

John Druville Slaytor, aged 12

John Druville Slaytor only son of the late John Slaytor of Doncaster died 23rd March 1915 Aged 12 years, Old F61

This unique gravestone commemorates the life of a 12 year old boy. It reflects a wealthy background which he definitely had. Despite the innocence portrayed in the sculpture — the cross symbolises salvation, there were plenty of unusual and rather naughty goings on in his ancestry too.

The inscription tells us he was the son of the late **John Slaytor** — he had died in 1909. John Druville Slaytor's widowed mother was **Miriam Elizabeth Little** who, for some unknown reason, came to Settle by the time of the 1911 census, living at 'Cragholme' near the Post Office in Duke Street. John Druville Slaytor and his father were both born in Doncaster and Miriam was a vet's daughter from Lincolnshire. Miriam was 25 years younger than her husband, less surprising considering she was his third wife. Despite three marriages John Druville Slaytor was the only child of John Slaytor.



John Slaytor was the eldest of three sons of **Charles Pantin Slaytor**, a respected medical practitioner and his wife **Mary Drabwell**. Charles came from Woolpit, Suffolk but worked in Bawtry, Doncaster for several years before relocating to Devon. Charles died in 1872 leaving a substantial inheritance to his sons.

John began his life working as a civil engineer and draughtsman in Sheffield. When he was 22, on 20 May 1875, he married **Eliza Henrietta Booth**, a wood turner/timber merchant's daughter. Oh dear, oh dear, some things just aren't meant to be and things quickly went pear shaped. In November 1878 John took Eliza Henrietta to the divorce courts on the grounds of her adultery with **Richard Liddell** and it all got very messy [1]. Divorces were only really possible since the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 — before that only the extremely wealthy were able to influence the church to annul their marriage or to initiate a private bill to go through Parliament. The 1857 Act made divorce a secular court action. It was still very expensive as it required several months of lawyers' wages and could only take place in London, so not much use for a northern labourer.

A SHEFFIELD DIVORCE SUIT.
In the Divorce Division of the High Court of Justice, yesterday, the Right Hon. the President (Sir James Hannen) and a common jury had before them the local suit of **Slaytor** v. **Slaytor** and **Lidell**, which was the petition of the husband, a Sheffield man, for a divorce on the ground of his wife's adultery with the co-respondent, which was denied. The case was set down as a defended

Slaytor
Slaytor
+ Liddell
COURT MINUTES.
Petition Filed *23rd Nov 1878*
Decree Nisi *12th June 1879*
Final Decree *20th Jan 1880*

Settle Graveyard Project

John stated, 'I have been informed and believe that between the 3rd day of June 1878 and the 15th day of August 1878 the petitioner frequently met Richard Liddell at the house of Samuel Hodgkinson in Attercliffe Road Sheffield and committed adultery with the said Richard Liddell'. Richard Liddell was an 18 year old banker's son whose real name was **James Henry Liddell**.

The house of **Samuel Hodgkinson** was an inn. John also stated 'She has committed adultery at Sheffield, Handsworth, Liverpool and other places with men whose names are unknown to me'. James Henry Liddell went to court to say that John Slaytor had made it all up.

Eliza Henrietta denied John's claims and, in retaliation, claimed that, 'in the month of August 1878 John Slaytor committed adultery on several occasions with Phoebe Morley.' **Phoebe (Eyes) Morley** was from Guisborough near Middlesbrough and was the wife of **Thomas Morley**, a miner. For some reason Thomas had thrown her out. Eliza Henrietta had felt sorry for Phoebe and took her on as a domestic servant in May 1878. However, by September she suspected John had 'behaved badly to her' which is an interesting way of putting it. Eliza Henrietta, 'a woman of lady-like appearance' [2] admitted that she 'chucked her out and gave her a good hiding.' Soon afterwards Eliza and Phoebe coincidentally met in the street. Eliza Henrietta said, 'Well, Phoebe' and 'then rushed upon her and struck her violently several times with an umbrella and made use of disgusting language. She further said that it was through her that her husband was to have a divorce from her and she threatened she would not rest until she had got her under the sod.' Unsurprisingly, Phoebe took Eliza to court for assault. The court acknowledged provocation on both sides. Eliza had to pay costs plus £20 sureties to keep the peace for six months. At the time of the 1881 census Phoebe was a patient in Sheffield hospital, hopefully not due to injuries caused by an umbrella, but was back with her husband in Birmingham by 1901. She died in 1902, aged 47.

