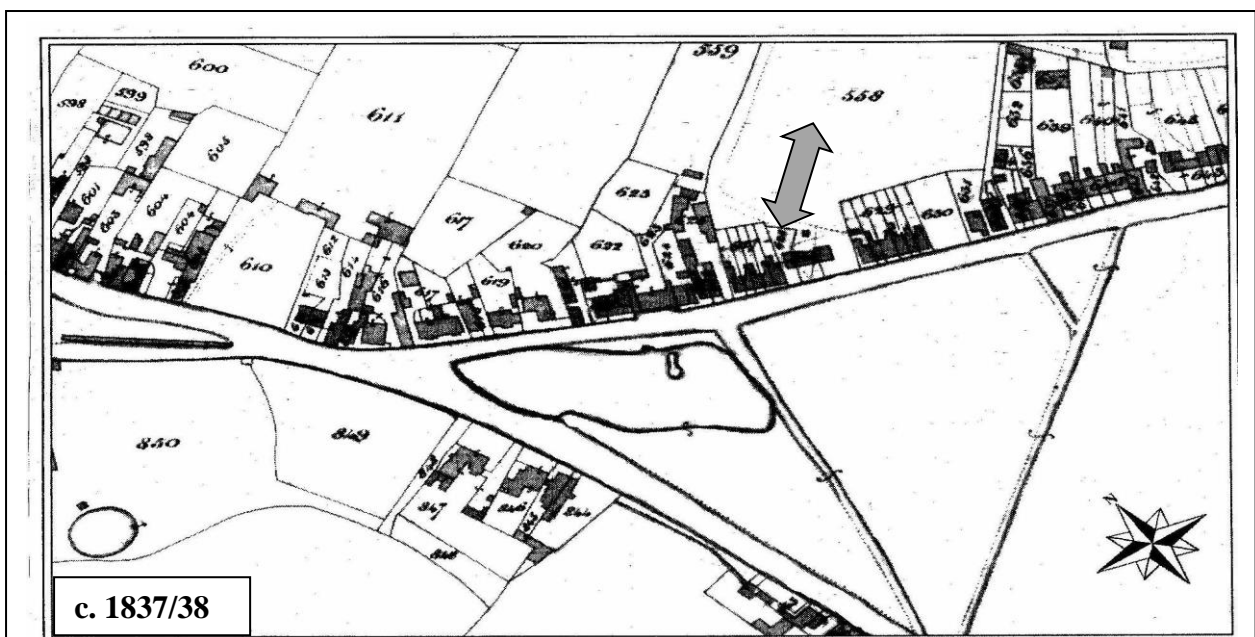


# DANIEL SLATER

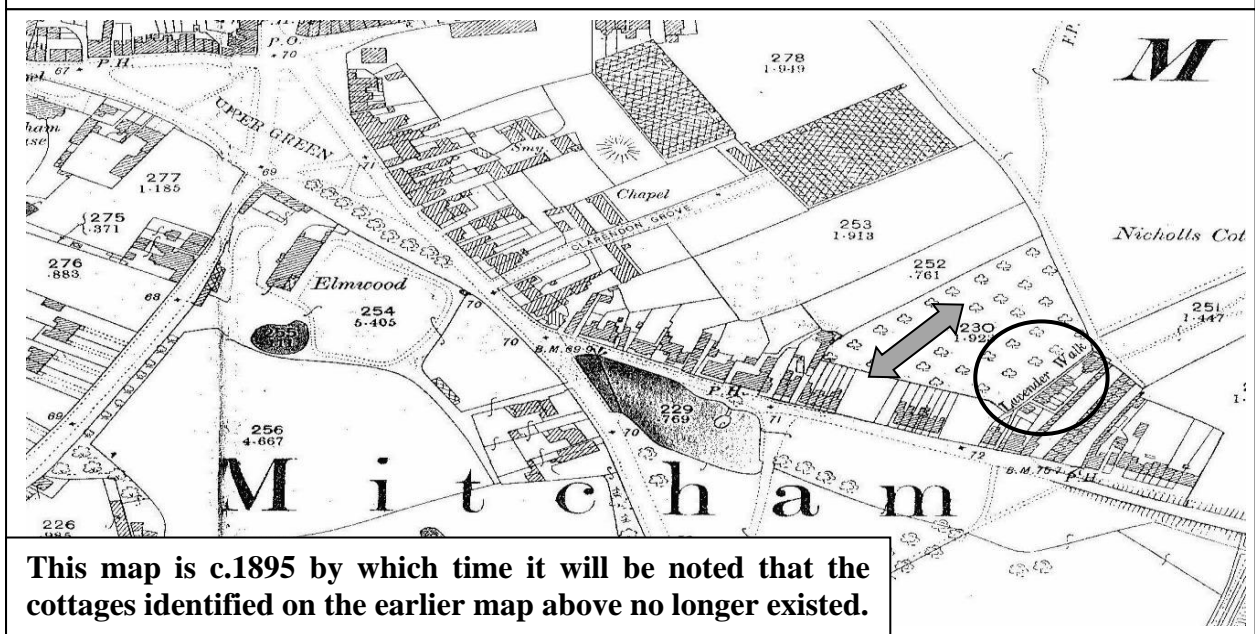
b. 1806 – d. 1873

## Where Daniel lived *continued*:

Referring back to Daniel's Biography ..... The Sutton Local Studies Centre advises that there is a map and a list of the Parishioners of Mitcham 1837/38 by the Reverend Herbert Randolph. The Reverend Herbert Randolph divided his list of parishioners into five districts and allocated each one to notable ladies of the parish. Miss Goad whose name appears on this map was presumably related to William Thomas Goad of Tamworth Lodge, Commonside or to his neighbour George. On the right hand side of the list which is included in the 'biography' there is the number 628 where it is assumed that Daniel and his family were living, as this corresponds with a block of dwellings in front of the field numbered 558 below.



Miss Goad's District included shops and houses from Upper Green to Three Kings Pond.  
Copyright of Surrey History Service. Reproduced by permission.



# DANIEL SLATER

b. 1806 – d. 1873

## Where Daniel lived *continued*:

The reader may like to draw comparisons with the maps opposite, with a recent aerial view and photograph. The aerial view below is very interesting as the shape of the previous lavender field can more or less be identified. The large building on the plot is now a school. On the c.1895 map on the opposite page (circled) there will be seen 'Lavender Walk' which still exists today and also circled below. The arrow on the left identifies where Daniel lived.



It would appear that the five cottages on the left above are the same cottages shown on the very early maps (a row of five). To the right of these there is an entrance which now leads to a school and where back in 1837/38 Daniel Slater lived and worked in the lavender fields.

# DANIEL SLATER

## b. 1806 – d. 1873

### Daniel & Elizabeth – Death and Will:

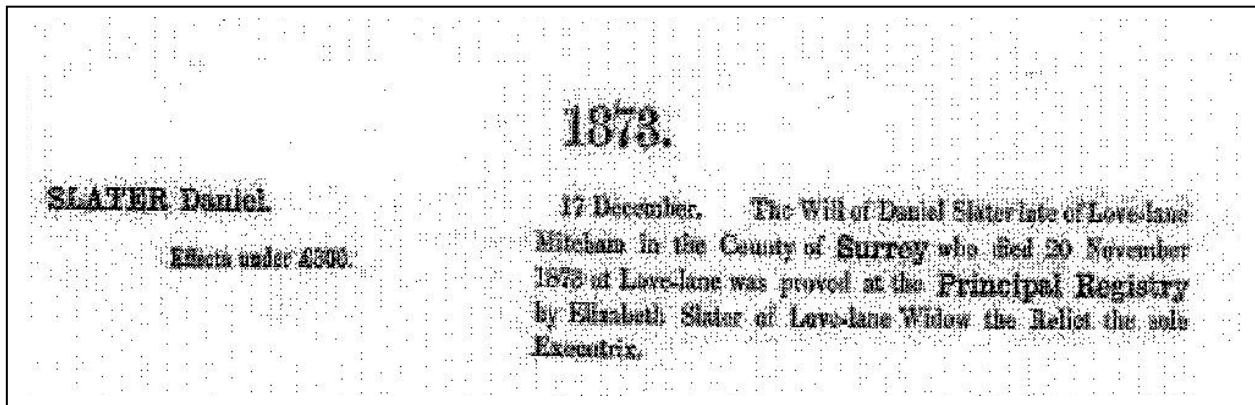
England & Wales, BMD Death Index: 1837-1915 Daniel Slater	
Name:	<b>Daniel Slater</b>
Estimated Birth Year:	about 1806
Date of Registration:	Oct-Nov-Dec 1873
Age at Death:	67
Registration district:	Croydon
Inferred County:	Surrey

England & Wales, BMD Death Index: 1837-1915 Elizabeth Slater	
Name:	<b>Elizabeth Slater</b>
Estimated Birth Year:	about 1810
Date of Registration:	Apr-May-Jun 1897
Age at Death:	87
Registration district:	Croydon
Inferred County:	Surrey

### Mitcham Parish Church - inscription on headstone:

In affectionate remembrance of **Mr Daniel Slater** of this parish who departed this life November 20<sup>th</sup> 1873 aged 67 years also of **Mrs Elizabeth Slater** who departed this life April 4<sup>th</sup> 1897 aged 87 years, also Rosetta Davidson daughter of the above died September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1928 aged 70 years.

*“Simply trusting every day, trusting through a stormy way, even when my faith is small trusting Jesus that is all”.*



The above record of Daniel Slater's Will reads:

17 December 1873 - SLATER Daniel - Effects under £300

The will of Daniel Slater late of Love Lane Mitcham in the County of Surrey who died 20 November 1873 at Love Lane was proved at the Principal Registry by Elizabeth Slater of Love Lane Widow the Relict (?) the sole Executrix.

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

## The Mitcham News & Mercury c.1952

The growing and distilling of lavender (*Lavandula vera*) was an important industry for many years. The area around Mitcham was well known for lavender from the 1500s. In its heyday during the 19th century the area around Mitcham, Wallington, Carshalton and Sutton must have been a sea of blue in the summer. This idyllic image was not reflected in the working conditions of the harvesters, many of whom were paid very little to work 14 hours a day; ten to fifteen shillings (50p to 75p) a week near London, and as little as 8s (40p) further south. Many only survived because of the charity of some of the wealthier landowners.

The name that comes to mind in association with Mitcham Lavender is Potter & Moore. The company was founded in 1749 by Ephraim Potter and William Moore. They set up a distillery to extract lavender oil in Eveline Road overlooking the green now called Figges Marsh. The business grew and flourished especially under James Moore, grandson of William. James was a shrewd businessman and an expert nurseryman. He bought up surrounding land and by the end of the 19th century he had more than 500 acres of land growing lavender and peppermint, which at that time was the larger crop, and other herbs such as chamomile, and spearmint.

The lavender was harvested in August when the oil was at its best. The women would cut the lavender and bundle it loosely in 'mats' which were carried to the still-room. Where the lavender was distilled, the resulting oil was used as the basis for the lavender perfume. Moore paid one guinea (£1.10) an acre for cutting and sold the oil at forty shillings (£2.00) a pound.



OLD SURREY - PICKING MITCHAM LAVENDER  
c1908

COLLECTORCARD  C1390  
Croydon CR0 1HW

**Note:** To the interested reader more information can be obtained from the following web sites:

<http://www.carshaltonlavender.org/>

Who still have an annual community lavender harvest. The date each year is posted on their web site. And: <http://www.mayfieldlavender.com/>

# THE HISTORY OF LAVENDER

## From the Egyptians - to the present day

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- Lavenders use dates back to the Egyptians. They used the plant for cosmetics and embalming.
  - The Romans also used lavender for pomades and ointments and within public baths.
  - The name Lavender may have come from: lavare – latin verb – to wash & livendulo – meaning livid or blueish
  - Egyptians were the first to experiment with distillation but it was the Medieval Persians who perfected the process.
- Romans introduced lavender to the UK, and it began to be grown quite commonly by the 15th Century.
  - In the 18th Century Pembrokeshire, Hitchen, Kent, and Mitcham became known for lavender growing.
  - Mitcham was viewed as ‘Bumpkin’ land and was used by physic gardeners who grew many plants for oils such as lavender, peppermint, cloves, lemon, rosemary, bergamot, roses and chamomile.
  - The area was noted for good air and good company. Mitcham’s rich black loam soil denoted quality.
  - Mitcham’s arms incorporated lavender sprigs and the boroughs colours were green and mauve.
  - In 1749 Potter and Moore were established in Mitcham and became famous distillers of lavender water. Their product was endorsed by stars such as Gracie Fields.
  - Around 1850 there were 500 acres of physic gardens in the area. Carts and wagons would travel to London markets every day.
  - By the 19th to early 20th century Mitcham, Carshalton and Wallington were the world’s leading suppliers. Thousands of acres could be found in Carshalton, Cheam, Sutton Common, Beddington, Hackbridge.
  - In 1910 Yardley established a shop in New Bond Street, using lavender bought from Mitcham
  - The harvests took place in August – when flowers produce the most oil.
  - Women, men and children would work 14 hour days, using small steel sickles. Whole families from Ireland would travel to the area and then move on to hop picking in Kent. Lavender harvesting was a major source of employment in the South London area.
  - Around 1910 the industry began to decline as cheap French lavender started to appear on the market.
  - Suburban development also affected the area as the daily Mitcham to London stage coach service attracted bankers.
  - During the First World War fields were taken over for food production.
  - Last distilling in Mitcham was in 1933.
  - Mitcham lavender still lives on – Heacham, Norfolk homes a 90 acre farm. Lavender is also still grown in Australia, New Zealand, Eastern Europe and Canada.

**NEWSPAPER ARTICLE**  
**Merton Messenger - December 1994**  
**A MITCHAM LIFE**  
*(original article on the opposite page)*

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Early on Christmas morning, Mrs Steward Slater, the last of the growers of Lavender in Mitcham for commercial purposes, died in Wandle Road at the age of 91. So reads the Mitcham and Tooting Advertiser of 30 December 1943, price two pence. The newspaper is in a fragile state, pages yellowy brown showing the passage of the years. It has been gently yet well thumbed by Steward's grandson, Ben Slater, the last in a long line of Mitcham Slaters.

**Oldest Family:** The Slater's are believed to be one of the oldest families in Mitcham. Steward Slater, his brothers, and their father's father before them were growing quality lavender in the area for at least 250 years. Ben was born in 1924 in the old Mitcham Town Hall now known, of course as Vestry Hall. His father Benjamin Slater, Steward's son, was caretaker at the Parish Council building for 35 years.

**India:** The family lived on the premises but life could have been dramatically different for young Ben. His mother Florence was in service with Sir Cato and Lady Worsfold at their grand Mitcham residence Hall Place. Despite their desire to adopt Ben, Lady Worsfold and her husband were turned down by Florence. "They later spent much of their life in India," he remembers.

Ben had already been married six months when his grandfather Steward died. "He was a marvellous character – never had a day in bed through illness," said Ben. Then on Christmas Eve 1943 he tripped on the stairs. The next morning we was found dead in his bed from pneumonia." "He was very short, just 5ft 4ins, but he was one of the strongest men I ever met – his little finger was bigger than my hand." Ben still knows the exact location of the graves of Steward and his brother Benjamin at Mitcham Parish Church, even though it has been years since he has visited.

**Australia:** Another place Ben has yet to visit is Australia. To be specific, Mitcham Australia, for the fact is that Ben has more relatives down under than he has in the UK. His great uncle William, brother of Steward Slater, went to Australia in the 1850's and started growing lavender, His arrival led to new Mitcham's springing up – one near Adelaide and the second near Melbourne. Ben has travelled widely thanks to his wartime service in the RAF voluntary reserve but Australia still eludes him.

