

## Francis Ellis, banker

Incredibly, the Ellis family can be traced back to **Matthew Ellis** born in 1597 in the hundred of Ouse and Derwent and Hardenshire (York) during the reign of Elizabeth 1 [ph2].

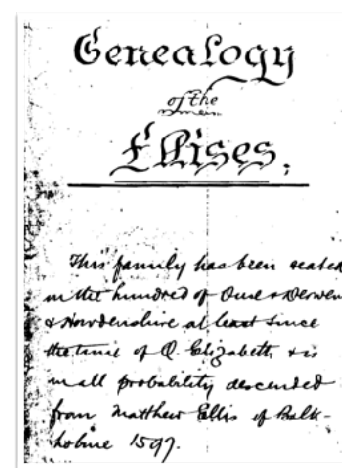
Francis Ellis (Snr) was born in 1792 in Earswick, north of York to **John Ellis** and **Elizabeth Clemenshaw** who, for some reason, moved over to Long Preston. Francis's sister **Jane** became the first wife of **John Waller**, the innkeeper at the Black Horse in Giggleswick. She died after giving birth to six children and is buried in Giggleswick graveyard.

Francis worked at the Craven Bank, owned by the **Birkbecks**, in Duke Street, opposite the Golden Lion. He had married **Margaret Steele** in 1816 and they had four children although the youngest, Ann, died in infancy in 1824.

In 1821 Francis had to give evidence in the trial of **James Ingham** who was found to have forged three notes purporting to be those of the Craven Bank [1].

Francis Ellis, clerk to Messrs Birkbecks and Co. bankers, of Settle, pronounced both the notes to be forgeries. The whole of the notes were engraved, except the dates.

At Settle, on the 30th Jan., aged 61 years, Francis Ellis, Cashier to the Craven Bank Company, Settle, in whose Service he has been for upwards of 40 years.



When Francis died, in 1854, he had worked for the bank for over 40 years [2]. Margaret died in 1861, aged 70. At the time of the 1861 census she lived with **Jennett Cork**, widow of wigmaker **William Cork**. Francis and Margaret were buried at Giggleswick in grave B2/12 with Margaret's parents **Christopher** and **Ann Steele**, her unmarried brother **John Steele**, infant daughter **Ann Ellis**, son **Christopher Gregory Ellis**, a painter, who died aged 30 and **Phoebe Ellis** who was son John's first wife. There seem to be eight bodies in this grave with just one infant – quite full! They are listed in the order they died.

*In memory of Christopher Steele ob Mai 30, aet. 30 an. 1791*

*Ann Ellis ob Jun 29 aet. 11 di. 1824*

*Ann Steele ob. Dec. 3 aet. 80 an. 1841*

*Phoebe Ellis ob. Jan. 19 aet. 30 an. 1847*

*Christopher Ellis ob. March 10 aet. 30 an. 1851*

*Francis Ellis ob. Jan. 30 aet. 61 an. 1854*

*John Steele ob. April 20 aet. 64 an. 1854*

*Margaret Ellis ob. Sep. 1 aet. 70 an. 1861*

Margaret's father Christopher died two months before her baptism. The Latin inscription indicates this is a Catholic family. The gravestone is one of the largest and best preserved in Giggleswick graveyard – it must have cost a fortune.

Margaret's brother, **John Steele**, died after an unfortunate



accident with his horse and fly in which his thigh bone was broken. John was on his way to the Roman Catholic Chapel at Lawkland, this being before the new chapel on Albert Hill was built. He never recovered despite the efforts of surgeon *William Thomas Holme Burrow*.

As was the custom, Francis' will [ph2], written in 1838, left his estate to eldest son John Ellis, making provision for his beloved wife Margaret. It was witnessed by *John Saul Howson*, son of Giggleswick schoolmaster *Rev John Howson* who soon left the area to work in Liverpool. The other witness was solicitor *Christopher Edmundson* who died a year later. Mysteriously, in 1853, a retired bankers clerk called *George Fletcher*, aged 81, made an oath that he was present at the time of the signing of the will and witnessed numerous crossings out which effectively cut out son John as the main benefactor. Instead the estate was to be split between all three sons and their heirs. It is extremely unlikely that George Fletcher would have been at the original signing of the will as he was living in his home time of Grassington until the 1840s. Margaret was awarded the estate in February 1854. However, two months later John Saul Howson, upon a return visit to Settle, summoned George Fletcher who then retracted his oath, adding the words 'not so' throughout. What a mess. When Margaret died in 1861 she left her estate to John, probably feeling guilty!

