

Ellis' garage

Many of us rely on Ellis' garage in Settle for repairs or even a new car. The successful garage at the top of Duke Street has been there for decades. Who were the original Ellis family?

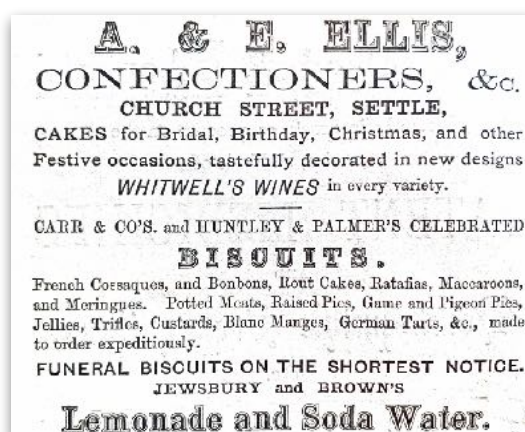
John Ellis, a butcher from Sawley married **Margaret Lancaster** in Gisburn in 1845. This would definitely have counted as 'a good marriage'. Margaret was one of many daughters, and just one son, of **Christopher Thomas Lancaster** and his wife **Ann Carr** who farmed at Moorhouse, a 220 acre farm at Paythorn which had been in the family for generations. The family's wealth and status are reflected on their memorial inside Gisburn Church [ph1].

Sacred to the memory of Christopher Lancaster of Moore-House Yeoman, who died August 30th 1855 in the 89th year of his age. Also Ann, wife of the above who died June 20th 1838 in the 55th year of her age. Also their children Nanny, Thomas and Stephen who died in infancy and were all interred in their family vault at the crossing of the centre aisle in this church.



You can't ask for a more high profile burial place than that! Burials inside churches were gradually phased out in the first half of the 19th century for hygiene reasons (hence the term 'the stinking rich') so Christopher was lucky to hold onto his spot!

John and Margaret remained in Gisburn with John working as a butcher while Margaret had five daughters and two sons. After the death of both their fathers in 1854 and 1855 John and Margaret moved to Rochdale for a few years and then, by the time of the 1871 census, made their first appearance in Settle, in Church Street. John, aged 64, had retired but daughters **Annie** and **Elizabeth** ran a confectionery business [LSA]. Son **Henry Ellis** died in 1876, aged 22 and then John died in 1878, aged 71 and they were buried back in Gisburn with infant daughter **Catherine Ellis**.



By the time of the next census the remaining family had moved to Castleton, Derbyshire. Son **Christopher Ellis** had found a job as a jeweller's assistant and the rest of the family went with him. They stayed in Castleton until 1892 when Margaret died, aged 78. Probate documentation tells us she left a healthy estate of £1,100, around £90,000 at today's value, to son Christopher, of course. What about all those daughters? The others, **Annie, Elizabeth, Mary** and **Margaret Ellis** all remained spinsters and, after their mother died, lived together in Rochdale until their deaths. The last surviving sister, Margaret returned to Settle when her other sisters died, because that's where brother Christopher was.

A year before mum Margaret died, in June 1891, Christopher married **Ellen Butterworth** of Rochdale [ph2,3]. Ellen descended from **Joseph Butterworth** who ran several successful cotton mills in Rochdale. Her parents, **Edwin Butterworth**, who stayed in the family trade, and his wife **Emma Tweedale** were first cousins. On wedding settleresearch@gmail.com



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documentation Christopher described his occupation as a goldsmith which apparently went very well. At the time of all the following censuses, from the age of 40, Christopher described his occupation as a *'retired jeweller'* with sufficient funds to employ servants at the time of each census return. Their four sons were all born in Cheltenham, and then the family moved to live in one of the large houses, Broadlands, at Arnside and by 1911 they were in Lancaster. They had photos taken during the early 1900s [ph2,3].