**War Service:** He joined the forces in 1941, two years after he left Wimbledon College at 15. He studied at Wimbledon after winning a scholarship from SS Peter and Paul school on Mitcham Cricket Green. "I can still remember all the names of the teachers and the headmaster. It was a very good school and it helped me a lot," says Ben.

Ben married hairdresser Margaret, now 72, and moved to Addiscombe vowing never to live in Mitcham again, But after the war he found himself buying a plot of land in Oxford Close and building his own home. Put off by the costs of builders, he visited the Ideal Home Exhibition and bought himself a book on house planning.

**Plans:** "Then, one Saturday morning I drew up the plans - it took four and half hours," said Ben. "Of course coming from the town hall I knew all the architects and got them to check it. They said was all OK!" The result is still standing today and is the home where Ben and Margaret raised their daughters Alison and Marion, both professional dancers. They also have four grandchildren aged between three and 20. Ben's home is close to the large plots of Eastfields and Mitcham where his family made their name. Ben, 71 next month spent 30 years with Universal Tools rising to MD for 14 years.

These days the lavender comes from Mitcham, Australia. But a family like the Slater's have long memories and will always remember the proud family boast: ***There's no lavender like Mitcham lavender. It yields more and better oil and consequently demands a better price at the best markets.*** Maybe that's why you can still see a little bit of lavender growing in a front garden in Oxford Close.

**MAGAZINE ARTICLE**  
**The New Scientist - 1 December 2001**  
**by Fred Pearce**

**OPINION HISTORIES**



Today it is Afghanistan. A couple of decades ago it was the “golden triangle” in South-East Asia. Before that it was India and Mexico, China and Turkey. Opium and the people who grow it were always the outsiders, the infidels, the Oriental fiends. Even as harassed Victorian mothers lulled their children to sleep with laudanum-laced patent medicines, they shuddered at tales in the popular press of East End opium dens run by Chinamen just off the junk from Shanghai.

So it comes as a shock to discover that Mitcham—a dormitory suburb of south London just off the end of the Underground map—was once the drugs capital of Britain. For through much of the 19th century, the water meadows of Mitcham were alive with white opium poppies. This little corner of Surrey was the largest centre of cultivation of the dreaded plant in Britain. It was the golden triangle of the home counties.

**A very English habit:**

The village of Mitcham, in the sleepy headwaters of the River Wandle, was for some 150 years the medicinal plants capital of England. As Surrey squire Sir T Cato Worsfold recalled at the turn of the last century: “almost everything in the vegetable kingdom that had a healing virtue in the medical world was produced in the village”. And that included much that was narcotic, as well as much that was fragrant and soothing.

Back then people didn’t distinguish between bad and good drugs the way they do today. Opium had been a staple of life in Britain since at least the Middle Ages. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was embraced by Thomas Sydenham, often regarded as Britain’s first modern doctor, though more as a sedative than a mind-altering agent. Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at least half the national intake was consumed in the marsh fens of Cambridge and Lincoln, where it eased the malarial fevers still rife there.

But demand soared throughout the country for much of the rest of the century, as it became an ingredient of hundreds of patent medicines, often in the form laudanum – a mixture of opium and alcohol. It stopped the runs, cured gout, soothed toothaches and dulled menstruation pains.

Queen Victoria used it. As the records of the local pharmacy in her Scottish Highlands fastness at Balmoral attest. By one estimate, a sixth of all the children in the country were regularly sent to sleep with Godfrey’s Cordial – a judicious mixture of opium, treacle, water and spices. In the 1870’s some 100 tonnes of opium was consumed in Britain annually. In its many forms, the aspirin of its day.

Despite this, Britons have persisted in seeing opium as an alien invader. But although it’s true that the opium poppy grows better in hotter climes, it has a long history in Britain. Archaeologists recently found opium poppy seeds in an underwater excavation of a Scottish settlement in Perthshire, some 2500 years old.

*Continued .....*

***Reprinted article from the New Scientist dated 1 December 2001 – continued:***

Maybe cultivation died out. But its revival was ensured by a campaign run in the 1790's by the Society of Arts in London to encourage the growing of pharmaceutical plants. The society offered cash prizes to successful opium growers. One winner was John Ball, who produced a bumper crop on his land at Williton on the Somerset Levels, selling the harvest to local apothecaries.

It would not have been long before this came to the attention of Mitcham's farmers. Around 1750, they built up a huge business supplying London and elsewhere with every kind of pharmaceutical plant and fragrant herb. Major James Moore of Figges Marsh was the big cultivator in the heyday of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with his neighbour James Arthur of Pound Farm. "Probably there is not in the whole kingdom a single parish on which the wholesale druggists and distillers of the metropolis draw more largely for their supplies", said local chronicler Edward Walford in 1884.

They set aside hundreds of acres around the village of Mitcham for what became known as the Mitcham Physic Garden, a cornucopia of the fragrant, the toxic, the hallucinogenic, the anaesthetic and, sometimes no doubt, the fraudulent. They set up stills and mills to process the products. Some famous names began here. The Yardley cosmetics company, for instance. Mitcham Mints became famous sweets. And Moore's family got together with their relatives the Potters, and began pushing lavender fragrances under the Potter & Moore brand.

But not all was fragrance. In among the fields of camomile and liquorice, peppermint and caraway, Major Moore was growing opium poppies and other subsequently banned narcotics such as wormwood. The poppies were harvest both for their opium – the dried juice extracted from the unripe seed capsules – and for morphine, one of opium's most powerful alkaloids. By the 1830's, local records show that Mitcham poppy heads were the major source of "English opium" for London druggists. Moore grew hemp too in the 1840's. It was a popular antidote to opium withdrawal symptoms, but was also used along with opium to treat for insanity. And he grew the hallucinogenic wormwood which was used in place of hops in local beer.



**Benjamin Slater** – described the extraordinary variety of pharmaceutical plants growing in the fields of Mitcham (the one in Surrey) in a memoir written in 1911. The poppies "grew 5 to 6 feet tall, with large heads as big as your fist, their stalks thick and strong", he wrote. He went on to describe how he had eaten a piece of wormwood in the fields and "shuddered from head to foot" at its bitterness. Saffron too was "a poison", he said along with the "pretty little green foliage" of the lavender cotton, and the "very deadly" monkshood. Benjamin was one of the family of 'Slaters' who mostly left for Australia, where they founded three towns called Mitcham, grew lavender and became the first to commercialise the eucalyptus tree.

Opium gradually fell out of favour at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, partly because of growing medical concern about its psychotropic and physical effects, and partly because of late Victorian panics about Chinamen and the like. With the introduction of the 1920 Dangerous Drugs Act, it finally became illegal in Britain to possess opium without a doctor's prescription. The drug went underground, re-emerging as heroin.

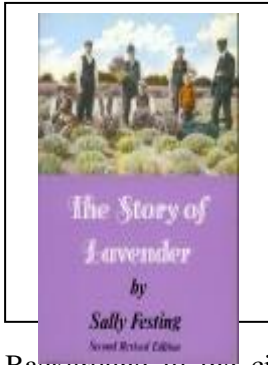
Soon history was being rewritten. The opium poppies were written out. The local council published a book "The Story of Lavender", but nothing on the Mitcham poppy. Nevertheless, if public morals had taken a different turn, perhaps Potter & Moore would have become famous in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for its "English opium" rather than for its lavender-scented toiletries.



# THE STORY OF LAVENDER

## By Sally Festing

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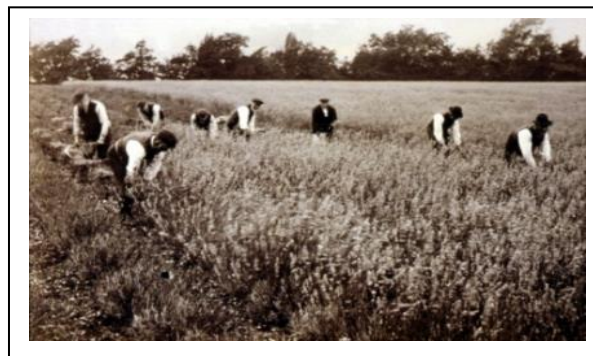
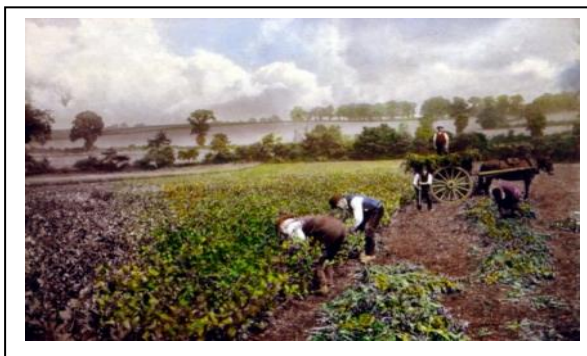
### BOOK REVIEW: by Tony Burfield

This is a unique and well-researched book 133-paged book tracing English lavender's history, cultivation and industry, and giving a very informative account of the lavender trade's rise and fall in the UK. The study contains so much original material which is a delight to read - detailed accounts of many of the original principle lavender growers and companies, set out in such a way as to include fascinating anecdotes and stories of many of the personalities involved.

Background to the circumstances in which lavender fields once stood - at Carshalton, Beddington, Mitcham, Wallington, Sutton, Hitchin etc. - are to be found, together with profiles of lavender distilling companies such as Potters & Moore. Sally Festing, a librarian, has been able to unearth so much about this part of our ethno-botanical heritage and agro-industrial culture.

The demise of the Mitcham lavender oil growers is described - seemingly they unwisely chose varieties which contained camphor, and this led to the exclusion of these particular oils from high class perfumery use. Subsequently, disease reduced the crop size and led to cheaper, but inferior, French lavender oils as is described in the book. On page 68 the Brighton-based pharmaceutical chemist and lavender grower J. Ch. Sayer, complained that as far as lavender oil was concerned, the public would buy anything cheap, irrespective of quality !

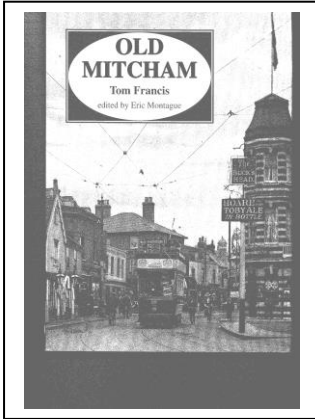
There is a wealth of excellent material including lavenders place in folk law, botany and early history. The text is profusely illustrated throughout with many plates and pictures. It is fascinating to look at the period shots of the men gathering the cut lavender in the fields dressed in their waistcoats and rolled up shirtsleeves, or to gaze at plates (page 60) where senior company partners (both smoking cigarettes) watch an employee pouring out the distilled lavender oil into pots. The next shot tracks the same partners to the laboratory, where one of the intrepid pair - still wearing a cap and still with a 'ciggie' between his lips, inspects the quality of the oil in a glass vessel ! Absolutely wonderful cameos of a former way of life!



# OLD MITCHAM

by Tom Francis  
edited by Eric Montague

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If the reader is not familiar with this book then it comes highly recommended and a 'must' for all those whose family came from Mitcham. Tom Francis died in 1953 at the age of eighty-one. He was described in his obituary by the local press as 'The Man who was Mitcham'. Known to generations of Mitcham people through his slide lectures on the history and characters of his native village.

Eric Montague, a recognised authority on the history of Mitcham, has carefully edited Tom Francis's notes and captions to provide an unparalleled glimpse of the people and life of the village. **Naturally 'Lavender' is mentioned and under the heading of Physic and Flower Gardens can also be found a reference to the 'Slater' family, and in particular the connection to Australia.**

**In his description of Mitcham in 1884, Edward Walford commented that .....**the soil of the parish is principally a rich black mould. And for upwards of a century a large proportion of the land hereabouts has been cultivated for the production of sweet herbs and medicinal plants. Poppies, mint, liquorice, aniseed and chamomile have long been extensively grown here. Mitcham, it may be stated, is remarkable for the extent to which roses and others flowers are cultivated, and in fact, the parish has long been celebrated for its 'flower farms'. In summertime the air is perfumed by whole fields of roses, lavender, and sweet and pleasant herbs; and probably there is not in all the kingdom a single parish on which the wholesale druggists and distillers of the metropolis draw more largely for their suppliers....the various herbs yielding but a small amount. When growers took their products to the distiller the receptacle for the oil was locked and the grower held the key. George Pitt at one time bought a derelict field of peppermint on which later built Cyprus Terrace; he put his building staff to clearing the weeds and harvested his peppermint, It was a big surprise to him when the resulting essential oil was handed to him in a glass phial of small size.

### **Quotes from the book:**

“Several herbal distilleries were opening in Mitcham and just over the border in Carshalton and Croydon, extracting the essences not only from lavender, but also from peppermint, roses and sometimes cedar. The essential oil was a valuable product. The situation was changing rapidly, however, and Mitcham's physic gardens were soon to become history, giving way to nurseries and market gardens”.

“Alfred Mizen, one of the three sons of the Edward Mizen who founded the market gardening firm of Mizen Brothers at Eastfields, Mitcham, was an old friend of Tom Francis. As its peak the firm had fields under cultivation off Western Road as well as towards Pollards Hill, and extensive greenhouses in the vicinity of Grove Road and Tamworth Lane. The firm opened up at Cobham and Leatherhead. Mitcham farm lands were disposed of for building and for sports grounds”.

“Besides the vegetables that the Mizens produced acres of flowers, roses, daffodils, narcissi, cloves, pinks, asters, cornflowers, sweet peas, chrysanthemum. Fields of these were a beautiful sight. As factories developed in the area and the air became heavily smoke laden quantities of gay coloured flowers and especially white flowers might be spoiled in a night if the wind blew in a certain direction. For this reason and others, horticulturalists sought farms further afield”.

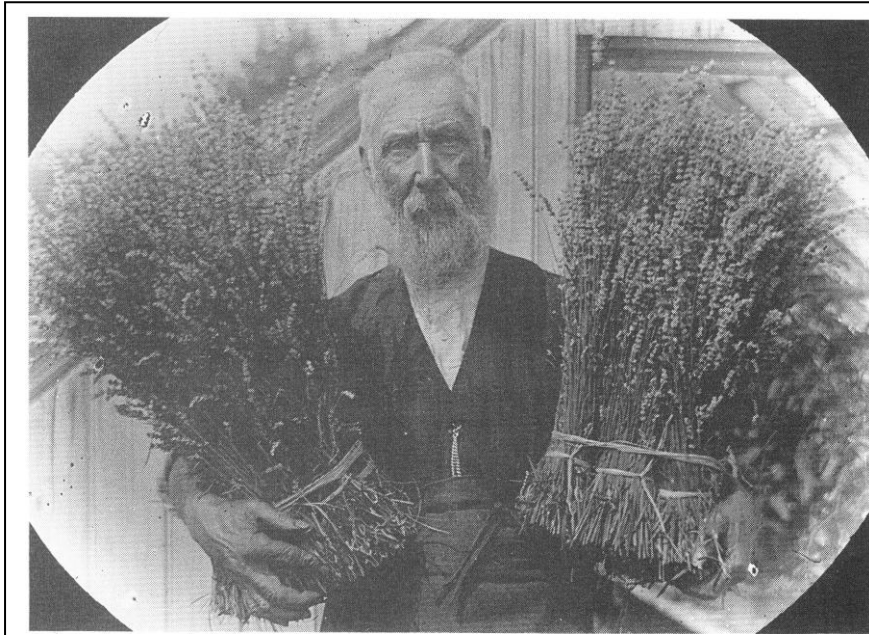
“Tom Francis recorded in his lecture notes that members of the **old Mitcham family of Slaters migrated to Australia, founded Mitcham, and grew lavender and were responsible for the commercialisation of Eucalyptus**, and for some years before his death he was in correspondence with the authorities at one of the three 'Mitchams' in Australia, 'exchanging courtesies' and supply photographs of the fair to be included in the town's official guide”.