2. I have been informed and believe that between the 3rd day of June 1878 and the 15th day of August 1878 the petitioner frequently met Richard Liddell at the house of Mr. Samuel Hodgkinson in Attercliffe Road Sheffield and that on divers of such occasions the petitioner committed adultery with the said Richard Liddell. —

A COMING DIVORCE CASE.

Assaulting a Servant.

At the Second Court at the Town Hall, yesterday, before J. Hallam, and T. A. Sorby, Esqs., Mrs. Henrietta Slater, a woman of lady-like appearance, was summoned for assaulting and threatening **Phoebe Morley**, a married woman,



ing a postage stamp. On coming out she met the defendant, who said, "Well, **Phoebe!**" She replied, "Well," and went round the corner to post the letter. The defendant then rushed upon her and struck her violently with an umbrella, and made use of disgusting language. She further said that it was through her that her husband was about to have a divorce from her, and she threatened that she would not rest until she had got her (complainant) under the sod. A large crowd was attracted. She was afraid that the defendant would do her bodily harm.—Cross-examined by Mr. Wilson: She was married, but did not know where her husband was. Her husband turned her out, and it was true that Mrs. Slater had taken her into her service because she thought her husband had behaved badly to her. It was also true that whilst she was in her employ, the defendant accused her of coming in late, and on that occasion "chucked her out of the house and gave her a good hiding." (Laughter.) As soon as she told Mr. Slater what she knew about his wife, the latter had to leave the house. She denied having spat in Mrs. Slater's face when she met her near the Town Hall, nor did she point at her and say, "Mr. So-and-So's —." She never spoke to

Settle Graveyard Project

Eliza Henrietta also alleged that John had 'committed adultery in a house of ill fame kept by **Annie Buckley** in Paradise Street, Sheffield with a person unknown to the respondent'. Since 1824 prostitution was illegal and women could be punished with a month's imprisonment with hard labour. As a result, Annie can be found in the census return two years later at 14 Paradise Street (appropriately enough) describing her occupation as a 'tobacconist shop keeper' with four young girls, 'servants' and 'boarders', just as she had been at the time of the 1871 census. Annie was from Welshpool, Montgomeryshire but most likely changed her name while running her house.

3 That in the month of ^{July or} August 1848 the said John Slaytor committed adultery in a house of ill fame kept by one Annie Buckley situate in Paradise Street Sheffield in the said County of York with a prostitute whose name is unknown to the respondent.

14 Paradise Street	1	Annie Buckley	Head	Woman	48	Tobacconist Shop Keeper	Wales
		Eliza Pickering	Serv.	Man	27	Servant Domestic	Yorkshire Sheffield
		Made Wright	Serv.	Woman	28	Servant Domestic	Yorkshire Sheffield
		Fanny Barnes	Boarder	Woman	19		Lancashire Salford
		Marion Hibbett		Woman	34		Lancashire Rivington

The Victorians were a hypocritical bunch and prostitution is thought to have been at its highest level during that era. Understandably, it was almost impossible to know the number of women working as prostitutes. Some studies suggest that, in London, prostitution was the fourth largest female occupation, most women driven to it by desertion, widowhood, poverty and desperation.



Eliza Henrietta also claimed that 'on the 14th day of September 1878 he (John Slaytor) did violently threaten her, eject her out on the street and refused to allow her to return.' In those days for a man to claim divorce he just had to prove his wife's adultery whereas women had to prove adultery plus further offences such as physical cruelty, bigamy or incest. Scorned spouses of both sexes went to extreme measure to get proof of adultery, paying good sums of money to 'witnesses'.