So why was son eldest John cut out of the will? John Ellis, born in 1817, also worked as a clerk at the bank in Settle, taking over from his father when he died. John and first wife *Phoebe Abbotson* lived in Well House, opposite the old vicarage in Giggleswick. Phoebe died, aged 30, after the birth of a daughter *Mary*. In 1851 widow John married *Elizabeth Ann Gibson*, also Catholic, from Kendal, who had three more daughters. John died in 1867, aged 50 and widow Elizabeth Ann outlived him by some 40 years, retiring to Turin, Italy. It obviously suited her – she was 92 when she died. John and Phoebe's daughter *Mary* married a wealthy farmer *Francis Charles Ellison* from Westmorland. John and Elizabeth Ann's daughter *Agnes Mary Dora Genevieve Ellis* married *George Reynolds Scott Burrows*, a general in the Indian army. Daughter *Margaret Mary* became a nun.

Francis died just a few years after John's second marriage. Perhaps the changing of the will had something to do with Elizabeth Ann Gibson, John's second wife? Despite living in Well House, Giggleswick throughout his life, John was buried in the Catholic graveyard in Skipton with his second wife. The inscription begins, *Pray for the Soul, John Ellis of Well House, Giggleswick*.

Meanwhile Francis and Margaret's second son *Christopher Gregory Ellis* worked as a painter, plumber and glazier in Birkenhead and had three children with his wife *Alice Bolton*. Unfortunately, his business was taken into administration when he was just 24. Christopher died aged just 31.

*Francis Ellis (Jnr)*, born in 1823, also began employment at the Craven Bank. While brother John was working at the branch in Settle, Francis had a post in Keighley. Whilst there, Francis met and, in 1846, married *Annie Robinson*. Annie's father *Thomas Robinson* ran a woollen mill

**Inquest.**—On Friday the 21st inst., an inquest was held at the Joiner's Arms, Settle, by Thos. Brown, Esq., coroner, on the body of John Steel, aged 64 years, and formerly a schoolmaster. Last Sunday week, the deceased, whilst being conveyed from Settle to the Roman Catholic Chapel at Lawkland, was riding with the driver on a fly drawn by one horse, when the horse suddenly commenced kicking, ran the vehicle against a wall, and overturning it, threw deceased on the road. Medical assistance was procured in a short time, when it was found that the neck of the left thigh bone was broken, and from the injuries received the deceased died on the 20th inst. He was a Roman Catholic, and, we are told had been fasting for some time. Verdict, "Accidentally killed."

The Will  
— of —  
Mr Francis Ellis.

*my said dear wife and son John*



in Keighley employing some 36 workers. Interestingly he was an active Wesleyan Methodist, having heard John Wesley preach and had several roles at the Chapel including the orchestra. He was an *'ardent debater in defending and maintaining the Wesleyan tenets and doctrines'* [3]. Francis and Annie were married in the centre of York, in the Parish church of Holy Trinity Kings Court [ph1], so Francis must have given up the Catholic faith, perhaps after a few debates with Thomas? When brother John died, Francis took over at the bank in Settle [WSA] while Annie gave birth to four sons and three daughters. In 1869 Francis became the auditor in the unsuccessful Settle Mining Company.

Annie died in 1892, aged 68 and Francis died in 1903, aged 80, of 'senile decay'. His obituaries explain that he entered the service of the bank when he was 14 and remained there for over 56 years until he retired, aged 70. The papers also calculated that Francis and his father's joint service to the bank almost totalled 100 years [4]. Quite an achievement. The article didn't mention John! Francis and Annie are buried with their daughter Jessie in the grave Old B62

*Sacred to the memory of: Ann wife of Francis Ellis who died March 12th 1892 Aged 68 years. Also Jessie Slinger their daughter died February 26th 1936 aged 75 years. Sacred to the Memory of Francis Ellis who died May 2nd 1903 aged 80 years, Old B62*