# OLD MITCHAM

by Tom Francis  
edited by Eric Montague

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## Photographs from the book:



Mr Fowler, one of the last of the old Mitcham lavender growers. After Fowler has given up actually growing the plant, he continued to trade in lavender. Although the physic gardens had gone, several of the distilleries remained in production drawing their supplies initially from elsewhere in Surrey and Norfolk, but eventually from France and Holland.



Workers gathering the lavender harvest early one morning at Carshalton, probably on the Barrow Hedges estate. This picture taken for R M M Jones in about 1905 serves to remind that after large scale commercial cultivation of lavender in Mitcham had ceased the growing of medicinal and aromatic herbs continued in the parishes to the south until the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# OLD MITCHAM

by Tom Francis  
edited by Eric Montague

Image from the book:



Tom Francis had no actual photographs of herb gardens or Mitcham field workers in his collection, and instead used this copy of a newspaper woodcut showing an artist's impression of the lavender harvest in Mitcham. He was uncertain of the date of the drawing but guessed that it might have been around 1860, and understood that it was made in the region of Lavender Avenue, looking towards the cottages and farm buildings facing Figges Marsh. It was here, at Tamworth Farm, just to the north of the 'Swan' that Potter and Moore had their distillery for producing the essence for which Mitcham had been famous since the extraction of oil of lavender on a commercial scale had been stated by Ephraim Potter and William Moore in 1749.

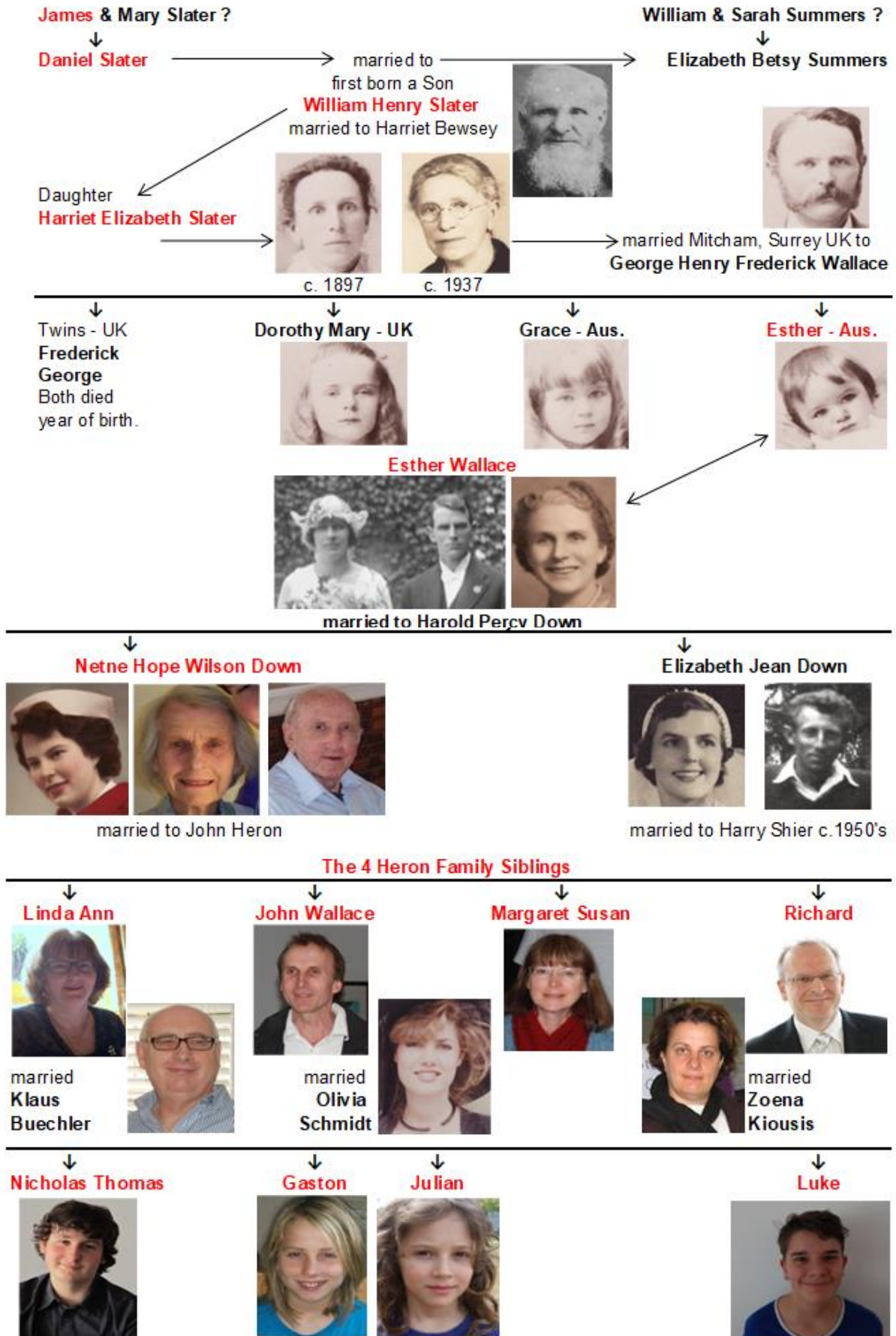
## TIME LINE

### 1857 - 1884

~ some known and not-so-well-known dates in history ~

Year	Event
<b>1857</b>	Sheffield FC founded – claims world's first football team. London postal districts introduced.
<b>1858</b>	'Great stink' smell of River Thames forced Parliament to stop work. Royal Opera House opens.
<b>1859</b>	Work started on Suez canal. Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge opened at Saltash giving rail link between Devon & Cornwall. First American oil well drilled in Pennsylvania.
<b>1860</b>	First tram service in Europe starts in Birkenhead. The Open Championship (golf) begins. Linoleum patented in England by Frederick Walton (some say in Dec 1863).
<b>1861</b>	American Civil War begins. Third full British Census. First horse-drawn trams in London. Tax on newsprint abolished. Mrs Beeton <i>Book of Household Management</i>
<b>1862</b>	Richard Gatling patents his machine gun. Victor Hugo <i>Les Miserables</i>
<b>1863</b>	Football Association founded. First section of the London Underground Railway opens.
<b>1864</b>	Red Cross established. Clifton Suspension Bridge over the River Avon officially opened.
<b>1865</b>	Abraham Lincoln assassinated. International Telegraph Union established. Salvation Army founded. Elizabeth Anderson first woman doctor in England. Concrete roads built in Britain.
<b>1866</b>	Atlantic cable first used. Marquis of Queensbury rules accepted for boxing.
<b>1867</b>	Typewriter invented (not commercially successful until 1873). Lister uses carbolic antiseptic.
<b>1868</b>	Last British election for which Poll Books available. Last convicts landed in W. Australia.
<b>1869</b>	Suez Canal opens. Cutty Sark launched in Dumbarton. HJ Heinz Company founded in USA, with its '57 Varieties'. Ball bearings, celluloid, margarine, washing machine all invented.
<b>1870</b>	GPO takes over the privately-owned Telegraph Companies. First British postcard – halfpenny post. Dr Thomas Barnardo first home for destitute children. Water closets come into wide use.
<b>1871</b>	Opening of Royal Albert Hall . FA Cup introduced. Henry Morton Stanley finds Dr David Livingstone in Africa. Gilbert and Sullivan begin 20 year collaboration.
<b>1872</b>	USA ship <i>Mary Celeste</i> found abandoned in the Atlantic. Licensing hours introduced. Penalties failing to register births/marriages/deaths. Penny-farthing bicycles in general use.
<b>1873</b>	Remington & Sons start to manufacture the new Scholes and Glidden typewriter (named Remington from 1876). Glidden invents barbed wire. Jules Verne <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> .
<b>1874</b>	Factory Act 56-hour week. Birkenhead Park opens, first public park copied later in New York.
<b>1875</b>	Midland Railway abolishes Second Class passenger facilities, leaving First Class and Third Class. (Third Class was renamed Second Class in 1956). London's main sewage system completed.
<b>1876</b>	Alexander Graham Bell & Elisha Gray file a patent for the telephone – Bell awarded the rights. Plimsoll Line established for loading of ships. Battle of Little Big Horn – Custer's last stand.
<b>1877</b>	First cricket Test Match begins (Australia and England in Melbourne) – Australia won by 45 runs. First tennis championships at Wimbledon. Edison invents microphone and phonograph.
<b>1878</b>	First weekly weather forecast published by the Meteorological Office. Edison & Swan invent electric lamp. CID established at New Scotland Yard. Gilbert and Sullivan <i>HMS Pinafore</i> .
<b>1879</b>	Blackpool illuminations switched on for first time. Tay Bridge Disaster – bridge collapsed in storm taking train with it. First telephone exchanges opened in London & Manchester.
<b>1880</b>	Education Act: schooling compulsory for 5-10 year olds. Greenwich Mean Time adopted throughout UK . Mosquito found to be the carrier of malaria.
<b>1881</b>	Godalming Surrey first town in England to have a public electricity supply installed. Postal Orders introduced. Gunfight at OK Corral.
<b>1882</b>	Australia defeat England by seven runs in a Test match at The Oval – Institution of 'the Ashes' in cricket. Fourth Eddystone Lighthouse completed. TB bacillus discovered by Koch.
<b>1883</b>	Parcel post starts in Britain. Eruption of Krakatoa near Java – 30,000 killed by tidal wave. Statue of Liberty presented to USA by France. Married Woman's Property act becomes law.
<b>1884</b>	John Kellogg patents corn flakes. Herman Hollerith patents mechanical tabulating machine. Greenwich made prime meridian of the world. Fabergé produces first jewelled Easter eggs.

# AUSTRALIA - PICTORIAL WHO'S WHO



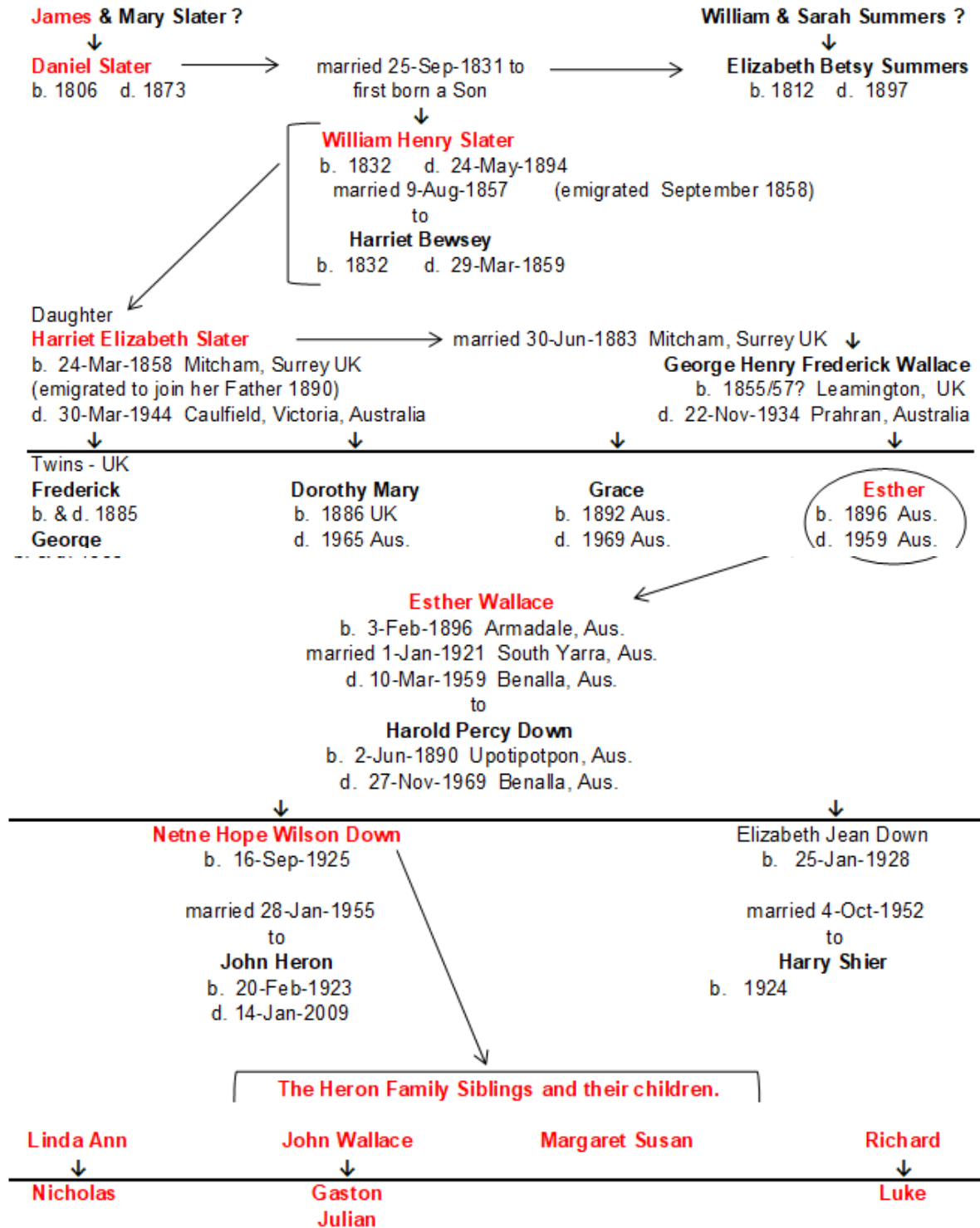
Please see the Australian Family Tree for dates.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER's - FAMILY TREE

## Tracing the line from his Daughter born in England

**Note 1:** See 'Slater' UK Family Tree for William's Siblings.

**Note 2:** The 'Tree' below does not include William's children born in Australia.

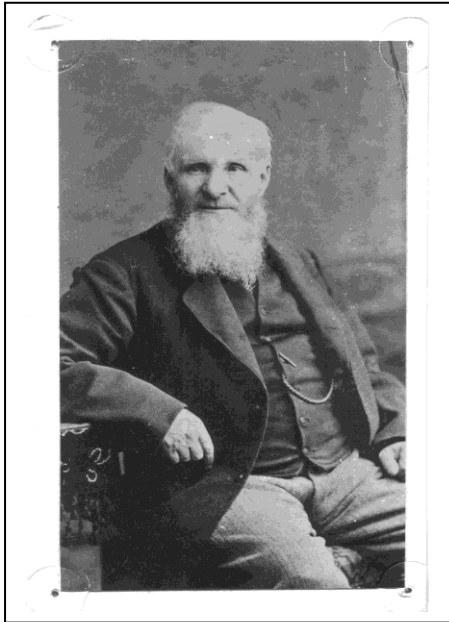


# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894

An Australian Pioneer

## Biography:



**WILLIAM HENRY SLATER**, the eldest son of Daniel and Elizabeth Slater was born 1832 in Mitcham, Surrey, England.

William's father, Daniel Slater was described as 'being from' Blackfriars, London, and his mother was 'from Mitcham', Surrey. William's father Daniel married Elizabeth Betsy Summers in 1831.

The 1846 English Tithe Commutation Survey showed that William's father, Daniel Slater rented two plots of land, totalling approximately one acre. One of his plots of land was in Love Lane, Mitcham, Surrey where he had a cottage and raised his large family.