It's quite clear that John and Eliza Henrietta both wanted a fresh start without each other but couldn't possibly admit that was the case. There were 58 pages of documentation attached to this divorce case as the court gathered statements to decide whether or not the couple were colluding in order to obtain a divorce. In the end the decree nisi was granted on 12 June 1879 and finalised in January 1880. As the wife was essentially the man's property she had no assets of her own, John was obliged to pay her costs, some £40 as part of the divorce. Interestingly, on 14 July 1879 in Rotherham Eliza Henrietta, declaring herself a spinster married **William Sellars**, a widowed gentleman — he was actually a colliery agent and she was, technically, still a bigamist. Did he know about John? They appeared to live happily ever after in Rotherham.

2. Marriage solemnized at the Parish Church, in the New Parish of Atterley, in the County of York.

When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Widow's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
14th July 1879	William Sellars	25	Widower	Gentleman	Albert Rd.	William Sellars	Colliery Manager
	Eliza Henrietta Booth	28	Spinster	—	Albert Rd.	George Booth	Timber Merchant

Settle Graveyard Project

Meanwhile, in March 1880 John married widow **Mary (Armitage) Fisher**. Her first husband, **Thomas Robert Fisher**, a butcher, had died in 1874. For some reason John and Mary took on the licence for the Elephant Hotel in St Sepulchregate in the centre of Doncaster [ph1]. It had a distinctive elephant over its porch! It had opened in 1850 and operated until the 1970s. It was knocked down to build a modern shopping centre, of course.



John and Mary didn't have children and stayed in Doncaster, although gave up tenancy of the Elephant Hotel. John turned his engineering talent to inventions and gadgets. In 1888 he took out a patent on *'an improved automatic apparatus for checking and registering coins inserted in weighing and measuring machines where checking and registering of payments are required'*[3]. In 1889 John worked with his brother **Charles Henry Slaytor**

on *'An improved cartridge extractor for sporting guns'*. In 1891 it was *'an improved method of ventilating rooms, chambers, coal mines, tunnels, malt kilns and places where impurities are to be removed from the air.'*

The rest of John and Mary's life together was uneventful, thank goodness. Mary died in 1898, aged 47 and was buried in Doncaster with a fine stone.

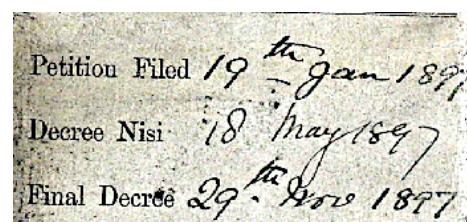


It was on 15 October 1901 that John married Miriam Elizabeth Little in Market Weighton, just north of Beverley on the east coast. John was 50 and Miriam just 25. Son John Druville Slaytor was born two years later. John died in 1909 in Devon, aged 57 *'after a lingering illness'*[4]. He had a polished oak coffin with *'massive brass furniture'*. The mourners were *'two brothers of the deceased and Dr Perkins'* — there was no mention of Miriam, nor his son as it was just not seemly to have women and children at funerals but he left them an enormous estate of over £6,000.

Funeral at Honiton

The funeral took place at St. Michael's Churchyard on Thursday of the late Mr. **John Slaytor** of Oaklands, Honiton, who died on the previous Friday, after a lingering illness. Deceased was a native of East Devon, but for many years carried on business in Doncaster. Recently he took up his residence at Oaklands, where he died. The mourners were two brothers of the deceased and Dr. D. Steele Perkins. The coffin was of polished oak with massive brass furniture, and the breastplate bore the following inscription: "**John Slaytor**, died January 1, 1909, aged 57." The Rev. A. G. C. Stamp officiated. There was a large number of beautiful floral tributes.