In 1895, daughter Jessie married mechanic **William Slinger**, the son of farmer **Robert Slinger** and his wife **Isabella Harger**. Isabella was one of the seven daughters of farmer **William Harger**. William and Jessie lived at Goldielands. The Ellis family had obviously established themselves in the established church – both Jessie and William were teachers at the church Sunday School. The Vestry records made a note of their wedding, *'Sunday School will be reopened Sunday 8th December after being closed for many weeks. The marriage of two of our teachers, Mr W Slinger and Miss Jessie Ellis, was an event of great interest to the other teachers, who all joined together to make a little wedding present on the occasion. We are requested on behalf of Mr and Mrs Slinger, to say that they return their most sincere thanks for the kind and generous present and good wishes.'*

William was a director of the Settle Market Buildings Company that had built the second storey of the Shambles in 1887/8 and then managed the whole

**KEIGHLEY.**  
**DEATH OF MR. T. ROBINSON.**—Died, on Tuesday last, aged 73, Mr. Thomas Robinson, of Keighley, worsted spinner. The deceased was perhaps the last of those in this neighbourhood who had been privileged to hear the Rev. John Wesley, (the founder of Methodism,) preach in Haworth church. For nearly 50 years Mr Robinson was seldom absent from his place at the proper time in the orchestra of the Wesleyan chapel, where he rendered useful and efficient service. He also fulfilled various offices in the Wesleyan body during that long period. He was exceedingly susceptible, tender, and kind-hearted, and although an ardent debater in defending and maintaining the Wesleyan tenets and doctrines, yet, he was ever mindful not to wound, but respect the feelings of others. He was well known and highly respected, and by his death his rather numerous family are bereaved of the counsels of an affectionate father.—*A Correspondent.*



**MR. FRANCIS ELLIS, SETTLE.**  
 Mr. Francis Ellis, of High Halsteads, Settle, died at his residence on Saturday morning, at the advanced age of 80 years. For upwards of 56 years he was in the service of the Craven Banking Company, which he entered at the early age of fourteen years. He was manager of the Settle branch of the bank from 1850 to 1892, when he retired at the age of 70. The father of Mr. Ellis was also engaged for a long period at the Craven Bank, the joint term of service of father and son amounting to almost one hundred years. In politics Mr. Ellis was a Liberal.



**Settle Market Buildings Company**  
 LIMITED.  
 THE 27th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, DEC. 21st, 1914.  
 DIRECTORS:  
 DIRECTOR CHRISTIE, GEORGE CLARK, WILLIAM SLINGER.  
 REPORT of the DIRECTORS to be submitted to the MEETING of the SHAREHOLDERS to be held at the Secretary's Office, Station Road, Settle, on Monday, December 21st, 1914, at 7-30 p.m.

building [ph4]. In 1887 William earned a nickname 'Electric Billy' after the lighting display he put up in Settle to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. He had a shop in the Green and then off the Market Place specialising in electrical repairs and later steam car maintenance [LSA]. He became the agent for the Beeston Humber Tricycle which cost £36 with extra for tyres. He serviced traction engines for travelling show people and was also the millwright at Kings Mill. A busy man.



William turned his attention to improving motor cars and cycles and took six years to build 'the Slinger Motorcycle', patenting it in October 1901 [ph2,3]. Its registration plate was C46. It was very unusual looking with three wheels in line. The rear of the machine appeared as a conventional bicycle, whereas the front wheel and forks were replaced by a small motorcycle with two small wheels and an engine between them. The engine was water-cooled with the radiator surrounding the cylinder. Moving forward was relatively easy but moving in reverse was similar to backing a car with a trailer attached. He 'tired' of it by 1910, leaving it in a shed with a broken frame while he started to tinker with four wheeled vehicles. However, Settle's Tot Lord rescued the Slinger Motorcycle and sold it to Mr James P Smith of Keighley in 1950. He restored it and took part in a number of rallies in 1953 and 1954, including the London to Brighton Rally. He also drove it back on a sentimental expedition to its birthplace of Settle. They don't build them like that any more!