Christopher decided to return to Settle and by 1915 lived at The Nook, 3 PenYGent View. At the time of the 1921 census Christopher's occupation was a *'retired watchmaker, jeweller and silversmith and garage proprietor'*. Three of their four sons lived with them, all working as *'motor mechanics'*. The sons had trained as lorry builders at Crossleys in Manchester so just needed their own garage to run. With the generous proceeds of his goldsmithing and a loan, which was seemingly never paid off, Christopher had bought several properties including the garage on Duke Street, previously known as the *'West Yorkshire Motor and Garage Company'* [ph4] which had been established in 1909 to serve the needs of North Ribblesdale enthusiasts of the new motor cars. It



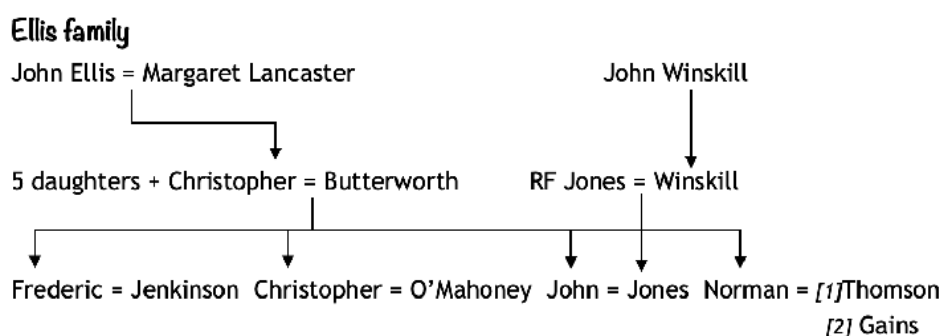
Ellis garage interior, photograph by the Horner Studio. Horner Collection©NCBPT (CC-BY 4.0)

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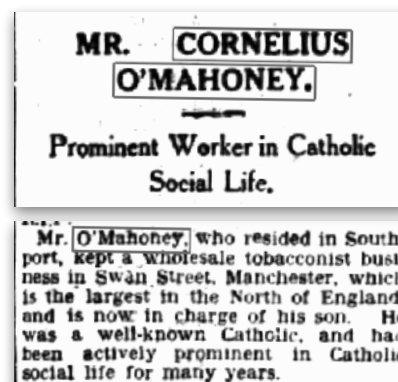
was on the site of the old Mechanics Institute and, intriguingly, had previously belonged to the Lancasters (Craven) Ltd. — could they have been relations of Christopher's mother? Christopher and Ellen's eldest son, **Frederic Henry Ellis**, had served his apprenticeship at the garage. Christopher was a generous dad to buy a business for his sons and it was renamed Ellis' garage. The business is still going strong today.

Christopher and Ellen were buried together in *Old J42* which was a walled grave designed for four people. It seems the last two spaces were not filled, unless with ashes. Unusually, the memorial stone is, and always has been, flat on the ground

Christopher Ellis The Nook, Settle 1859 - 1938 with his wife Ellen nee Butterworth both of Rochdale 1861 - 1922



So, what about those four sons? Second son, **Christopher Reginald Ellis** [front of the boys' photo] was the one who didn't come to Settle. He stayed in Stockport, Cheshire and began a career with British American Tobacco. In 1919 he married **Marien Charlotte O'Mahoney** from Chorlton, Manchester who he probably met through his work. She was one of nine children of **Cornelius O'Mahoney** and **Mary Robb** who were Irish and had arrived in Manchester during the 1880s. Cornelius kept *'the largest wholesale tobacconist business in the North of England'* [1]. When Cornelius died in 1932, aged 79 he left an enormous estate worth over £1million at today's value. It transpired that he had also been a prominent worker in catholic social life, whatever that means. When Christopher Reginald Ellis died in 1962, aged 68, he only left an estate of £737, not quite in the same league as his father-in-law.



The remaining three Ellis sons ran the garage with eldest son **Frederic Henry Ellis** [back centre of boys' photo] being the named proprietor. He was exempt from military service due to a weakness of the spine although managed to work at the garage until his death, aged 89! He was remembered as affable, eccentric and generous and stood in front of the garage every day wearing his trilby hat and long, well-worn raincoat. He was also a bit of a tinkering entrepreneur. Before the days of wholesale 'spare parts' for motor cars, the garage was equipped with a blacksmith's workshop and a gas-powered tool-making lathe. The garage was the home of the Settle ambulance, a Rolls Royce, because Frederic was the only mechanic trained to maintain them. The earliest steam traction engines, lorries and steam rollers trundled up the road for Frederic's expertise, generally self-taught. Frederic was also a keen model maker, his most famous creation being a yacht of some 30 inches in length in full trim with all the carefully filed brass fittings and rigging. What a talented man. The garage also ran a taxi service and, on several occasions Frederic and his

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brothers took turns driving a charabanc of tourists over the top of Kirkstone Pass in the Lake District, just a gravel track in those days. During WW2 the garage was requisitioned as a base for servicing RAF vehicles whilst RAF servicemen lived at what is now The Falcon Manor with officers at Hellifield Peel.

