

Stephen and Annie Slater, with very mixed fortunes

William Slater of Loughborough, a builder, married **Mary Taylor** of Costock, Nottinghamshire in 1829 and they had at least five children living in Loughborough and then Litchurch, the historical centre of Derby. Their children did well.

Son **John Slater** became a silk manufacturer in partnership with **Thomas Mitchell**, at one point with 100 employees. In 1880, when John was just 46, this successful partnership was dissolved [1] and, from then on, John described his occupation as 'gentleman' meaning he no longer needed to work for an income. He married **Margaret Barton**, another gentleman's daughter and they had four daughters who all remained spinsters. William and Mary's son **William Slater** became a shoe finisher in Leicester, married **Caroline Jephcott** (who had previously worked in the silk industry) and had at least four children.

NOTICE is hereby GIVEN, that the PARTNERSHIP heretofore subsisting between us, the undersigned **THOMAS MITCHELL** and **JOHN SLATER**, in the Trades or Businesses of Silk Throwers, Spinners, and Manufacturers, carried on by us at Wellington-street, in the Borough of Derby, in the County of Derby, under the style or Firm of "MITCHELL and SLATER," has been this day DISSOLVED by mutual consent.

All Debts due and owing to or by the late Firm will be received and paid respectively by the said **THOMAS MITCHELL**, who in future will carry on the said Business on his own account.

Dated this Twenty-fifth day of May, 1880.

THOMAS MITCHELL.
JOHN SLATER.

Witness to both signatures,
WM. FARNSWORTH,
Managing Clerk to Messrs.
W. and A. H. ROBOTHAM,
Solicitors, Derby.

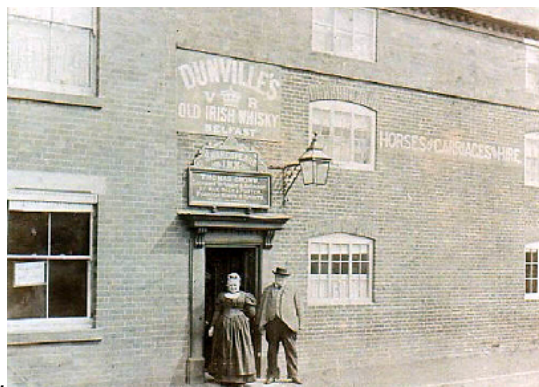
William and Mary's youngest daughter **Mary Ellen Slater** carried out her duties to stay at home and look after her ageing parents until they died in the 1880s. Only after that was she available to find a husband and she found an interesting candidate. She became the third wife of **George Offiler**, (what a brilliant name!) the founder of Offiler's Brewery in Derby [ph1]. George started his brewery at the Vine Inn in 1877 but soon moved to larger premises and served most of the free houses of Derby. Apparently, workers started their shifts at 6am with a pint of beer, and they were each allowed four more pints during the course of the working day. Workers horses, stabled at the brewery, pulled the beer drays, while sales representatives travelled the streets of Derby and beyond by horse and gig.



George died in 1899, aged 61 leaving a very generous estate to Mary Ellen. George's son, **Henry Offiler**, continued the business and expanded it further incorporating steam powered lorries and opening a second brewery. In 1946 Derby County's FA Cup winning team paraded around the town aboard an Offiler's dray. The brewery was eventually taken over by the Charrington United Breweries group in 1965.

So far so good for the Slaters!

William and Mary's son **Stephen Slater** was the one to provide interest in Settle, employed as a railway telegraph inspector for the Midland Railway. In 1871, aged 28, Stephen married **Annie Brown**. Annie was the illegitimate daughter of **Harriet Brown** who married a carpenter, **Edwin Jackson** two years after Annie was born. Harriet was the daughter of **John Brown** and his wife **Mary Smith**, butter factors and



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innkeepers of the Shakespeare Inn at Repton [ph2] and they brought Annie up. The inn was taken over by Harriet's brother, **Thomas Brown**, [ph2] when John and Mary died.