This wasn't the end of the trials and tribulations in the Slaytor family. John's brother **Frank Slaytor** became a solicitor and lived a very comfortable life in Guernsey with his wife and son. However John's brother **Charles Henry Slaytor**, the co-inventor and an analytical chemist also experienced the challenges of the divorce court. On 13 October 1883, aged 23 he married **Julia Isabella Corringham**, aged 21, the daughter of a 'gentleman' who had made a fortune as a colliery agent. Once married



Charles and Julia took up farming in Haxey, Lincolnshire and had two daughters, **Mary** born in 1885 and **Violet** born in 1893. However, in 1897 things had got so bad that Charles Henry took Julia to the divorce court for her alleged misconduct in 1893 with **Arthur Nicholson**, a surgeon, who had since died on the Gold Coast, and subsequently with **Samuel Edward Jackson**, a music teacher[5].

There was quite a bit of excitement caused by this case. One reason was that Arthur Nicholson, the first 'co-respondent' had died before the hearing raising legal questions as to whether a dead man could be included in the divorce case. He had '*succumbed to malarial fever while serving as a duly-qualified medical man in the expedition to Ashantee*'. (Ashantee is now Ghana in Africa and Arthur's visit was during the colonial wars against the natives.) As a result, '*leave was given to proceed without making him a co-respondent*' [6].

The other alleged co-respondent, Samuel Edward Jackson, was an ironmonger by trade but also a music teacher. At the time of the alleged affair he was a 24 year old single man. Julia was 35. By the time of the divorce hearing he had moved to Germany — a bit of a coward?

A pivotal piece of evidence in the divorce case was a love letter between Julia (calling herself Diana) sent to Samuel Jackson '*her own darling Billy*'. On 25th September 1896 Julia, who was living with her parents at that stage, wrote the letter to Samuel and, at 7.20pm, put it in the letter box. The family servant, **Alice Teale**, left the house and waited for the postman and persuaded him to let her retrieve the letter which is how it came to be used in evidence [7]. Julia denied asking Alice to retrieve it so who did?



The prosecutor, Mr Buszard, said '*It was not altogether a proper letter for a married lady to write to a man who was not her husband and the accused was put up to it, he did not doubt, by some greater offender*' [8]. She was not a snitch so we'll never know! Unfortunately for Alice, retiring a

THE DIVORCE COURT.

A FARMER'S PETITION.

In the Divorce Court yesterday Justice Barnes again had before him the case of Slaytor v. Slaytor and Jackson. This was the petition of Charles Henry Slaytor, a farmer, of Haxey, Lincolnshire, for a dissolution of his marriage on the ground of his wife's alleged misconduct in 1893 with Arthur Nicholson, a surgeon, who has since died on the Gold Coast, and subsequently with Samuel Jackson, a teacher of music, formerly residing in Gainsborough. The respondent answered denying the misconduct, but Jackson did not appear.

A case which will excite some interest is that of "Slaytor v. Slaytor and Jackson," in regard to which two or three applications have been before the court with reference to making a dead man a second co-respondent, who had died before the divorce proceedings were commenced. Upon proof of his having succumbed to malarial fever while serving as a duly-qualified medical man in the expedition to Ashantee in December, 1895, leave was given to proceed without making him a co-respondent.

IMPORTANT POST OFFICE PROSECUTION.

letter in question was written by a Mrs Slaton, of Graizeland, to a Mr Jackson, and addressed to him at 37, Silver-street, Gainsboro'. She posted it about 7.20 in the evening. It was not altogether a proper letter for a married lady to write to a man who was not her husband, and the accused, who was in her service, and was put up to it, he did not doubt, by some greater offender, went to the wall box in which the letter was posted. She waited there until the mail-cart came along to clear the box, and, by representing that she had just posted a letter which she did not wish to go, she was allowed to turn over the letters and take out the one she wanted. He believed that in consequence of her stealing that letter Mrs Slaton's husband was successful in getting a divorce

letter was (and still is) a criminal offence but she was found not guilty — ‘*The verdict was received with great applause.*’

GIRL GOES FREE.
STOLEN LETTER AND HAXEY DIVORCE

The divorce was finalised in November 1897 and, again, Charles Henry paid Julia’s costs. Julia retired to Dorset with her two daughters, neither of whom married. Violet travelled the world and settled in Australia. Charles Henry Slaytor, aged 44 married again in 1904. His wife was 27 year old **Helen Piercy Wordsworth**, a Wakefield farmer’s daughter and they immediately left for Tasmania and then Euston, a small town in New South Wales, Australia where Charles Henry made a living as a chemist. He died out there in 1927, aged 67, and somewhere along the line he had a third wife, Gwendoline.