William didn't build copies of his bike to make money, lucrative as this could have been. William was more of a tinkerer and inventor. 'Electric Billy' was the first man in the district to cut grass by motor-powered mower. William and Jessie didn't have children. Jessie died, aged 75 and is buried with her parents. William was buried with his parents in Old E64 when he died in 1926, aged 63. We'll find out more about this incredible man in the account of the *Slinger family*.

Eldest daughter **Margaret Ann Ellis** stayed with her parents in Settle and looked after widowed father Francis until he died. Margaret Ann was well known for her melodious voice [CH,2]. In 1874, **Mrs Atherton**, daughter of **Henry Robinson** returned to Settle from London for the 'Cricket Club annual entertainment' to perform with her

It has been said, with some degree of truth that where there are mountains there will be music, and Settle has been no exception to that rule. The old Choral Society gave many excellent concerts and, as I write, I can see in my mind's eye the band, chorus and principals ranged beneath the organ in the Music Hall. The "Hallelujah Chorus" is in full swing; that sweetest of singers, Miss Ellis, who for so many years charmed us with her melodious voice, takes the lead; by her side are two other

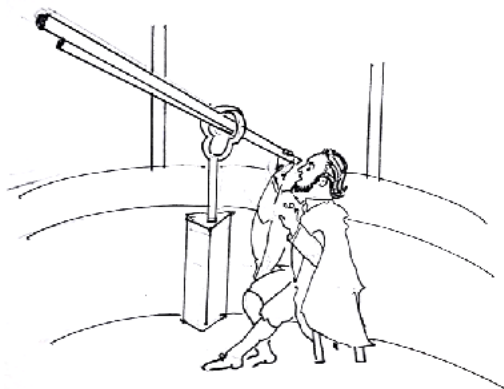
Mrs. Atherton's reappearance after so long an absence was looked forward to with anticipations of no ordinary pleasure, and her fine pure voice and highly cultivated style stirred the audience to unusually energetic expressions of delight. Miss Ellis's talents are so well known that we need only say that she was in excellent voice and was warmly recalled after each song. Mr. E. G. Robinson took all by surprise by the clever way in which he sustained his part in the Duett "Very Suspicious" and he was equally successful in the encore duett, "Love and Pride." Both he and his sister Miss Atherton proved themselves adepts in the art of "suing the action to the word." Mr. H. Robinson's fine baritone voice was heard to great advantage in the part songs, and he gained a warm encore by his tasteful rendering of a beautiful moorish serenade. Mr. E. Handby gave a very meritorious performance of Adam's somewhat difficult song, "True to the last." He entered into the spirit of it, with the instinct of a true artist, and was deservedly encored. Mr. Phillips' readings

## Settle Graveyard Project

brother, *Edward Gardner Robinson*, Miss Ellis and *Edmund Handby*. In 1873 Miss Ellis was known to have sung for the navvies at Ribblehead with *Mr Wilman* as part of a range of measures 'to distract the navvies and their families from activities of a more corrupting nature'.

**SETTLE CHORAL SOCIETY.**  
President—Lieut.-Col. Stansfeld.  
Vice-Presidents—C. H. Charlesworth, Esq., T. Brayshaw, Esq.  
Secretary—Rev. C. Routh. Treasurer—Mr. T. Dixon.  
Librarian—Mr. George Hartley. Leader—Mr. Booth.  
Committee—Dr. Buck, Rev. A. W. M. Close, Miss Ellis, Messrs. E. Handby, H. Lord, and Robert Wilson.

Margaret Ann was the only woman on the committee of the choral society in the company of *Lieut-Col Stansfeld*, *Charles Henry Charlesworth*, *Thomas Brayshaw*, *Dr Charles William Buck*, *Edmund Handby* and others [LSA].



After her father died, aged 61, Margaret Ann became the second wife of her second cousin once removed, **William Ellis**, who was born and worked in Greenwich. William's father **Thomas Ellis** was an assistant to John Pond, the Astronomer Royal, at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. Thomas had begun working at the Observatory in 1824. During his 27 years of service he would have witnessed the 1832 transit of Mercury and the first public time signal in the country, broadcast from the roof of in 1833, by dropping a ball at a predetermined time. The Observatory played a major role in the history of astronomy, mapping and navigation. Because the prime meridian passes through it, it gave its name to Greenwich Mean Time.

