ADEQUATE SUPERVISION.
 The Chief Constable of Nottingham has recommended that provision should be made for the registration of the business of marine store dealers and dealers in old metal, so that there can be more adequate supervision.
 The Watch Committee have been informed that considerable difficulty has been experienced for some time in keeping an efficient control of such dealers, and they are advising the City Council to adopt a section of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, which gives the necessary power to exercise the supervision.



W. ECCLESTON,
Wool & Iron Broker, The FOLLY, SETTLE.
 ANTIQUE FURNITURE Bought or Sold.
 BEST PRICE GIVEN for CAST-OFF CLOTHING.
 ANY KIND OF FURNITURE BOUGHT

1907. William's obituary mentions that he also traded from Kirkgate as well as the Folly [2].



On his military records son William John (Billy) Eccleston is described as 5 foot 8 inches tall, 10 and a half stone and with a tattoo on his right arm. The witness to his enlisting in Settle in December 1915 was none other than his neighbour's brother, **John Grisedale**. By then William John and Florence had five children and his wife was five months pregnant with the twin daughters Florence and May who died within hours of being born in 1916. The twins were buried with their grandparents in *Old FX17*. Billy had a wonderful photo taken with chippy John Andrews and Stan Percy [left - ph4].

Florence died in 1934, aged 49 — she must have been exhausted after all those childbirths. William John Eccleston died in 1956 aged 76, some 50 years after the family first moved to The Folly. William John and Florence are buried together in *Old BX32* with their 23 year old daughter **Violet Eccleston**.

Many of William John and Florence's children stayed in the area and will have their own memories and this account can't do justice to them. Son **Harold Eccleston Lister** was born just a month before his parents married. Harold was a quarryman who lived in Castle Hill with his wife **Lilian Fox** and his large family and descendants still live there to this day. Harold and Lilian are buried in the unmarked *New DX17*. Harold and Lilian's son, **Donald Eccleston**, is buried in the newest section of the graveyard. Harold and Lilian's son **Brian Eccleston** married **Violet Taylor**. Violet died at the birth of a daughter **Susan Eccleston**, who also died. Violet and Susan are buried together in the unmarked *New FX9*. Harold and Lilian's son **Francis Edward Eccleston** is buried with his first wife, **Josephine Cecilia Pettet** in the *New D40*. Harold and Lilian's daughter **Sheila Eccleston** married **Fred Stevens**, who was a professional footballer. Harold and Lilian's daughter Dorothy married **Peter Cokell** in 1950. Harold's son William married **June Cockshott**, the granddaughter of **Fanny Cockshott**.



Settle Graveyard Project



In 1939 William John and Florence's son **William Richard Eccleston** [ph4] married **Belinda Sweeney**. Zion church records tell us that four years Banns were read for his marriage to Helen Cowler but, for some reason that wedding didn't take place.

William Richard and Belinda lived in Bowskills Yard and then Castle Hill where his daughters ran a hairdressing shop [ph2]. William Richard and Belinda are buried in the unmarked *New EX45*. William John and Florence's son **Alfred Reuben Eccleston** found work in Horton-in-Ribblesdale where he was buried with his second wife **Cissie**. William John and Florence's son **Arthur John Eccleston**, known as John, married **Rose Ann Nugent** who had come to Settle with her sister, **Catherine Nugent**, possibly from Northern Ireland, to work as nurses at the Harden Bridge Isolation Hospital. John and Rose Ann are buried in the unmarked grave *Old FX52*. Rose Ann's sister Catherine married **George Truelove**, a grocer (for over 60 years) in Austwick [ph2].

William John and Florence's youngest son **Frank Eccleston** was wounded in Normandy just after his marriage to **Marion** [1] but he recovered. They are buried together in the graveyard *Old M34* and have a gravestone:

WOUNDED A MONTH AFTER HIS WEDDING.
Pte. Frank Eccleston, the youngest son of Mr. W. Eccleston and the late Mrs. Eccleston of "The Folly," Settle, has been wounded in the arm and leg whilst serving in Normandy, and is now lying in a military hospital in England. He was married a month before going to France on D-Day. His bride resides at Darvel, Ayrshire.

In ever loving memory of a dear husband dad & grandad Frank Eccleston born 9th March 1921 died 29th Jan 1997. Also his beloved wife Marion Eccleston treasured mum gran & great gran born 15th March 1926 died 17th March 2012. Love you and miss you both. At Rest, Old M34



Florence (Lister) Eccleston had at least six siblings. Her sister **Annie Jane Lister** married **Robert Leatham**, a horse driver in 1911. They lived on Chapel Hill in Settle for a short while and had a son **James Henry Leatham** who died aged just three months. James Henry was buried in *Old FX17* with his grandparents.

Robert and Annie Jane Leatham moved to Keighley after James Henry's death. *Old FX17* contains the bodies of William Grundy Eccleston and his wife Mary and four infants; their infant daughter Mary Jane Eva, twin granddaughters, Florence and May and James Henry Leatham. Florence's youngest sister **Clementina Lister** married **Ernest Longford**. At the time of the 1939 register they lived in Bowskill's Yard in Settle with Ernest working as a school porter, but they moved to Oxfordshire afterwards.



This account has been compiled by Sarah Lister as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried.

Settle Graveyard Project

It has been written in good faith with no offence intended. If I have inadvertently included errors or breached any copyright I apologise and would welcome corrections.

The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project and can be found on dalescommunityarchives.org.uk/settle graveyard project. The 'Old Settle' family tree on ancestry.co.uk includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on settleresearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.

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