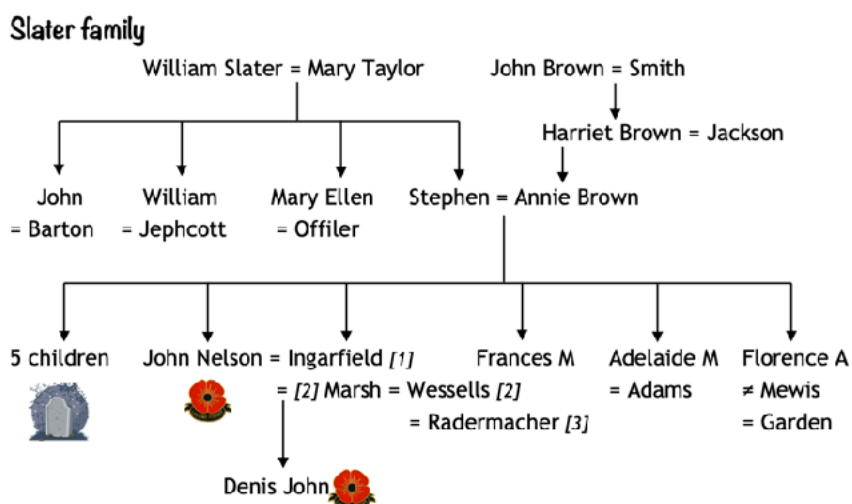


Stephen and Annie had nine children, moving to Settle during the 1870s and the family lived in Cravendale House at the bottom of Belle Hill, Giggleswick before moving to 'The Bijou' on Church Street, Settle. In August 1901 Stephen had an accident between the buffers of a shunting luggage train at Carlisle and badly crashed his arm [LSA]. It doesn't seem to have stopped him working though. He retired in his sixties and lived to the age of 75, leaving a generous estate to his widow Annie who died in 1922, aged 71.

22. At Ingleton, three local volunteers were welcomed home from the war.—Accident to Mr. Stephen Slater, of Settle, who was caught between the buffers of a shunting luggage train, while attending to his duties, at Carlisle Station, and had his left arm badly crushed.

Despite this facade of a quiet hardworking family, the lives of their children were a catalogue of disasters. Five of their nine offspring died as children. Son **William** died, aged 2 and was buried in an unmarked grave in the Ancient graveyard, just before it was closed due to being 'dangerously full'. Daughters **Mary Ellen**, aged 14, **Gertrude Annie**, aged 11, **Rose Lilian**, aged 4 and **Catherine Edith** aged 3 were all buried in the unmarked AX22. That's so unlucky.

Stephen and Annie's only surviving son was **John Nelson Slater** who showed great potential. He worked as a commercial clerk in London before marrying **Edith Lilian Ingarfield** in March 1905. Unfortunately, six months after the wedding a daughter, **Edith Maud Slater**, was born and died, followed by Edith Lilian six months later. So, in 1909 John Nelson Slater married **Mabel Louisa Marsh**. At the time of the 1911 census John and Mabel lived with her 14 year old brother **Sydney Charles Marsh** and a couple of boarders. They had three children but only one son, **Denis John Slater**, survived infancy. **Dora Irene Slater** had died in 1910, just a couple of months old and **Victor Richard Slater** died in 1918, aged 3.



During the war Corporal John Nelson Slater served with the 6th Battalion Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment. He died of wounds on 23 September 1918, aged 38. This was just months after dad Stephen Slater's death. John Nelson Slater's life was commemorated on his parents gravestone, *Old H43* — his mother must have been distraught.

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In memory of Stephen Slater. Died January 7th 1918 aged 75 years. Also Annie wife of the above. Died August 20th 1922 aged 70 years. At Rest. Also of John Nelson their son Killed in action September 23rd 1918 Aged 38 years

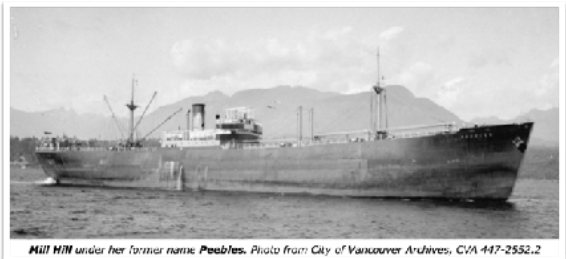


What about widow Mabel? Her younger brother, Sydney Charles Marsh was also killed during the war on 17 January 1917, aged just 20. He had been a Private serving the North Staffordshire Regiment. Her son Victor Richard Slater died a couple of months after husband John Nelson Slater, aged 3. In 1920 Mabel married **Henry William Douglas Wessells** of German descent, an interesting choice at that stage of history. Henry's father was **Heinrich Wilhelm Wessells**, a 'naturalised' corn merchant who died soon after Henry William Douglas Wessells' birth in 1882, aged 63. Henry William Douglas Wessells' mother was 25 years younger than his father but she died when he was eleven. Despite being orphaned Henry William Douglas became a successful accountant, survived WW1 and helped to bring up Mabel's son Denis John Slater. Unfortunately Henry also had a premature death, dying in 1923, aged 42. Before his death, Henry managed to spend 6 months with his son **Sydney Gordon Douglas Wessells** but missed his baptism.

1924 13th 1924 No. 1561	Sydney Gordon Douglas	Henry William Douglas of Mabel Douglas	Wessells	The Nook R. I. P. Harrow	R. I. P.
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In 1927 Mabel married again. Her third husband was **Charles Albert Radermacher**, another accountant 20 years her senior. Inevitably he died well before her, aged 71 in 1939, but, presumably, nothing to do with the war.