In 1925, aged 32, Frederic married **Mary Matilda Jenkinson** [ph5,front right], one of eleven children of **George Jenkinson** and **Agnes Clarke** who successfully ran the Black Horse in Giggleswick for many years. Frederic and Matilda lived at Ferncliffe, Halsteads, just opposite the garage and had their son there. Frederic and Mary Matilda were buried in the new section of Giggleswick graveyard, near Mary Matilda's family, and with a memorial stone matching that of Frederic's parents.



Frederic Henry Ellis Motor Engineer of Settle 1892 – 1982 with his wife Mary Matilda née Jenkinson of this parish 1891 – 1957 A3/B17.

Frederic and Mary's son **Christopher George Ellis** took over the family business but found that Frederic's business skills had fallen way short of his engineering skills — he had not kept any paper records of his work, nor chased invoices. His parents had lived a simple life off the proceeds of petrol sales. However, Christopher seemed to turn things around. In 1962/3 Chris extended the



Giggleswick Sleigh in about 1930, from left, John Hutter, Chris Ellis, John Hargreaves, Geoff Wood, Gus Parlier, Alvin Fowcett, Len Denton



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garage parking lot by purchasing and demolishing the large house, liberal club and cottages towards town [ph10]. The photo shows the petrol pumps outside the garage. Over the years Christopher also bought the builder's yard from **Brassingtons**, converting the plumber's yard into cottages and then sold them on. He purchased the garage from **Fred Whitehead** at Goldielands and the **Haygarths** mechanics business on Duke Street, now the site of the Peter Allen shop. Chris was a member of the Rotary club and ran the property as a Rotary Charity shop [ph12] for a while and also helped out with Settle Rotary Santa Run [ph6,second left]. He bought the Central garage, now Car and Kitchen [ph11] from **Clifford Oliver**, a descendant of the Kitcheners who had owned it previously.

Frederic was assisted by his brother, third son **John Butterworth Ellis** [left, boys' photo]. In 1930 John married **Enid Myfanwy Jones** and they lived at Greenbank, Station Road in Giggleswick to have their family. Edith's name may suggest she was Welsh but was in fact born in Croydon to **Robert Francis Jones** of Bangor, Wales and his wife, **Elizabeth Winskill** from Malham Moor. Edith, the blur at the front! was pictured with her parents and brother, another **Robert Francis Jones** (Jnr) in 1905 [ph7]. Robert was a schoolmaster. An older brother, **Frank Winskill Jones** had died an infant. Tragically, in 1907, when little Enid was just three, dad Robert Francis Jones died of pneumonia, aged 36.



Some of our readers may remember the name Winskill. Widow Elizabeth (Winskill) Jones had two children to care for and suddenly had no income. Little Enid was brought up to Malham Moor to live with her grandfather **John Winskill** and his second wife **Harriet Britton** on the Malham Tarn estate. John was the land agent for **Walter Morrison MP**. Enid married John Butterworth Ellis just a year before John Winskill died — despite his wealth, when he died, John Winskill and his wives were buried in an unmarked grave in Settle, *Old BX32*. Walter Morrison also helped the family out in another way too. After Robert Francis' death, Enid's mum, Elizabeth (Winskill) Jones had a successful career as a nurse at 'St Luke's Hospital for the Dying' in Bayswater which was located just around the corner from Walter Morrison's London Residence. This was a terminal care hospital for 'respectable' people. She was presented with a handsome oak bureau [ph7] to mark completion of 25 years of service in 1937 and her 'relations from the north' joined the celebrations and had an 'excellent buffet'. Elizabeth retired on a pension of £55 per annum per year, until the age of 65, to live in a very nice house in Crosby, Liverpool. Elizabeth died when she was 64, still in Crosby. She obviously chose not to live in Settle near her daughter, Enid.