Thirteen of the children have been identified but it is assumed that there were many more children who probably did not survive childhood.

The 1851 English Census for Mitcham, Surrey, recorded that both Daniel and his eighteen year old son William were gardeners. 'Gardener' was the general term used for growers of physic herbs, either as smallholders, or workers on major herb farms. William and his younger brother Benjamin both worked for James Moore, of Potter and Moore - the best known of all of Mitcham's herb growers. It was here that William learnt his craft.

In the August of 1857 William married Harriet Bewsey. He was 25. The following year on 18 April 1858 William and Harriet had a daughter also called Harriet. But by September of the same year William had emigrated from England to Australia arriving in December of 1858 on the Roxburgh Castle.

William's wife Harriet passed away in 1859 a year after the daughter was born. The daughter, Harriet Elizabeth Slater is recorded on the 1861 census at the age of 3 living with her grandparents Daniel & Elizabeth Slater.

Why did William decide to leave his wife and daughter? Further evidence does provide a fascinating story covered separately in this book. The reader will also be interested to know what happened to William's daughter Harriet.

<b>groom's name:</b>	William Henry Slater (Physic Gardener)
<b>groom's birth:</b>	1832
<b>groom's age:</b>	25
<b>bride's name:</b>	Harriet Bewsey
<b>bride's birth:</b>	1832
<b>bride's age:</b>	25
<b>marriage date:</b>	9 August 1857
<b>marriage place:</b>	Parish Church, Mitcham. Registration District Croydon, Surrey, UK
<b>groom's father's:</b>	Daniel Slater (Gardener)
<b>bride's father's:</b>	Elias Bewsey (Carver & Guilder)



# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

**b. 1832 – d. 1894**  
**An Australian Pioneer**

## Biography *continued*:

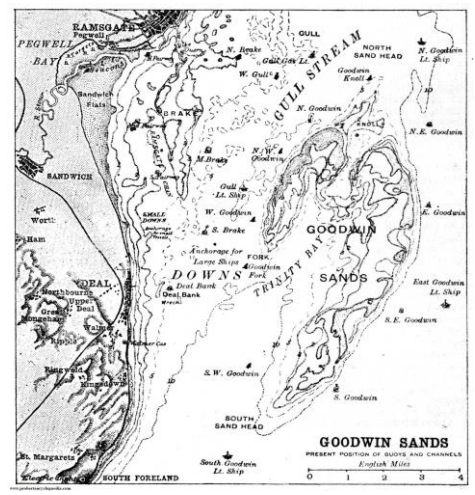
At around the age of 26 William had obviously made the decision to leave England most probably due to the 'gold fever' that was evident in Australia during the 1850's and to achieve this end he decided to emigrate. He left Plymouth, England in the September of 1858 aboard the Roxburgh Castle arriving in Melbourne in the December of the same year. A painting of the Roxburgh Castle is shown below but by 1872 she was no longer in service.



'Roxburgh Castle', was built at Sunderland in 1852 for Richard Green and registered for voyages from London to Sydney. This painting (by Jas. Harris 1853) shows the ship 'Roxburgh Castle', rescuing the crew of the burning 'British Merchant' on the 17 January 1853.  
**Source:**  
 National Maritime Museum.

'The Times' of 28 Feb.1853 reported the arrival off Portland of the 'Roxburgh Castle', on Saturday 26 Feb., 'with 70 passengers and a large freight of gold' from her maiden voyage to Port Phillip, Melbourne, Australia. Unfortunately, many years later the Roxburgh Castle was lost on the Goodwin Sands (ran aground) on 5 January 1872 on her way out to Melbourne.

The Goodwin Sands, graveyard of many fine ships and seamen, lie roughly between the North and South Forelands, some 3½ miles east of Deal. They are twelve miles in length and five miles wide at their widest part. The tides ebbing and flowing through the narrow neck of the Dover Straits have built up these massive sandbanks whose outlines are constantly altering and whose existence has always been a hazard to vessels navigating these waters. At high water the sands are completely covered but as the tide falls they break the surface and expose perhaps a tenth of their total area, with some parts then being up to 13 feet above the sea.



# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894  
An Australian Pioneer

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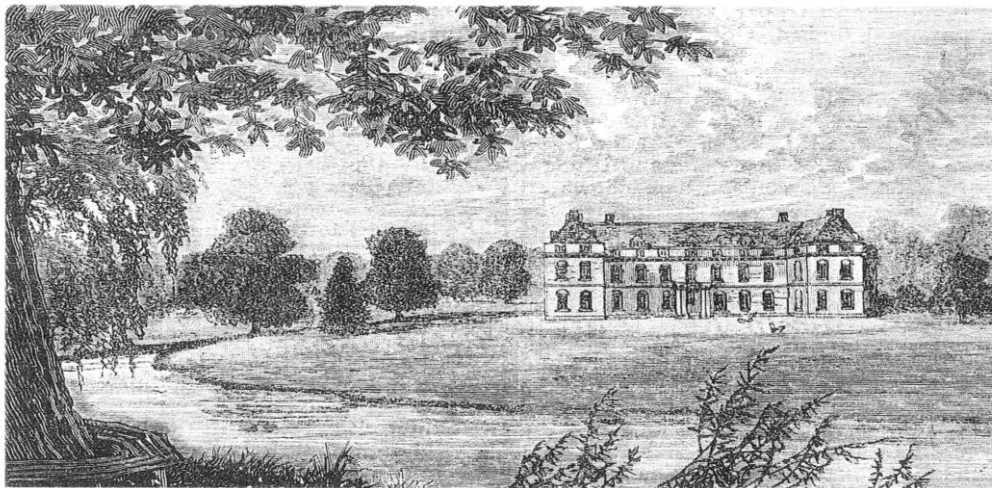
## Biography *continued*:

William spent some years in the gold fields before returning to Melbourne to settle at Air Hill as it was then known and he was instrumental in changing the name of Air Hill to Mitcham, its present name. The then heavily timbered land on the south bank of the Koonung Creek, a few miles out of Melbourne was chosen to set up his physic garden and the access to this land was by two dirt tracks, now known as Surrey and Springfield Roads.



He became one of the founding fathers of the township of Mitcham, now a suburb in the City of Whitehorse. With pride (or a sense of humour!) here he built a single story house (pictured left) with a corrugated iron roof which he named 'Mitcham Grove' – inspired no doubt by the memory of banker Henry Hoare's grand house on the banks of the River Wandle back home in Mitcham, Surrey.

Below is Mitcham Grove in Surrey 1796.



MITCHAM GROVE IN 1796



Photograph left (regretfully not very clear) is the Slater Herb Garden **area** c.1969. No doubt it looked very different in the days when William was growing herbs and fruit. Daniel (William's brother) arrived in Melbourne in 1875 but with his early demise at the age of 27 in 1876 and also that of son William Slater Jr. at the age of 31 in 1897, there was no one to take on the business when William retired two years before his death in 1894.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894

An Australian Pioneer

## Biography *continued*:



William's 2<sup>nd</sup> wife - Mary Ann

William's second and third children were born in Australia before his second marriage. Elizabeth Rose Slater was born in 1859 but only lived 4 weeks. Mary was born in 1861. In 1864, at the age of 32 William married Mary Ann Cresswell. The delay in his second marriage could have been due to many reasons, he may have been away working in the gold fields or indeed the news of Harriet's death in 1859 may have taken some time to reach him. After the birth of his first daughter Harriet born 1858 in Mitcham, Surrey and the two daughters mentioned above, William had 2 other children, William Henry in 1866 and Elizabeth Rockcliffe in 1869. However, interesting facts have emerged concerning William's departure from England. It appears that he did not travel alone. A Mary Slater is recorded as a passenger (Mary Ann Cresswell ?)

<b>William Slater</b> b. 1832 d. 1894		William Married → in UK 9 August 1857	Harriet Bewsey b. 1832 d. 1859
Emigrated September 1858 to Melbourne, Australia arriving in December 1858		Daughter Harriet Slater b. 24 March 1858	↖ ↗
The first two children below ↓ were born pre- his marriage to Mary Ann Cresswell			
Daughter Elizabeth Rose b. 1859 d. 1859	Daughter Mary b. 1861 d. 1940		
William Married → in Australia 1864	Mary Ann Cresswell b. UK.1831 d. A.1912		
Son William Henry Jnr. b. 1866 d.1897	Daughter Elizabeth Rockcliffe b. 1869 d.1926		



The photograph on the right shows William's Son, William Henry Jnr. and it is quite possibly the day of his wedding as a buttonhole flower is evident. He married Ann Eliza Peterson in 1890 but sadly William Jnr. died in 1897 at the age of 31. William Jnr. and Ann had 5 children born between 1891 and 1897, the year William Jnr. died. The following year in 1898 Ann remarried a James Geraghty and had another six children.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

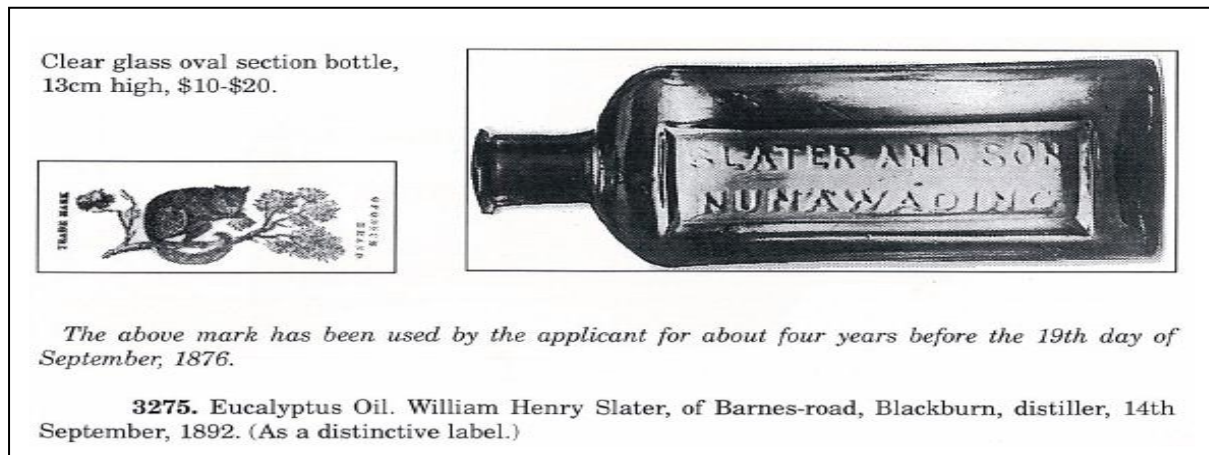
b. 1832 – d. 1894  
An Australian Pioneer

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## Biography *continued*:

About 1862 William Slater began growing medicinal herbs. His first peppermint and lavender root stocks were obtained from England. With the help of a £25 Government Grant for establishing a new industry, he soon had nine acres of peppermint and one acre of lavender under cultivation. The venture became a financial success and in 1865 he exhibited a collection of essential oils in Dublin for which he gained a medal and a certificate. In 1866 he received a medal in Melbourne and another in Paris in 1867. Also, in 1866 at the Melbourne Exhibition he exhibited a sample of opium, which, after analysis, was considered equal to anything produced elsewhere. At the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition of 1888 he gained a 'First' for his essential oils because his lavender oil was considered to be 'inferior only to the Mitcham (England) oil and superior to the French oil.' His peppermint oil was equally successful.

As a practical distiller of oils he joined Mr Bosisto, a chemist of Richmond in the production of eucalyptus oil. Later William started his own distilling business and produced 'Eucalyptus Amygdalina Oil', better known as 'Possum Brand'. (*AMYGDALE, pronounced amidal, is French for tonsil.*) Its successful use at the Melbourne Hospital for medical purposes led to it being regularly exported to London until his death in 1894. A more recent family story related that some oil was also sent to the USA, for the manufacture of paint.



The evidence William gave to the *1890 Royal Commission on Vegetable Products, Perfume Plants and Essential Oils* was detailed and valuable and with that unselfishness which was characteristic of him, said "I believe there would be room for a dozen people to start the same line, and more than that." As the orchard continued to expand it was often used for University Field Days. 'The Slaters' welcomed all visitors to 'Mitcham Grove', but William gave a special welcome to the young students from the College for whom he would 'unfold his vast store of practical knowledge, both in the fields amongst his herbs, and in the laboratory among his preparations.' These field days were continued by William's descendants until the orchard was subdivided for building blocks, in the early to mid-twentieth century.

Unfortunately herbs grown for medicinal purposes were unprofitable due to local prejudice and a preference for German herbs. As a result William planted fruit trees which became even more profitable when he began to dry the fruit for the markets. His great Grandson, Harry Pearce, who in 1924 owned the orchard, planted cherry trees and it was this fruit that was sold to MacRobertson's chocolate factory to manufacture 'Cherry Ripe' chocolate bars.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

**b. 1832 – d. 1894**

**An Australian Pioneer**

## Biography *continued*:

William Henry retired two years before his death at his home in Barnes Road, Blackburn on 23 May 1894 aged 62 years after being ill for six months. The cause of his death was stomach cancer. Mary Ann, his wife, died 12 August 1912, aged 83 years. (*she was in her 81st year.*)

The obituary written for the *Australian Journal of Pharmacy*, June 1894, pgs 272-3, describe Mr Slater as being a retiring contented and happy man with a homely disposition who loved his work. It also stated 'although he never craved for wealth or fame in the pursuit of his business, he still acquired a reputation in his own particular line, and at the same time gained modest competency.'

## William Slater's Herb List:

Southernwood	<i>poor beards</i>	Rue	<i>croup, sciatica</i>
Insects comfrey	<i>sprains and bruises</i>	Hyssop	<i>debility, rheumatism</i>
Danzie	<i>worms, fevers, lumbago</i>	Mullein	<i>throats, lungs, catarrh</i>
Chamomile tonic	<i>the system, cramps, the hair</i>	Wormwood	<i>stomachs upsets, nerves</i>
Lavender	<i>faintness, nerves, headaches</i>	Horehound	<i>chests, asthma tonic</i>
Elder	<i>skin sores, boils etc.</i>	Feverfew	<i>insect bites</i>
Lemon balm	<i>aches of teeth, eyes, heart</i>	Spearmint	<i>giddiness, weak stomachs</i>
Sage	<i>sore throats, liver, kidneys</i>	Strawberry leaves	<i>eczema, blood disorders</i>
Mint	<i>indigestion, palpitations, headaches</i>		



Photograph left of the 'Slater' tombstone at Box Hill Cemetery.

### ***Inscriptions:***

**William Henry Slater** died 23 May 1894 aged 66 years (*now thought to be 62 years according to later evidence*).

**Mary Ann Slater**, wife of William Henry Slater died 12 August 1912, aged 83 years. (*she was in her 81<sup>st</sup> year*)

**Daniel Slater** who departed this life 23 July 1876 aged 27 years (*thought to be the younger brother of William*).

**William Henry** only son of M A Slater, husband of Ann Slater, died 3 June 1897, aged 31 years.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

## b. 1832 – d. 1894

### An Australian Pioneer

## Leaving England:

As mentioned in William’s Biography some interesting facts emerged concerning his departure from England. William and his wife Harriet (nee Bewsey) married in August 1857 and in March 1858 they had a daughter also called Harriet. It was in September of the same year that William left England and sailed to Australia. Six months later in the March of 1859 William’s wife Harriet was found dead at the age of 27. The death certificate gives the cause of death as “suicide by poison mentally deranged”.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 4114136-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		CROYDON							
1859 DEATH in the Sub-district of Mitcham		in the County of Surrey							
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
241	Found dead, 27th March 1859, Mitcham, Surrey	Harriet Slater	Female	27 years	Wife of William Henry Slater, Labourer	Suicide by Poison, Mentally deranged	Information received from William Carter, Coroner for Surrey, Bloomsbury Road, London, 1st August 1859	Fourth April 1859	George Charles Registrar

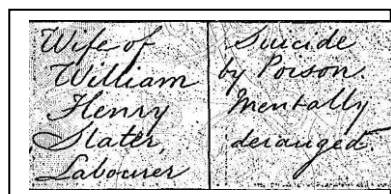
CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 12th day of June 2012

DVD 293104

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE \*CROWN COPYRIGHT WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

One could speculate what caused this very sad occasion. Indeed, Harriet could have been suffering from the severe form of post natal depression which was not actually recognised as a disorder until around the 1850’s – that’s if you could afford to go to a doctor !