Meanwhile, back in Settle at the time of the 1911 census, Miriam and John Druville Slaytor lived at Cragholme near the Post Office and **Alfred Stockill**, from Northallerton, worked as the bank manager in the Market Place bank building (now a solicitor and Bank). They married in October 1911 with **Dr Lovegrove** being a witness and moved to live at Bankwell, Giggleswick. A son, **Philip Alfred Stockill** was born a year later — he became an editorial journalist. 12 year old John Druville Slaytor died on 23 March 1915. He had been suffering from influenza, pneumonia and a middle ear infection. A private nurse from Bradford cared for him in his final days. His death was certified by **Dr Hyslop** and the registrar was **James Parker**.

Seventy third March 1915 Bankwell Giggleswick H. S.	John Druville Slaytor	Male	12 years	Son of John Slaytor Independent Means (Deceased)	1 Influenza 2 Acute Pulver Pneumonia 3 Acute Otitis Media Certified by D. S. Hyslop. H. S.	H. Pearson Hospital Nurse present at the death 3 Comden Terrace Bell Busk Bradford	Seventy third March 1915	James Parker Registrar.
-----------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------	------	-------------	--------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------

A year later Miriam and Alfred had another son, **Roger Stockill**, who became a lawyer. The family relocated to Nottingham.

Miriam’s own family had refreshingly scandal free lives. Twin sisters **Susanna** and **Margaret Little** died soon after they were born. Her remaining eight siblings had respectable careers and families, several brothers working as butchers or drapers. Her brother **John Clapham Little** [ph2] was a tailor, his business called ‘*Little the Great*’ Tailor and Cutter — no job too large or too small! His adverts proclaimed ‘*Mr Little is great in both stature and in knowledge of things sartorial. He is a man who cannot help being popular!*’



‘Little the Great,’ Tailor and Cutter



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. 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](http://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

Settle Graveyard Project

and information on settleresearch@gmail.com. Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.

Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 — Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 2 — Sheffield Independent, 3 — York Herald, 4 — Western Times, 5 — Globe, 6 — Lloyds Weekly Advertiser, 7 — Epworth Bells, Crowle and Isle of Axholme Messenger, 8 — Hull Daily Mail

ph1 — photo credited to closedpubs.co.uk, ph2 — credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username [mikebemrose](#)

1876. Marriage solemnized at The Registrar's Office District of Sheffield in the County of York

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.
64	12 th May 1876	John Slayter Eliza Henrietta Booth	24 years	Bachelor	draughtsman	West Street Sheffield	Charles Slayter ¹³ (deceased)	Surgeon
			27 years	Spinster		23 Pinfold Street Sheffield	George Booth (deceased)	Timber Merchant

Married in the The Registrar's Office according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by Certificate from Joseph to me,
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, { John Slayter } in the presence of us, { Richard Hall } by William H. Woodham
 { Eliza Henrietta Booth } { Elizabeth Frith } Deputy Registrar
 I certify the above to be a correct Copy. Joseph Slayter Superintendent Registrar.
 Extracted this 2nd day of November 1876. Wm Woodham 21st the Mayor 1876.

1883. Marriage Solemnized at The Parish Church in the Parish of Bromley in the County of Middlesex

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.
453	13 th Oct 1883	Charles Henry Slaytor Julia Isabella Birmingham	Full	Bachelor	Analytical Chemist	Bromley	Charles Sarten Slaytor	Doctor of Medicine
			Full	Spinster		Bromley	Robert Ward Birmingham	Gentleman

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by Licence by me,
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Charles Henry Slaytor } in the presence of us, { Thomas Tollfree } by Alberton Knowles
 { Julia Isabella Birmingham } { Susanra Tollfree }