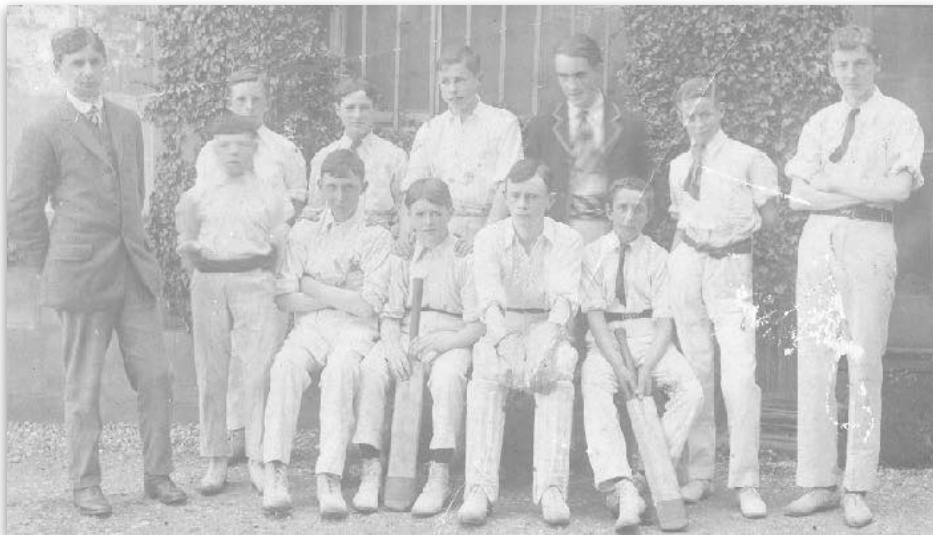
Sadly, descendants think that Enid's brother Robert Francis Jones (Jnr) [ph8] was brought up in an orphanage until the age of 16. But, despite this, Robert was sufficiently qualified to obtain a post at Martin's Bank in Settle, later taken over by Barclays. He was appointed on 12 April 1915, aged 16. He signed up to serve with the Grenadier Guards during the war and was killed on the Western

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Front on 23 August 1918, aged 19, just a couple of months after starting active service. Robert left *'the whole of my property and effects'* to sister Enid. His life was commemorated on the bank's Roll of Honour as well as the Settle cenotaph and Kirkby Malham war memorial.



Christopher and Ellen's youngest son, **Anthony Norman Ellis**, known as Norman, [right, boys' photo] was a fine cricketer. He was pictured in 1911 on the Quaker Friends' school team, [ph2, left seated] and became the team captain in 1912. Brother John Butterworth Ellis, two to the right of Norman, was also on the team. Years later brother Frederic Henry would drive the Settle Cricket Team to their away matches. As a mechanic, during the war Norman and his brother John were valuable recruit for the Royal Engineers, with training in Halifax. From there Norman [ph3] was posted to Arras, near the Somme, driving the officers from HQ to the front line. He also carried dispatches across the battlefield on his motorbike. He was blown off his bike on several occasions hiding in ditches until everything had subsided. A piece of shrapnel penetrated his face into his mouth resulting a six month hospital stay and a permanent disfigurement to his



face. Only 13 of 250 comrades survived that attack. Norman spent the last two years of the war in a prisoner of War Camp at Meschede, with 50,000 others. He survived but, understandably took a long time to recover from the trauma.

After the war Norman joined his brothers in the garage business as a mechanic and taxi driver. After a while he began to be hired on a regular basis by **Sir William Nicholson** of Hellifield Peel. Sir William was a former Lord Mayor of Leeds and ran *'William Nicholson and Son'* building company, also based in Leeds, and had numerous prestigious contracts across Yorkshire. Interestingly, Ingfield estate in Settle was thought to be built by Nicholsons — could this be the same company? Sir William [2] already employed a coachman for his horses and carriages but different skills were required to drive the new

Presentation to Sir W. Nicholson.