On the other hand Harriet’s mental state may have been a contributing fact for William’s departure. But another possible reason comes into play when the reader discovers that the ‘plot thickens’ in the following paragraphs. One wonders why William decided to sail from Plymouth when in actual fact the ship actually departed from London (much nearer to his home town), before sailing onto Plymouth.

Research has established that William was not travelling alone on the ‘Roxburgh Castle’ when it departed from Plymouth, England in the September 1858. The Roxburgh Castle passenger list indicates that William travelled under his middle name of ‘Henry’ and there is the start of an entry under the ‘single’ column but then a definite entry under the ‘married’ column. His ‘wife’ is shown as Mary and speculative research by the author linking that name to his eventual wife in Australia revealed that there was indeed a Mary Ann Cresswell born in Mitcham, England – same as William.

It also transpires from research that Mary Ann Cresswell was about 2 months pregnant when she boarded the ship to Australia and the following year in April 1859 Mary Ann gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth Rose, but the child did not survive and passed away at four weeks. The cause of death has been established as a “watery tumor (*tumour*) on the head from birth”. Considering that Mary was probably suffering with sea sickness and morning sickness the journey under sail for approximately three months must have been too dreadful to contemplate.

It appears that the birth of Elizabeth Rose was only registered by Mary Slater, although strictly speaking she was still Mary Ann Cresswell. When asked the question when and where the ‘father’ had been married Mary Ann gave a false date of 5 March 1857. And to the question asking if there were any other ‘issue’ (*children*) from the marriage the response is “besides this has no issue”. Of course this brings the reader back to little Harriet, William’s daughter from his marriage to Harriet Bewsey and the interesting life that unfolded for her which is included in this book.

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

## b. 1832 – d. 1894

### An Australian Pioneer

#### Leaving England *continued:*

This is a 'modified' page as the full passenger list is 5 pages! But it does show the details of the ship and Henry (William) Slater and his 'wife' Mary. Although the ship did leave from London on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1858, the port of embarkation for quite a few passengers was Plymouth – as indicated Ply.

SCHEDULE (B).  
Referred to in the 10th Section of the Passengers' Act.

Ship's Name.	Master's Name.	Tons per Register.	Aggregate No. of superficial Feet in the several compartments set apart for Passengers, other than Cabin Passengers.	Total Number of Statute Adults, exclusive of Master, Crew, and Cabin Passengers, the Ship can legally carry.	Where Bound.
<i>Roxburgh Castle.</i>	<i>H. Smith</i>	<i>1121.</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>100.</i>	<i>Melbourne Port Phillip</i>

I hereby certify that the Provisions actually laden on board this Ship, are sufficient, according to the requirements of the Passengers' Act, for *51* Statute Adults for a Voyage of *140* Days.

(Signed) *H. Smith* Master. *16-11-58*

(Date.) *1. Sept* 1858.

**NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF PASSENGERS.**

Ports of Embarkation.	Names of Passengers.	Age of each Adult 12 Years & upwards.		Children between 1 and 12 Years.		Infants.		Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passenger.	State whether			Port at which Passengers have contracted to land.
		Married. Single.		M F		M F			Pauper.	Free.	British.	
		M	F	M	F	M	F					
	<i>Indians etc &amp; Opium</i>											
	<i>Baldry, Maria</i>		<i>24</i>					<i>Servant</i>				<i>Melbourne</i>
	<i>Bolton, C. R.</i>	<i>46</i>						<i>Trader</i>				"
	<i>Sarah M.</i>		<i>26</i>					<i>Wife</i>				"
	<i>Bevan, Ann T.</i>		<i>29</i>					"				"
	<i>Polunoy, Henry</i>	<i>10</i>						<i>Trader</i>				"
	<i>Elizabeth</i>		<i>31</i>					<i>Wife</i>				"
	<i>James Murray</i>		<i>30</i>					<i>Servant</i>				"
	<i>Mary</i>		<i>28</i>					"				"
	<i>Emily</i>		<i>26</i>					"				"
	<i>Elizabeth</i>		<i>65</i>					<i>Mother</i>				"
	<i>Caroline Powell</i>		<i>30</i>					"				"
	<i>Ann</i>							<i>Servant</i>				"
	<i>James</i>		<i>22</i>					<i>Servant</i>				"
	<i>Salomon, Susan</i>		<i>22</i>					"				"
	<i>Frank, Matilda</i>		<i>25</i>					"				"
	<i>Henry, George</i>		<i>21</i>					<i>Trader</i>				"
	<i>Henry, John</i>		<i>29</i>					"				"
	<i>Elizabeth, King</i>		<i>16</i>					"				"
	<i>Nelson, George</i>		<i>26</i>					"				"
	<i>Robert</i>		<i>26</i>					"				"
	<i>Frederick, Smith</i>		<i>19</i>					"				"
	<i>Wendley, William</i>		<i>33</i>					"				"
	<i>Mason, John W.</i>		<i>18</i>					"				"
	<i>Victor, John</i>		<i>21</i>					"				"
<i>Ply</i>	<i>Slater, Henry</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>2</i>									
<i>Ply</i>	<i>Mary</i>		<i>25</i>					<i>Wife</i>				
	<i>Martin, Anne</i>		<i>24</i>					<i>Servant</i>				
	<i>Hopkin, Mary</i>		<i>18</i>					<i>Wife</i>				
	<i>Bennet, Henry</i>	<i>53</i>						"				
	<i>Sophia</i>		<i>53</i>					<i>Wife</i>				
	<i>William</i>		<i>30</i>					<i>Trader</i>				
<i>Ply</i>	<i>Power, Patrick</i>	<i>48</i>						"				

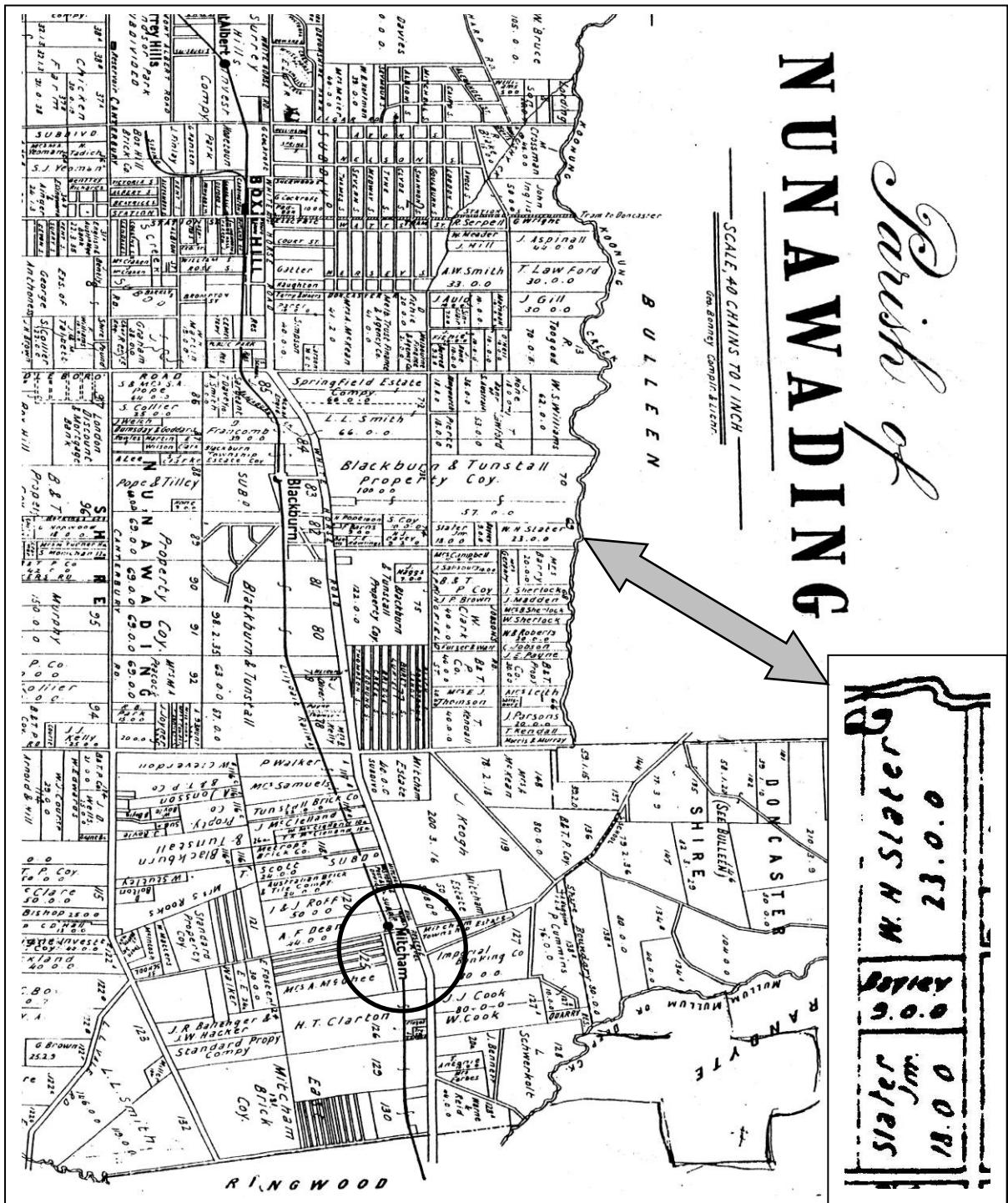
Carried forward..... *8 12 22 17 3 1 1*

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894  
An Australian Pioneer

## William's Land – Parish of Nunawading Map 1892:

William owned an area of land as indicated by the arrow adjacent to the Koonung Creek. Next to this is land owned by Bayley. William's daughter Elizabeth Rockcliffe Slater married Leonard Sherwin Bayley in 1889. Next to Bayley's plot is land owned by William Slater Jr.





**WILLIAM HENRY SLATER**  
**b. 1832 – d. 1894**  
**An Australian Pioneer**

**The Slater Reserve map:**

William Slater was also interested in sport and was a member of the Box Hill Cricket Club. To continue this interest, a portion of his original orchard was retained in 1979 for sporting activities and has been called The Slater Reserve. Here there is a basketball stadium, a picnic area, a community garden and ample room for other sports which the public now enjoy.

*Exh 607*  
*ND 4936*

**Nunawading Parks & Recreation Information**

**SLATER RESERVE**

**SLATER RESERVE: (Multi-purpose Recreation facility)**

**Location** East end of Grosvenor Street, Blackburn.

**Facilities**

- 1 Basketball Stadium,
- Garden Area,
- Playing Field,
- 1 Set of Football Goal Posts,
- 1 Set of Soccer Goal Posts,
- Car Parking on site.

**Play Equipment** 1 spring motorbike, 2 spring horses, 1 quarter see-saw, 1 multi-purpose play apparatus - (incorporating swings, tunnel, sliding rings, slide and climbing bars).

The site plan shows a rectangular area with a dashed boundary. On the left side, there is a 'BASKETBALL STADIUM' and 'COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOTS'. Below the stadium is 'OVERFLOW PARKING'. In the center, there are 'BOULE COURTS'. To the right, there is a 'PICNIC AREA' and a 'PLAYGROUND'. A large area on the right is labeled 'INFORMAL PLAY'. The plan includes various paths, trees, and play equipment locations. Details A, B, and C are marked with arrows pointing to specific areas of the plan.

**City of Nunawading – Parks & Recreation Dept. 379 White Horse Rd, Nunawading, 3131. Ph. 872 9411.**

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

## b. 1832 – d. 1894

### An Australian Pioneer

#### The Slater Reserve photographs:



Below the large sign at the entrance to the Slater Reserve giving brief details of its history.



To the left the sign reads:

William Slater named his property 'Mitcham Grove' after the English village of Mitcham. The district to the east of Slater's property later became known as 'Mitcham', replacing the earlier name of 'Air Hill'.

And the noticeboard reads:

You are now entering 'Mitcham' the apex of the suburbs. Note the views and bracing air. Come again and bring your friends.

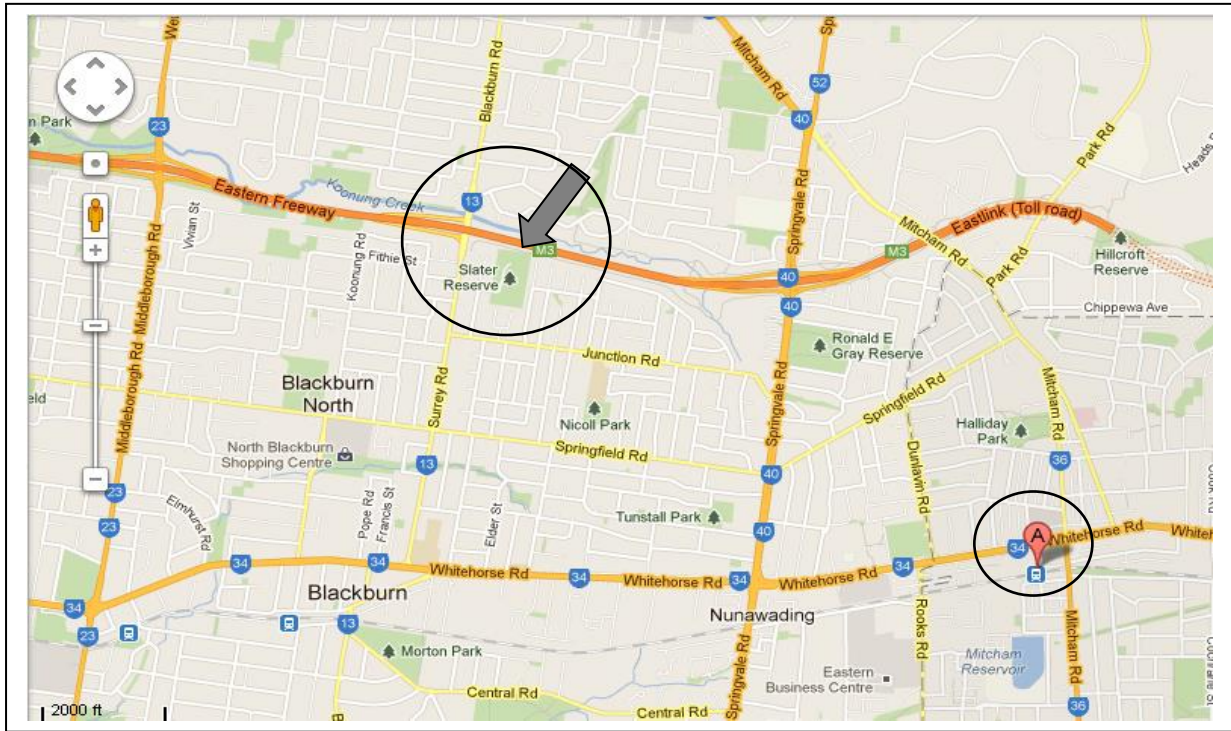
#### The top paragraphs to the right of William & Mary Anne Slater's photographs read:

Visitors to William Slater's herb farm remember it as a romantic landscape. Fields of peppermint, lavender, chamomile and other medicinal herbs were cultivated alongside apples, plums, cherries and strawberries. In the 1860's Slater established his property east of Surrey Road from Springfield Road to Koonung Creek. The knowledge Slater gained while working for English perfumiers Potter and Moore proved invaluable in establishing his business in Australia. He created essential oils from peppermint and lavender, which he sold overseas, and dried a range of medicinal herbs and plants. Like a number of agriculturists Slater distilled eucalyptus – under the brand name O'Possum – and is said to have established the first eucalyptus distillery in Victoria. Like many of the old orchards and flower farms Slater's property was eventually subdivided and built upon. This recreation reserve and the community gardens alongside the basketball stadium are among the only reminder of Slater's perfumed fields.