John Nelson Slater and Mabel had one surviving son, Denis John Slater. He married **Margaret Ellis** in January 1940. Unfortunately, he was just the right age to be called up for service in WW2. He was a radio operator serving on Steam Ship Mill Hill (built in 1930, previously named SS Gracechurch and SS Peebles), part of a convoy transporting cargo to



COD	LN	GN	Nat.	Rank or Rating	Cause of Death	Ship	Age Group	Date of Death	Res.	R. of H List Number	G.R.
			199	520	659	B	27	40/8	185	15	H
Record of Death of Merchant Seaman											
Surname: SLATER						Ship: Mill Hill					
Other Names: Denis John						Official No: 161390					
Address: 16, Queens Gate, London, S.W. 1						Port of Registry: Newcastle					
Birthplace: London Country: Eng. Land						Rank or Rating: Radio Officer					
Date of Death: 30.8.40			Place of Death: at sea			Age at Death: 27					
Cause of Death: missing presumed killed by enemy action (sunk by enemy action (torpedo) on 30.8.40)											
Ppd by: Red				Register Entry: E.A.				Reg. Gen.			
Ckd by: 08		Year: 1940		Month: Dec		Page: 6					

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Middlesborough from Halifax, Nova Scotia. At 2.30am on 30 August 1940, 58 miles off Cape Wrath in the north of Scotland a German submarine torpedoed the convoy, sinking three ships including the SS Mill Hill. It sank within a few minutes with the loss of all 33 hands, a third of whom were from India. Some families just don't have any luck.

Stephen and Annie's eldest daughter **Frances Maude Slater** remained a spinster and looked after aunt Mary Ellen (Slater) Offiler in her widowed years. This have may have been the catalyst for Frances' career in nursing. Second daughter **Adelaide Maria Slater** became the second wife of a railway inspector, **Matthew Henry Adams**, 20 years her senior, and they had two sons to add to the many others from his first marriage. It's possible they met when Adelaide visited relations in Litchurch, Derby as that's where Matthew Henry Adams had been working, after a spell in Hellifield.

Stephen and Annie's youngest daughter **Florence Annie Slater** performed with the Settle Amateur Operatic Society in her youth [ph3]. She moved to Manchester, presumably for work, where she caught the eye of **Frederick George Mewis**, a 'professor of music and languages' and they had a daughter **Iris Yvonne Mewis** in 1913. Despite the mention in Annie's



SLATER Annie of The Bijou Settle Yorkshire widow died 20 August 1922 at Ihigh-street Settle Probate Wakefield 1 September to Frances Maud Slater spinster Adelaide Maria Adams (wife of Matthew Henry Adams) and Florence Annie Mewis (wife of Frederick George Mewis). Effects £575 10s. 9d.

probate records they never married because Frederick was already married. In 1906 Frederick had married **Hermione Clarinda McGregor Smith**, the daughter of the Dean of Wilberfoss, York — very respectable. However, by 1911 Hermione was working as an asylum nurse, deserted by her husband. There was no sign of a divorce but, in 1916, Hermione married **Reginald Talkington McKenna**, a military man from Belfast. With so much going on in the world, perhaps bigamy wasn't the greatest priority? However, Reginald was killed on the Western Front in the war on 10 October 1918. In 1920 Hermione married **George Albert Perotti**, a Scottish 'technical director'. Towards the end of his life an article explained that George was the manager of an export company at Cardiff Docks [2]. Hermione died in 1965, aged 80.

Mr. George A. Perotti, manager of Maris Export and Trading Co. Ltd., Cardiff Docks, is ill at his home at Baron-road, Penarth.

Meanwhile Frederick George Mewis got together with Florence Annie but at the time of the 1921 census they were living apart in Chorlton, Manchester. At the time of the 1939 register Frederick George Mewis described himself as a widowed professor of languages. What an odd chap. Meanwhile, as Florence Annie had never married Frederick George Mewis, she was free to marry a lecturer in economics, **Donald John Garden**. She was still only 34. [ph4] and they had three further daughters to join Iris Yvonne Mewis. Unfortunately, Donald John Garden died when he was just 47 but Florence Annie



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lived to be 73.



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 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 – Derby Mercury, 2 – Western Mail

ph1 – photo credited to barclayperkins.blogspot.com, brewerytrays.co.uk, ph2 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username [annanick189](#), ph3 – with kind permission go the Settle Amateur Operatic Society via John Reid. ph4 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username [Ian Cresshull](#)

LSA - Lambert's Settle Almanac with the kind permission of the Museum of North Craven Life

Baptism documentation via ancestry.co.uk, originally from The National Archives.