**DEATH OF MR. THOMAS ELLIS, OF THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.**—We are sorry to announce the death of this gentleman, which took place on Saturday last, after a long and painful illness. Although Mr. Ellis's habits were too retiring to enjoy a large circle of acquaintances, still he was accustomed to claim as his friends many of the oldest inhabitants of this town, by whom he is deeply regretted, now that he has passed away from us. Mr. Ellis came originally from Yorkshire, and has been attached to the Royal Observatory since the year 1825, having at his decease nearly completed 27 years of active service in that establishment. In his official duties he has always been considered most faithful and industrious, and he is regretted by none more than by his late colleagues. He was 53 years of age, and has left a widow, one son, and two daughters, to lament his death. His son, Mr. William Ellis, has lately been appointed, on the recommendation of the Astronomer Royal, to the situation of Observer at the University of Durham.

Thomas' obituary of 1859 [5] tells us that son William had 'lately been appointed, on the recommendation of the Astronomer Royal, to the situation of Observer at the University of Durham'. In fact, he wasn't there long. Due to the deaths of Thomas and a fellow astronomer William Rogerson, William Ellis returned to Greenwich in 1853 to work

as an assistant to the Astronomer Royal, earning £150. Later he became the superintendent of the magnetic department. William dedicated much of his life researching the correlation between sun spots and magnetism.

There are numerous reports of William's journal entries, books and lectures on topics such as 'Longitude' and 'On the difference produced in the Mean Temperature derived from daily Maximum and Minimum readings, as depending on the time at which Thermometers are read' [7,8].

*The Horological Journal* for July contains an important lecture on "Longitude," delivered before the British Horological Institute by William Ellis, Esq., F.R.A.S., of the Royal Observatory.

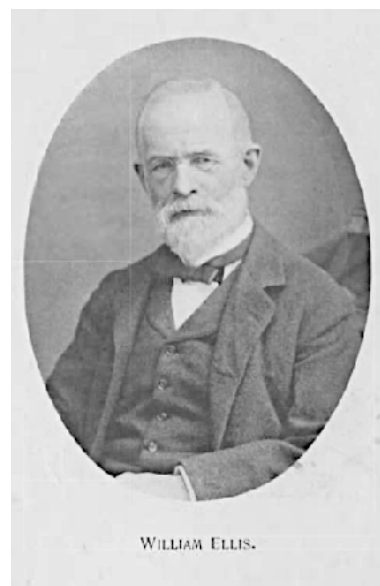
Royal Meteorological Society. Ordinary meeting at the Institution of Civil Engineers, 25 Great George Street, Westminster. Papers:—"On the difference produced in the Mean Temperature derived from daily Maximum and Minimum readings, as depending on the time at which the Thermometers are read," by William Ellis, F.R.A.S. "On the

William's first wife, Sarah Elizabeth Campion, died in 1906 and he was 80 when he married cousin Margaret Ann Ellis in 1908. William was 88 when he died 'purely of the weakness of old age in 1916, being conscious and active in mind almost to the last'. His obituary explains he had

charge of the clock and time signal department and became Superintendent of the Meteorological and Magnetic department. He retired in 1893, aged 70 and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Observatory.

William's mother Ann Jefferson lived with him and his wife Sarah until she died in 1884 aged 86. William's only brother, **John Jefferson Ellis** was drowned in Waterford Harbour in Ireland, in 1849, aged just 18 [12].

ELLIS.—Dec. 7, in his 19th year, Mr. John Jefferson Ellis, youngest son of Mr. T. Ellis, many years an assistant at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. He was unfortunately drowned in the bark *Ann Gales*, which was totally lost at the entrance of Waterford harbour, Ireland.



Between them, William Ellis [ph2] and his father served at the Observatory for a period of nearly 70 years. On William's 85th birthday, a group photograph was taken outside the old Magnetic Pavillion where the Peter Harrison Planetarium now stands. A copy is held by the National Maritime Museum. His work is well documented on the internet. Margaret Ann died, in 1929, aged 82, in Greenwich.



Francis and Annie's daughter **Mary Ellis** became the second wife of **John William Shepherd**, the successful Settle chemist who was also a distant cousin. Mary died in Somerset, aged 76, but was brought back to Settle for burial with John William and first wife in *Old C76*.