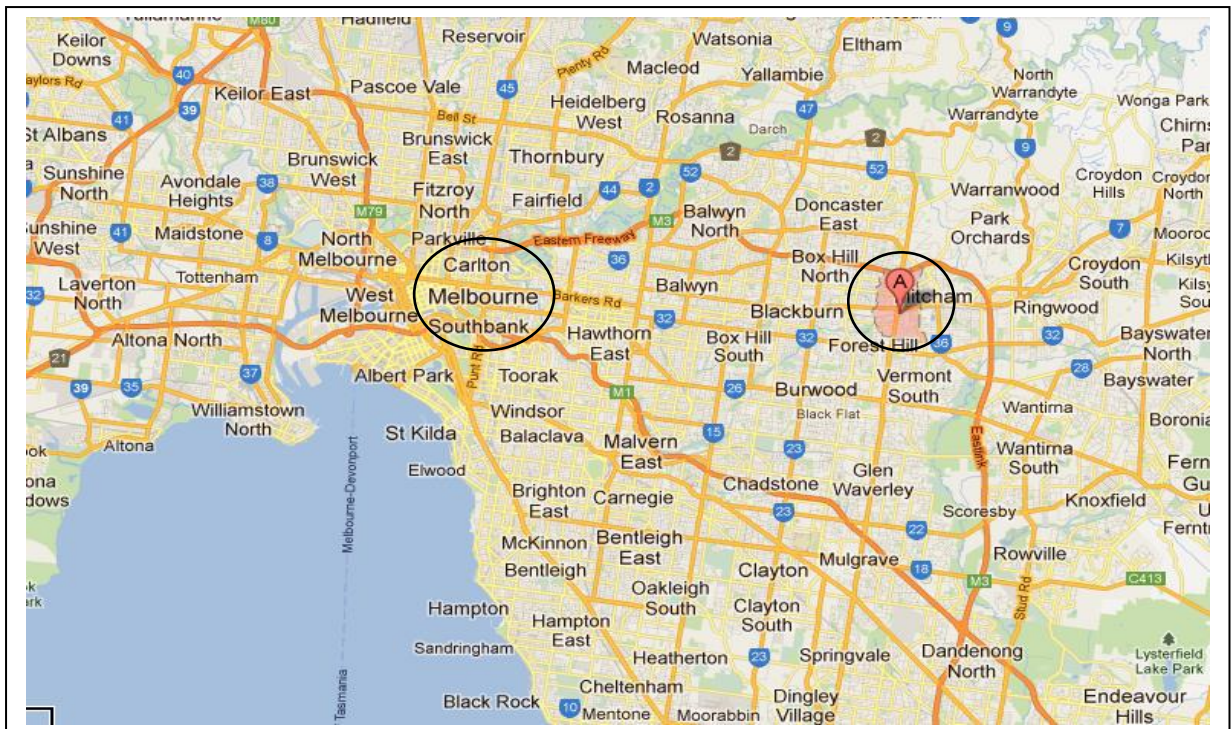
# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894  
An Australian Pioneer

## Mitcham, (Melbourne), Victoria, Australia:



The two maps show Mitcham marked as ‘A’ and the arrow on the map above just below the Eastern Freeway indicates the Slater Reserve. The map below shows the distance between Mitcham and Melbourne – approximately 28.5 km (17.8 miles).



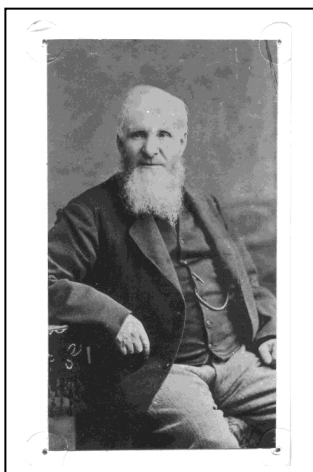
# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

b. 1832 – d. 1894

An Australian Pioneer

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Reprinted from *The Australian Journal of Pharmacy* (1894) – (D McAlpine)



## Obituary - The Late Mr W H Slater

The announcement of the death in the last month's *Journal* of Mr William Henry Slater, eucalyptus oil distiller and medicinal herb grower, at his residence, Mitcham Grove, Blackburn, on 23<sup>rd</sup> May (1894), at the age of 66 years (*revised 62 years*), calls for more than a passing notice. The deceased was not only closely identified with the development of an important industry, and cultivated successfully quite a number medicinal plants, but his memory will always be green in the hearts of many of the old students of the College of Pharmacy, for the pleasure in instruction afforded once a year by the visit to the romantic spot where many a well-known medicinal plant flourished luxuriantly, and – more important to some – the strawberry beds were also well stocked.

Mr Slater was born at Mitcham in the county of Surrey, England, in the year 1828 (*revised 1832*). At an early age he was apprenticed to the firm of Potter and Moore, whose business was acquired some years ago by Messrs W J Bush & Co. At this establishment he received a thoroughly practical training in the growing and distilling of medicinal herbs and scent-producing plants. He remained with the firm of Potter and Moore (after completing his apprenticeship) until he was 28 years of age (*revised 26 years*), and then being struck with gold fever, like many other young man, he came out to Victoria in the ship *Roxburgh Castle*, arriving in Melbourne about the close of 1857 (*revised 1858*).

Shortly after his arrival he settled down near Box Hill and being a practical distiller of oils, he was for a short time connected with Mr Bosisto in the production of eucalyptus oil. For some reason or other the connection was severed and Mr Slater started distilling for himself. His *Eucalyptus Amygdalina* Oil with the well-known Possum Brand afterwards became extensively used. Mr Slater claimed, with what justice I cannot say, to be the first to introduce eucalyptus oil as a medicine for human beings. This much is certain that for some time he experimented and closely watched the effect of the oil on animals, until he became convinced that there was a great future in store for it.

According to Mr Slater, Mr Plunket of Lonsdale Street, was the first chemist who ever sold eucalyptus oil as a medicine, and the first Winchester\* sold in Melbourne for medicinal purposes was supplied by him by then firm of Slater & Boardman of Box Hill. Soon after this the Melbourne Hospital received supplies from them, until now its use has become almost universal. The names of Baron von Meuller and Mr J Bosisto CMG MLA are also closely identified with the eucalyptus oil industry. The former gave his attention to the production of oil from eucalyptus for medicinal purposes as early as 1847, and in the first General Report of the Government Botanist on the vegetation of the colony, dated Sept. 1853, he stated – “few may be aware that the Cajuput oil of India is obtained from trees very similar to our common *Melaleuca*, and that even from the leaves of *Eucalypti* an oil can be produced of equal utility”. Before this, Dr White, the first Government Surgeon of New South Wales, has recorded in an appendix to J White's journal of a voyage to New South Wales, had distilled oil from *E.piperita* for medicinal purposes. Quite recently Mr Percy Wilkinson has added considerably to our knowledge of these oils by the systematic examination of no less than 87 samples.

\*Winchester (*British* - a large cylindrical bottle for liquids. – Origin C18: originally applied to containers holding a bushel, gallon, or quart, according to an obsolete system of measurement with standards kept at *Winchester* in southern England.)

*Continued.....*

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER

## b. 1832 – d. 1894

### An Australian Pioneer

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#### *Obituary – The Late W H Slater – continued:*

Mr Slater next turned his attention to medicinal herbs, and about 1862, obtained from home a selection of such plants including peppermint and lavender. With his usual enthusiasm he went pretty largely into their cultivation and shortly afterwards had nine acres of peppermint and once acre of lavender under cultivation. He had the satisfaction of receiving a grant from the Government of £25 for establishing a new industry – an industry which yet promises to become a profitable one for those taking up land in suitable localities. In his capable hands the next venture proved a financial success, and in 1865 he exhibited a collection of essential oils at Dublin, for which he received a medal and certificate, in 1866 he gained an award at Melbourne, and again at Paris in 1867. He was also successful in obtaining the first order of merit for essentials oils at the Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition 1888-89. As the result of this undertaking, he proved conclusively and in an eminently practical manner that the soil and climate of Victoria is specially suited for the growth and cultivation of perfume plants.

He grew samples of lavender at Mitcham Grove, Blackburn, the oil from which was pronounced by experts to be inferior only to the finest Mitcham (Surrey) oil, and altogether superior to any French oil. The same may also be said of the peppermint oil produced by him. He also went in for opium growing and a sample exhibited at Melbourne in 1866 was pronounced by experts (as the result of analysis) to be equal to anything produced elsewhere.

He ultimately became so absorbed in the manufacture of eucalyptus oil, that he gradually gave up producing others oils in quantity. Up to the time of his death he was a constant shipper of eucalyptus oil to London, and never anticipated seeing that industry in such a bad way as at present. He also continued the growth and preparation of medicinal plants, the sale of which he met with a fair amount of success, but he found it very hard to combat local prejudice, although it was a very easy matter to produce a superior article to most of the so-called American, but what were really German herbs.

Mr Slater was a retiring and homely disposition, and loved his work for the work's sake. He always extended a hearty welcome to visitors to Mitcham Gove, and was perfectly delighted to meet the young students from the college and unfold his vast stores of practical knowledge before them both in the fields among his herbs and in the laboratory among his preparations. He likewise gave valuable evidence before the Royal Commissioners on vegetable products, and with that unselfishness which was his characteristic, said "I believe there would be room for a dozen people to start in the same line, and more than that."

Although he never craved for wealth or fame in the pursuit of business, still he acquired a reputation in his particular line and gained at the same time a modest competency. He was always contented and happy, and endeavoured to make others the same. He was a life member of the Box Hill Cricket Club; and in his time has witnessed the founding and growth of all the large wholesale drug firms in Melbourne. For a period of about two years prior to his death he retired, to a great extent, from the active pursuit of business, leaving it almost entirely to his partner and son-in-law, Mr L S Bayley who has succeeded to the business.

Mr Slater was failing very much in health for six months before he died, the vast amount of work which he did in his day beginning to tell even on such a strong constitution as his. The complaint which carried him off was malignant tumour of the stomach. In him we lose one of the early pioneers who had the energy and courage to start a new industry, and the hands to carry it out. The work he did, and the experiments he made in connection with the growth of medicinal herbs, will be of value to the rising generation who cast their lot upon the land in the colony wherein he lived and laboured. He leaves a widow and grown-up family to mourn his loss.

# TIME LINE

## 1885 - 1905

~ some known and not-so-well-known dates in history ~

Year	Event
1885	The Benz Motorwagen, first purpose-built automobile is built. The first successful <a href="#">appendectomy</a> is performed. <a href="#">Good Housekeeping</a> Magazine on sale. First London Pillar Boxes
1886	A carbonated beverage invented to be named <a href="#">Coca-Cola</a> . The establishment of the <a href="#">Yorkshire Tea</a> merchants. The <a href="#">Folies Bergère</a> stages its first revue. Severn Railway Tunnel opened
1887	<a href="#">Queen Victoria</a> 's Golden Jubilee, marking the 50th year of her reign. <a href="#">Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show</a> opens in <a href="#">London</a> . The <a href="#">Gramophone</a> is patented by <a href="#">Emile Berliner</a> .
1888	<a href="#">The Football League</a> is formed and Jack the Ripper is very busy ! The birth of the touch typing method that is widely used now. <a href="#">George Eastman</a> registers the trademark <a href="#">Kodak</a> ,
1889	The <a href="#">Wisden Cricketers' Almanack</a> publishes its first <a href="#">Wisden Cricketers of the Year</a> . The <a href="#">Eiffel Tower</a> opens in <a href="#">Paris</a> . "Pizza Margherita" forerunner of today's modern pizza is invented.
1890	The first ever <i>official</i> <a href="#">County Championship cricket</a> match. <a href="#">Vincent van Gogh</a> shoots himself and dies two days later. The <a href="#">corrugated cardboard</a> box is invented.
1891	The <a href="#">Wrigley Company</a> is founded in <a href="#">Chicago</a> . The first <a href="#">penalty kick</a> is awarded in <a href="#">football</a> . <a href="#">New Scotland Yard</a> becomes the HQ of the <a href="#">London Metropolitan Police</a> .
1892	Sir <a href="#">Arthur Conan Doyle</a> publishes <a href="#">The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes</a> . <a href="#">Ellis Island</a> begins accommodating immigrants to USA. The first official <a href="#">basketball</a> game is played.
1893	The first car number plates appear in <a href="#">Paris</a> . <a href="#">Rudolf Diesel</a> receives a patent for the <a href="#">diesel engine</a> . A crash on the <a href="#">New York Stock Exchange</a> starts a <a href="#">depression</a> .
1894	Blackpool Tower is opened in Blackpool, and Tower Bridge in London opens for traffic. The first <a href="#">battery-operated telephone switchboard</a> installed in <a href="#">Lexington, Massachusetts</a> .
1895	Oscar Wilde's last play <a href="#">The Importance of Being Earnest</a> is first shown at St. James' Theatre in London. The first game of what would become known as rugby league football is played. <a href="#">Wilhelm Röntgen</a> discovers a type of <a href="#">radiation</a> later known as <a href="#">X-rays</a> .
1896	The first motoring fatality in UK. Bridget Driscoll was run over by a car at <a href="#">Crystal Palace</a> . Bridget Driscoll was related to John Driscoll. John was married to Nora Graham a sister of Violet Graham - the wife of William Sheppard (Arthur Sheppard's first son). Also the ship The Drummond Castle, returning from South Africa, went aground off Ushant (France) on 17th June 1896 with the loss of 245 lives one of which was Violet Graham's Grandfather.
1897	The word "computer", meaning an electronic calculation device, is first used. The <a href="#">Klondike Gold Rush</a> begins. <a href="#">Dracula</a> , a novel by Irish author <a href="#">Bram Stoker</a> , is published.
1898	<a href="#">Caleb Bradham</a> names his soft drink <a href="#">Pepsi-Cola</a> . <a href="#">North Petherton</a> , Somerset becomes the first town in <a href="#">UK</a> to install <a href="#">Acetylene</a> lighting. Discovery of a substance called <a href="#">radium</a> .
1899	<a href="#">Felix Hoffmann</a> patents <a href="#">aspirin</a> . The <a href="#">paperclip</a> is patented by <a href="#">Johan Vaaler</a> , a Norwegian inventor. <a href="#">HP Sauce</a> was founded. The <a href="#">International Council of Nurses</a> is founded.
1900	The <a href="#">British Labour Party</a> is formed. <a href="#">Winston Churchill</a> elected to Parliament for the first time. First modern-day <a href="#">hamburger sandwich</a> introduced. The <a href="#">Davis Cup tennis</a> tournament created.
1901	<a href="#">Queen Victoria</a> dies at the age of 81. The U.S. <a href="#">stock market</a> crashes. <a href="#">Hubert Cecil Booth</a> patents an electric <a href="#">vacuum cleaner</a> . <a href="#">Alzheimer's disease</a> described for the first time by <a href="#">German psychiatrist Alois Alzheimer</a> . <a href="#">Scotland Yard</a> creates <a href="#">fingerprint</a> archive.
1902	<a href="#">Edward VII</a> is crowned King. <a href="#">Scott</a> , <a href="#">Shackleton</a> & Wilson reach furthest southern point thus far by man at 82°17'S. The first <a href="#">Borstal</a> for youth offenders opens in <a href="#">Borstal, Kent</a> ,
1903	<a href="#">Morris &amp; Rose Mitchom</a> introduce the first <a href="#">teddy bear</a> in America. <a href="#">Orville Wright</a> flies an <a href="#">aircraft</a> with a <a href="#">petrol engine</a> at <a href="#">Kitty Hawk, North Carolina</a> .
1904	The stage play <a href="#">Peter Pan</a> , premieres in <a href="#">London</a> . <a href="#">Henry Ford</a> sets a new <a href="#">automobile land speed record</a> of 91.37 mph. U.S. Army Engineers begin work on the <a href="#">Panama Canal</a> .
1905	<a href="#">The Automobile Association</a> was founded in United Kingdom. The word "lime" is first used to describe a colour. The <a href="#">Simplon Tunnel</a> is officially opened through the <a href="#">Alps</a> .

# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER (Junior)

b. 1866 – d. 1897

Son of William Henry Slater Snr.

## William Henry Slater Junior:

In following the male line of descent a son, William Henry Slater Junior, was born in 1866.

The photograph opposite is quite possibly the day of his wedding as a buttonhole flower is evident. He married Ann Eliza Peterson in 1890 but sadly William Jnr. died on the 3 June 1897 only three years after the death of his father. He was 31.

William Jnr. & Ann had 5 children born between 1891 and 1897, the year William Jnr. died. It will be noted that his first son died aged 11 years.

Son: William Henry b. 1891 d. 1902  
Daughter: Annie b. 1892 d.  
Son: John Frederick b. 1894 d. 1975  
Son: \*\* Robert Cresswell b. 1896 d.  
Daughter: Mary Ann Elizabeth b. 1897 d. 1961

The following year in 1898 Ann remarried a James Geraghty and had another six children.

It is probable that Harriet Wallace (nee Slater) who emigrated from England in 1890, finally met her only brother before he passed away in 1897.

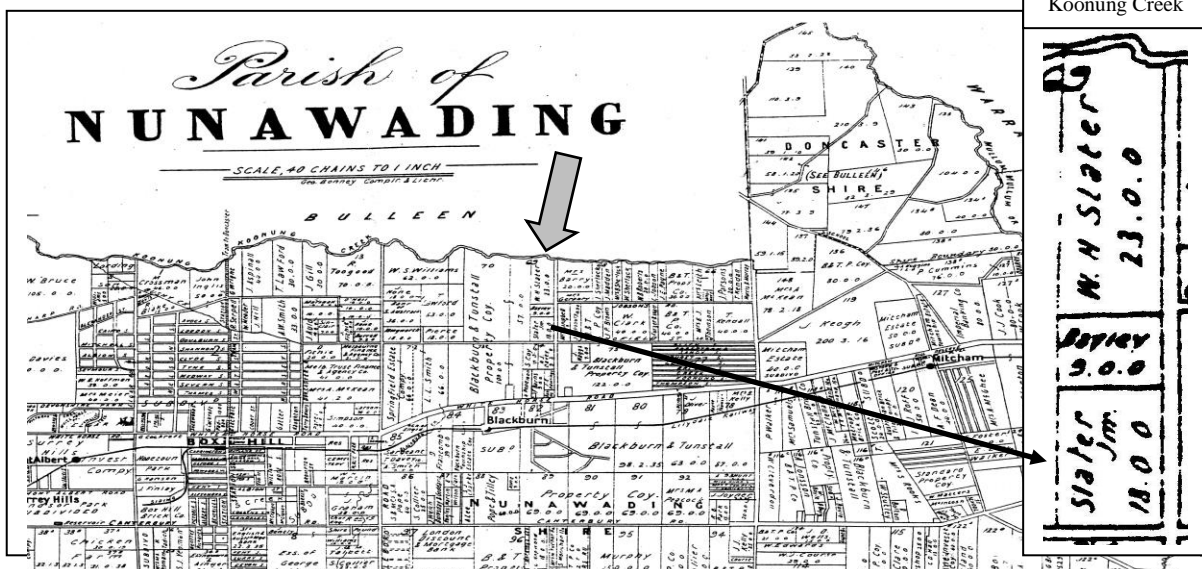


William Slater Jnr  
and his wife Ann Eliza Slater (nee Peterson)

(\*\* See Newspaper article on page 67)

## History:

*The house at 106 Surrey Road was built in 1890 for William Slater Jr. As early as 1880, the eastern half of Crown Allotment 69, comprising a strip of land on the west side of Surrey Road (then known as Barnes Road) between Springfield Road and Koonung Creek, was owned and occupied by William Slater and William Slater Jr., both distillers. The Rate Books for 1890 list a timber house on 50 acres of land, valued @ £110. In 1891, the land was divided into three portions. The present house was built on 18 acres at the southern end of the Slater's land – see insert on the map below. The Rate Books list a 'timber house' owned and occupied by William Slater Jr., valued at £50. William Slater Sr., continued to occupy the existing house on the northernmost 23 acres, whilst Leonard Bayley, also a distiller, owned and occupied nine acres between the two Slater properties.*



# WILLIAM HENRY SLATER (Junior)

b. 1866 – d. 1897

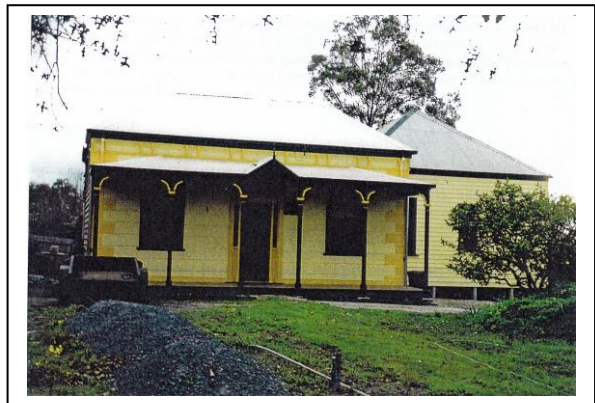
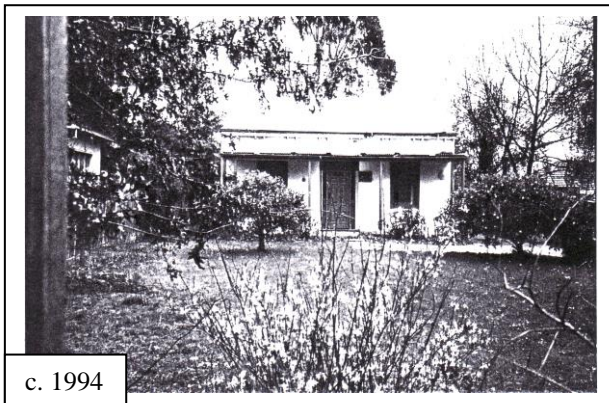
Son of William Henry Slater Snr.

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## William Henry Slater Junior *continued:*

### *Description:*

*The house at 106 Surrey Road, Blackburn, is a single-storey double-fronted Victorian timber cottage with a block-front façade and conventional weatherboard elsewhere. The hipped roof is clad in corrugated galvanised steel, and there is a matching skillion verandah support on square timbers posts with a cast iron lacework frieze. The central placed front door is flanked by a single timber double hung sash window on either side. There are no chimneys.*



*The house has undergone extensive renovation and reconstruction. A photograph taken in 1994 as part of the City of Nunawading Heritage Survey Project showed the house to have had a roughcast cladding, possibly on cement sheeting, and the flat roofed verandah dated from the 1960s. The recent building program has included the reinstatement of a traditional Victorian verandah, weatherboard cladding, and the addition of a substantial hipped roof wing to the north-west.*



### *Significance:*

*106 Surrey Road is of historical importance and aesthetic interest. Historically, the house is associated with the prominent Slater family, who were involved in the herb growing and distilling industry in the area, and in particular with William Slater Snr., thought to be responsible for the name of Mitcham. Aesthetically, the house is a good example of a typical block-front weatherboard Italianate timber villa which retains a relatively large site, a remnant of its rural history.*



The author is indebted to the Whitehorse Historical Society, Australia for the above information taken from the Heritage Review: Building Citations.

## DANIEL SLATER b. 1849 – d. 1876 Brother of William Henry Slater Snr.

### Daniel Slater:

It is also important to mention Daniel Slater. Daniel was a younger brother of William Slater Snr. and like William's only Son, also passed away at a young age. William was the first born of a very large family and Daniel (named after his father) was born in Mitcham, Surrey (*England*) some 17 years after William in 1849. On the 22nd August 1874 he left England to join his brother in Australia. He departed from Gravesend to Melbourne aboard the 'Lincolnshire'. Within two years of arriving in Australia Daniel had passed away on the 23 July 1876. The cause of death was Phthisis (*Pulmonary Tuberculosis*). He was just 27 years of age and unmarried.

**ALLPORT & MORGAN, BROKERS, 7, Leadenhall Street, London, E.C.**

**SCHEDULE B.**

FORM OF PASSENGER LIST.

Ship's Name.	Master's Name.	Tons per Register.	Aggregate number of superficial feet in the several compartments set apart for Passengers other than Cabin Passengers.	Total number of Statute Adults, exclusive of Master, Crew, and Cabin Passengers, which the Ship can legally carry.	Where bound.
<i>Lincolnshire</i>	<i>Edwards</i>	<i>1056</i>	<i>4500</i>	<i>360</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>

I HEREBY Certify that the Provisions actually laden on Board this Ship are sufficient, according to the requirements of the Passengers' Act, for \_\_\_\_\_ Statute Adults, for a Voyage of \_\_\_\_\_ Days.

Date *Aug 22nd 1874* (Signature) *Edw. Edwards* Master.

#### NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF PASSENGERS.

Port of Embarkation.	Names of Passengers.	Age of each Adult of 12 years and upwards.				Children between 1 and 12 Years.		Infants.		Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passengers.	English.				Scotch.				Irish.			
		Married.		Single.		M.	F.	M.	F.		Adults	Between 1 and 12	Infants	Adults	Between 1 and 12	Infants	Adults	Between 1 and 12	Infants			
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
<i>Gravesend</i>	<i>Bromby</i>									<i>gent</i>												
	<i>Edwards</i>									"												
	<i>Michael</i>									"												
	<i>Daniel</i>									"												
	<i>Edward</i>									"												
	<i>R. D.</i>									<i>Skute</i>												


**MESSRS. MONEY WIGRAM and SONS** (of Blackwall-yard, London) Line of Packets, comprising the Kent, Suffolk, Yorkshire, Norfolk, Sussex, and other well-known clipper ships, which have been built expressly for the Australian passenger trade.

For LONDON Direct,  
To Sail with the Strictest Punctuality,  
On MONDAY, the 3rd DECEMBER,  
The renowned clipper ship  
**L I N C O L N S H I R E,**  
1,100 tons, AI at Lloyd's,  
R. ROE, Commander.

The Lincolnshire under the experienced command of Captain Roe, has again accomplished a highly successful run to this port, and will be despatched for London direct on the 3rd December.

This well-known and favourite vessel was built expressly for the Australian trade, and her accommodations are admirably adapted to promote the comfort of passengers.

On her first outward passage the Lincolnshire completed the distance to her destination in 65 days; and her subsequent voyages having also been highly successful, it may be confidently stated that her sailing qualities are of that superior order which characterise the other well-known clippers of Messrs. Money Wigram and Son's celebrated fleet.



Clipper ship 'Lincolnshire' (1858) 1100 Tons. Built by Messrs Money Wigram & Sons, Blackwall, London.

# TIME LINE

## 1906 - 1933

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~ some known and not-so-well-known dates in history ~

Year	Event
1906	The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) immunization for tuberculosis is first developed. San Francisco earthquake (7.8) on the San Andreas Fault destroys much of San Francisco.
1907	The first <u>taxicabs</u> with <u>taxi meters</u> begin operating in London. <u>Robert Baden-Powell</u> leads the first <u>Scout</u> camp in England. Laurence Olivier, English stage and screen actor born
1908	<u>Ernest Shackleton</u> sets sail from <u>New Zealand</u> for <u>Antarctica</u> . Western bandits <u>Butch Cassidy</u> & <u>The Sundance Kid</u> are killed in <u>Bolivia</u> . Ford produce first <u>Model T</u> automobile.
1909	<u>Leo Baekeland</u> announces creation of <u>Bakelite</u> . Karl Landsteiner develops a system of blood grouping. <u>Ernest Shackleton's</u> expedition claims to have found the <u>magnetic South Pole</u> .
1910	<u>Comet Halley</u> is visible from Earth. <u>George V</u> becomes King of the <u>United Kingdom</u> .
1911	<u>Ronald Reagan</u> 40th President USA born. <u>Roald Amundsen's</u> expedition reaches <u>South Pole</u>
1912	<u>Sinking of the RMS Titanic</u> : Casimir Funk identifies vitamins. The Maternity Allowance Act goes into effect in Australia, excludes minorities. <u>Krupp</u> patents <u>austenitic stainless steel</u> .
1913	<u>General election in Tasmania</u> . <u>Joseph Cook</u> becomes 6th <u>Prime Minister of Australia</u> . <u>Death Valley, California</u> hits 134 °F (~56.7 °C). <u>Harry Brearley</u> invents <u>stainless steel</u> in <u>Sheffield</u>
1914	<u>World War I</u> . The guns of <u>Point Nepean</u> fort <u>Port Phillip Heads</u> in <u>Victoria Aus.</u> fire across the bows of <u>Norddeutscher steamer SS Pfalz</u> which attempted to leave <u>Port of Melbourne</u> in ignorance of war declaration and is detained; said to be first <u>Allied</u> shot of the War.
1915	<u>Einstein's</u> theory of <u>general relativity</u> formulated. Train ambush near <u>Broken Hill, N.S.W. Aus.</u>
1916	The <u>light switch</u> invented. Britain initiates <u>daylight saving time</u> . <u>Kirk Douglas</u> , actor born.
1917	8th year of the <u>1910s</u> decade between 1583-1929 with Julian Value: 1917 is 13 calendar days difference, and continued to be used until conversion to the Gregorian calendar in <u>1929</u> .
1918	<u>People Act</u> gives most women over 30 the vote in England. End of <u>WWI</u> and <u>Armistice with Germany</u> . " <u>Spanish 'flu</u> " becomes pandemic. <u>Russia - Shooting of the Romanov family</u> .
1919	<u>Bentley Motors Limited</u> is founded in England. The <u>League of Nations</u> is founded in Paris.
1920	<u>Australian Country Party</u> is formed by Nelson Pollard. <u>Leo McKern</u> , Australian actor born.
1921	Dr. <u>Marie Stopes</u> opens first <u>birth control</u> clinic in London. The province of <u>Northern Ireland</u> is created within the <u>United Kingdom</u> . <u>Adolf Hitler</u> becomes <u>Führer</u> of the <u>Nazi Party</u>
1922	A 20-ton <u>meteorite</u> lands near <u>Blackstone USA</u> . <u>The Sun News-Pictorial</u> , predecessor of <u>Melbourne, Australia Herald Sun</u> , is founded. The <u>British Broadcasting Company</u> is formed.
1923	First <u>Time</u> magazine hits newsstands in the USA. The original <u>Wembley Stadium</u> opened its doors for the first time. <u>Mount Etna</u> erupts in <u>Italy</u> 60,000 homeless. Police strike in Australia.
1924	<u>GMT</u> : A radio time signal is broadcast for the first time from the <u>Royal Greenwich Observatory</u> . Supposed invention of <u>Caesar salad</u> by <u>Caesar Cardini</u> in <u>Tijuana</u> .
1925	<u>John Logie Baird</u> successfully transmits the first television pictures with a greyscale image.
1926	Widows' pensions are introduced in <u>New South Wales, Australia</u> . Al Capone on the climax of his power. <u>A. A. Milne's</u> children's book <u>Winnie-the-Pooh</u> is published in <u>London</u>
1927	<u>Australian Parliament</u> convenes for first time in <u>Canberra</u> . <u>Charles Lindbergh</u> makes first solo, nonstop transatlantic flight. Britain: 1,000 people a week die from <u>influenza</u> epidemic.
1928	The <u>River Thames</u> floods in <u>London</u> . <u>Royal Flying Doctor Service</u> of Australia commences. op
1929	First appearance of <u>comic strip hero Popeye</u> . "The Battle Of Blood Alley" is fought by a <u>razor gang</u> in <u>Sydney, Australia</u> . <u>Wall Street Crash of 1929</u> . <u>Conscription in Australia</u> ends.
1930	The <u>3M</u> company markets <u>Scotch Tape</u> . The first <u>frozen foods</u> of <u>Clarence Birdseye</u> on sale.
1931	Automobile manufacturer <u>Porsche</u> founded. <u>The Star-Spangled Banner</u> adopted as USA National anthem. <u>Rupert Murdoch</u> born. <u>Dame Nellie Melba</u> , Australian soprano died.
1932	First <u>Purple Heart</u> was awarded. The <u>Sydney Harbour Bridge</u> opens. <u>Mars Bars</u> are sold for the first time. The first <u>Venice Film Festival</u> is held. <u>BBC World Service</u> begins broadcasting.
1933	<u>London Underground diagram</u> introduced to the public. First alleged sighting of <u>Loch Ness Monster</u> . <u>Charles Kingsford Smith</u> makes first commercial flight between <u>Australia &amp; N.Z.</u>