Mr. Herbert Atkinson (left) presenting Sir William Nicholson, a former Lord Mayor of Leeds, with a portrait on behalf of the directors and staff of William Nicholson and Sons (Leeds), Limited. The presentation was made at Sir William's home at Hellifield Peel, near Skipton.

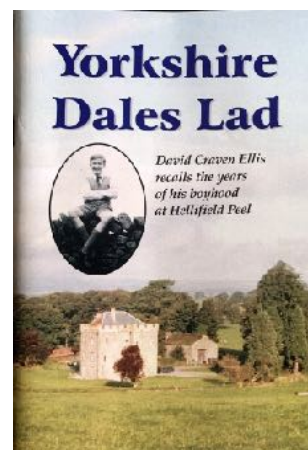
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motor cars and so Norman became a full-time private chauffeur to Sir William with a uniform and the use of a cottage, Peel Cottage, provided on top of £4 per week. Settle's **Dick Haygarth** was a gardener at Hellifield Peel too. Norman drove a Daimler called 'Bertha'! In the early 1900s Sir William had taken over the lease of Hellifield Peel, of Saxon origin, and the ancestral home of the **Hammerton** family. Sir William did extensive renovation work to preserve what was, by then, ruins. It is thought to have had a priest's hiding hole and chapel. Sir William was a good man, often hosting shooting parties at his residence Summerstone Lodge at Pateley Bridge and garden parties, teas and dinners at Hellifield Peel to raise money for hospitals and the welfare of war heroes. **Geoffrey Dawson** of Langcliffe Hall and the **Tottie family** from Coniston Hall were regular visitors. He chaired the '*Leeds Wounded Warriors Welfare Committee*'. Sir William had provided St Aidan's Church in Hellifield in 1906, encouraged local scouts, cadets, the local British Legion and promoted the National Service League. Sir William was the founding president of the Hellifield Village Institute which also led to a library and bowling green. He was knighted for his widespread philanthropy.

Norman would have seen a very different side of life in his new job. On one occasion Norman drove Bertha with Sir William in a procession through Leeds to mark a civic visit by the Prince of Wales, later Edward VIII and Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin! In 1925 Norman drove to Glasgow for Sir William to meet family friends. Norman fell in love with their daughter **Martha Thomson Reid**. In March 1925 Norman and Martha married in Glasgow, and a daughter, **Margaret Norma Ellis**, known as Norma was born a year later back in Peel Cottage. Martha died of cephalitis in 1930, aged 27, when Norma was just four. In 1931 Norman married **Sarah Gains** who had worked as the housemaid at Hellifield Peel since 1920 and often helped out with looking after Norma. The cottage was enlarged by the addition of another bedroom and bathroom in preparation for the two sons to join Norma.

Sir William died in 1944 and the Peel was immediately requisitioned and accommodated Italian and German prisoners of war who had to live in bell tents in the grounds. The Ellis family had to move to Long Preston and Norman worked as an HGV driver in Skipton. In 1952, Hellifield Peel was bought by Settle's **Tot Lord** who decided to remove items of antiquarian interest for his Pig Yard Museum, preserve the keep, only, and demolish the rest, much to the distress of Norman and family.

Norman and Sarah's son **David Craven Ellis** later wrote a book about life growing up at Hellifield Green and it's a beautifully written account of life in the day [ph9]. Norma later married **Donald Scriven** who came to work at Hellifield Peel as a garden boy. Norman and Sarah died in the 1970s in Far Sawrey, near Windermere, just down the road from Beatrix Potter's house.



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.

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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 – Nottingham and Midland Catholic News, 2 – Leeds Mercury

ph1 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username Patrlan24, ph2 – username julieellis197, ph3 – username jrogers1946, ph4 – Image 2022.1.38.8 from the Horner Photographic Studio Collection provided courtesy of the Museum of North Craven Life, ph5 – credited to family descendants via Ancestry.co.uk, username sjcaffrey, ph6 – credited to the Craven Herald, thanks to John Reid, ph7 – credited to descendant Guy Ellis, ph8 – credited to Craven's Part in the Great War, ph9 – Yorkshire Dales Lad, by David Craven Ellis with thanks to John Reid, ph10 – credited to the back in Settle facebook site, submitted by Jeanne Carr, ph11 – submitted by Mick Harrison, ph12 –with thanks to John Reid



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