*Eliza Shepherd born March 2nd 1864 died April 21st 1891 Mary Shepherd born June 13th 1858 died Dec 24th 1933 John William Shepherd born Sep 2nd 1855 died April 16th 1945, Old C76*

So the three Miss Ellises had incredibly interesting husbands and their sons did well too. Francis and Annie's son **Christopher Ellis** began his career in the woollen mills in Bradford but then diversified as a costume maker. He boarded with siblings from the White family for many years. Their neighbours were journalists, photographers and other costume makers. Eventually, aged 60, Christopher married **Clara White**. Son **Edwin Ellis** ran a woollen mill in Bradford. During the 1870s he emigrated to Canada and changed his surname named to **Richmond**. Well that's suspicious! There were newspaper reports of an Edwin Ellis declared bankrupt in Bradford in 1870 — perhaps this may explain it? In Canada he had three sons with wife **Florence Bradford**. Francis and Annie's son **Thomas Francis Ellis** joined the army and also found his way to Montreal in Canada, working as a painter.

Francis and Annie's son **John Ellis** was a solicitor. He married **Sarah Ellen Rosa Harger** who was the daughter of Robert Harger. Her grandfather was **Joseph Harger** who ran the Royal Oak Inn in Settle. John and Sarah Ellen Rosa were technically first cousins once removed, although the family history is complex — see *Hargers*. They lived in Keighley and had two daughters. John held many positions in musical, chess and abstinence movements. He was a pioneer of the use Esperanto

Mr John Ellis, solicitor, Keighley, showed the advantages of Esperanto from an educational point of view, and pointed out that by its regular construction and logicalness it formed the best introduction for children to the study of languages.

**LIN VO INTERNACIA.**  
(BY A ST ANDREWS ESPERANTIST.)

Two great Esperanto meetings were held in Edinburgh last week-end, the occasion being the annual meeting of the British Esperanto Association. Hundreds of Esperantists assembled from all parts to the meetings held in the Exhibition, to which Esperantists were admitted at half price, and into the concert hall free.

### *Settle Graveyard Project*

language in Britain and was the first secretary of Keighley's pioneering Esperanto English group in 1902, in collaboration with a Keighley journalist Joseph Rhodes. In 1908 he attended two Esperanto conferences [11].

John and Sarah Ellen Rosa's daughter **Dorothy Ellis** married **Frederick William Delves**, a textiles manager, in 1932 in Keighley after meeting on a golf course. The wedding provided great photos of that era [ph2]. Dorothy was accompanied by Fred's cousin **Jim Armistead** who gave her away as her father, John, had died by then. Don't they look happy?! There were only five heirs between all seven of the children Francis and Annie.



*This account has been compiled as part of the Settle Graveyard Project which has recorded gravestone inscriptions, updated church records and researched the lives of those buried. Life stories can be found on [dalescommunityarchives.org.uk](http://dalescommunityarchives.org.uk), 'settle graveyard project'. The 'Old Settle' family tree on [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk) includes the families buried in the graveyard. The project is ongoing and welcomes queries and information on [settleresearch@gmail.com](mailto:settleresearch@gmail.com). Latest news and events are on the Facebook page 'Settle Graveyard Project'.*

*Many thanks to Nick Delves, a descendant, and Allan Gould a relation for their help with the compilation of this account. Illustrations kindly provided by Teresa Gordon*

*The life stories of people with italicised names have been researched as part of the graveyard project.*

*Newspaper cuttings with the kind permission of the British Newspaper Archives: 1 – Westmorland Gazette, 2 – Lancaster Gazette, 3 – Leeds Intelligencer, 4 – Leeds Mercury, 5 – Kentish Mercury, 6 – The Scotsman, 7 – Colonies and India, 8 – Islington Gazette, 9 – Morecambe Guardian, 10 – Lancashire Evening Post, 11 – St Andrews Citizen, 12 – Kentish Gazette*

*CH – with the kind permission of the Craven Herald and Pioneer*

*WSA – Wildman's Settle Almanac, LSA – Lambert's Settle Almanac with the kind permission of the North Craven Buildings Preservation Trust*

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