# HARRIET ELIZABETH SLATER

## b. 1858 - d. 1944

### Daughter of William Henry Slater (Snr.)

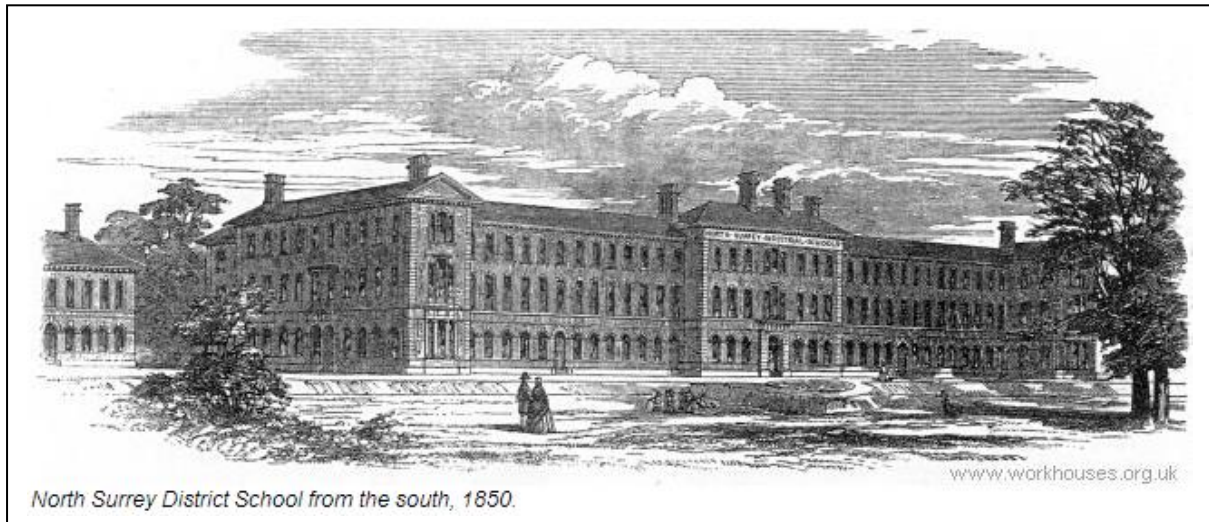
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**Harriet Slater:** The reader may recall in William's biography that he had a daughter from his first marriage in England to Harriet Bewsey. Daughter Harriet had a very interesting life but research has revealed some tragic events along the way.

Although her birth was registered as Harriet Elizabeth Slater born the 24 March 1858 in Mitcham, Surrey, England, some records do show her name as Harriett – with another 't'. Within five months of her birth her father William had emigrated to Australia in the September of 1858. In March 1959, a year after she was born her mother Harriet (at the age of 27) was found dead as a result of suicide by poisoning and mentally deranged.

It was not the best of starts in life for little Harriet but it appears from the 1861 census at the age of 3 she was living with her grandparents, (Daniel & Elizabeth Slater) who presumably brought her up until she went to school. The 1871 census indicates that she was attending a residential school in Penge, Surrey (England). Her grandparents died in 1873 (Daniel) and 1897 (Elizabeth). An entry in the Croydon 'Online History' states:

*"The North Surrey District School for pauper children, later known as Anerley School, opened at Penge in 1850. It aimed to teach children basic literacy and numeracy skills, and (more importantly) practical skills such as shoemaking, baking, farming for boys, and sewing and washing for girls."*



School District to facilitate the setting up of large joint schools for pauper children. Response to the Act was negligible until the disastrous outbreak of cholera at Mr Drouet's privately run pauper school at Tooting at the beginning of 1849 in which almost two hundred children died. In response to the incident, several London School Districts were established.

At its first meeting on 16th May, 1849, the Board decided to establish a District School for 500 children. A 56-acre site was found at Anerley, Upper Norwood, Surrey on the slope of a hill which was soon to be crowned by the Crystal Palace. The school, designed by Charles Lee, opened in November 1850. In 1930, the site was taken over by the London County Council. It operated as a residential school until its closure in around 1937. The buildings have all been demolished and modern housing now occupies the site.

# HARRIET ELIZABETH SLATER

## b. 1858 - d. 1944

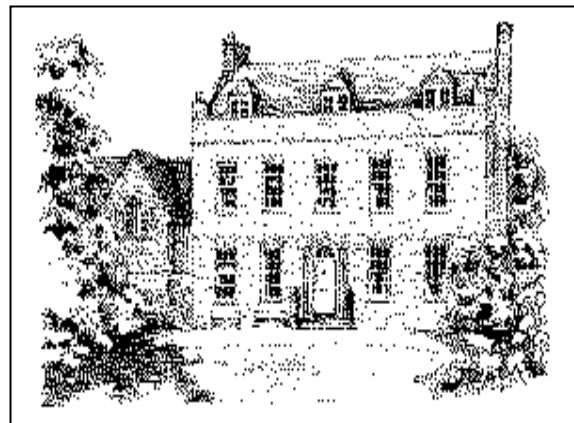
### Daughter of William Henry Slater (Snr.)

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#### Harriet Slater *continued:*

The foresight of Harriet's Grandparents (Daniel & Elizabeth Slater) in sending her to school and the skills she accomplished there, no doubt prepared Harriet to obtain a position when she left. What happened to Harriet in the intervening years between leaving school and 1881 cannot be established but the census that year (below) reveals that Harriet was employed as a Domestic Servant at Ropley House in Alresford, Ropley, Hampshire (*England*).

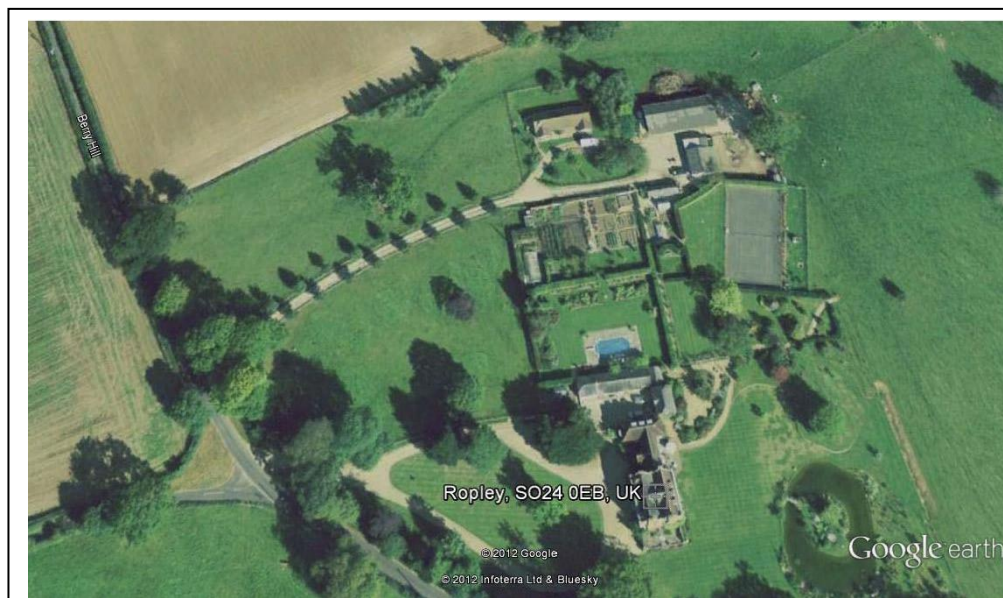
Name:	<b>Harriett Slater</b>	
Age & Est. Birth	23	abt. 1858
Gender:	Female	
Where born:	Mitcham, Surrey, UK	
Parish & District	Ropley, Alresford	
County/Country:	Hampshire, England	
Street Address:	Ropley House	
Occupation:	Domestic Servant	
Household Members:	Name	Age
	Miriana S Hagen	29
	Mary Lilly	48
	Philippa Williams	28
	Annie Boxley	46
	Mable Boxley	11
	Elizabeth Blake	44
	Harriett Slater	23
George Wallace	26	



**ROPLEY HOUSE**

The listed of 'household members' shown on the left reveals a clue to Harriet's later life ! Also the reader may like to know more about Ropley House. It seems to have had a chequered past – dare we mention 'smuggling' ! Web site link below:

[http://ropleyvds.hampshire.org.uk/annals/html/ropley\\_house.html](http://ropleyvds.hampshire.org.uk/annals/html/ropley_house.html)



#### **ROPLEY HOUSE**

Large  
Georgian  
House

Grade II  
Listed

English  
Heritage  
Building

Mid 18<sup>th</sup>  
century –  
early 20<sup>th</sup>  
century.

# HARRIET ELIZABETH SLATER

## b. 1858 - d. 1944

### Daughter of William Henry Slater (Snr.)

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#### Harriet Elizabeth Slater *continued:*

The tantalising clue that the author picked up on, namely George Wallace age 26 as another household member at Ropley House where Harriet worked, gave the author a further area of research. George was employed at Ropley House as a Gardener.

Given that Harriet and George were of a similar age the thought that they may have been (to quote a current turn of phrase), 'an item' was an opportunity not to be missed. The research 'paid off' ! They were married on the 30 June 1883.

<b>England, Marriages, 1538–1973</b>	
Groom's name:	George Frederick Wallace
Bride's name:	Harriett Slater
Marriage date:	30 June 1883
Marriage place:	Mitcham, Surrey, England
Groom's father:	George Henry Wallace
Bride's father:	William Slater

According to the 1881 census George Frederick Wallace was born in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire (*England*) in 1855 ? but may have spent his childhood in Dartmouth, Devon (*England*). There is some conflicting evidence as to his year of birth and where he was born. To be revealed later.

Harriet & George went to live in Twickenham, Middlesex (*England*) and in 1885 they had twin sons and the records show that they were born and baptised on the same day 27 May 1885 most probably due to the fact that it was apparent they would not survive. Sadly they did not survive. The sons were named after their father/grandfather Frederick and George. This was another tragic event in the life of Harriet. In 1886 a daughter was born at Twickenham – Dorothy Mary Wallace and was baptised on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 1886.

The 1891 census records no trace of the family and it appears from the shipping record that follows they emigrated to Australia in 1890 – an epic journey not to be undertaken lightly. But no doubt for Harriet to reconnect with the father that she never knew as a child was paramount. A huge milestone for her (just four years before he passed away) to at last meet the man she had most probably heard about but had never met. Harriet & George and daughter Dorothy departed from Antwerp aboard the S.S. Chemnitz and arrived in Melbourne on the 28 August 1890. This was the first of two ships to be named Chemnitz which did cause some confusion in tracking.

The first 'Chemnitz' was built by A. Stephen & Sons, Glasgow in 1889. She was a 2,758 gross ton vessel, length 320ft x beam 39ft, one funnel, two masts, single screw and a speed of 11 knots. There was accommodation for 10-1st and 320-2nd class passengers. Launched on 29 November 1889 for Deutsch - Australische, she was chartered to the Hamburg America Line in 1893. She sailed from Hamburg for New York on 22 June 1893 and made just the one round voyage on this route. In 1906 she was sold to Chile and renamed 'Enrique Lihn' and in 1911 was scrapped at Hendrik Ido, Ambacht.

Second class passengers could well be a euphemism for 'steerage' ! And in today's money this could have cost in the region of £1200 per ticket. The Wallace family did indeed travel 'steerage' and in the late 1800's the conditions could vary from ship to ship but on the whole they were not the most comfortable with very little (if any ! ) sanitary arrangements. Various accounts discovered on

internet searches have described such journeys as ‘horrendous’ and relayed in graphic detail with serious illness and even death commonplace.

## HARRIET ELIZABETH SLATER b. 1858 - d. 1944 Daughter of William Henry Slater (Snr.)

Harriet Elizabeth Slater *continued:*

**S.S. CHEMNITZ**  
Commander: Johanne Hellerich  
Arrived Melbourne 28 August 1890

NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF PASSENGERS.		Age of each Adult or 17 years and over.	Sex	Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passenger.	Remarks.
<i>Steerage</i>					
<i>Landung</i>	<i>26</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>20</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>24</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>20</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>25</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>19</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>20</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>23</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>19</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>15</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>11</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>11</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>23</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>23</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>11</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>27</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>37</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>30</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>23</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>40</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>23</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>30</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>37</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>26</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>28</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>22</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>16</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>11</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>9</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>7</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>5</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>3</i>				
<i>Landung</i>	<i>35</i>				

George Waller 37  
Harriette 30  
Dorothy 4

The passenger list clearly shows George Wallace (Gardener) and his wife Harriette ? The actual spelling is not very clear but appears to be another variation of her name. Also daughter Dorothy at the age of 4.

Postdamper „Chemnitz“.

The Argus (Melbourne) Friday 29 August 1890.  
**Shipping Telegrams**

**THE steamship Chemnitz, of the German-Australian line, entered the Head last evening, and reached the bay at a late hour. The Chemnitz is from Hamburg and Antwerp, with passengers and cargo. She is consigned to Messrs. Jas. Service and Co.**



In Australia Harriet and George had two other daughters namely Grace in 1892 and Esther in 1896. Esther had two daughters, Netne Hope Wilson Down in 1925 and Elizabeth Jean Down in 1928. It is Netne who is the mother of the siblings in Australia with whom the author is in contact. A line of descent that traces back to England before the 1700's.  
*Photograph of Harriet's family. L-R – Grace, George, Dorothy, Harriet, Esther. c.1897.*

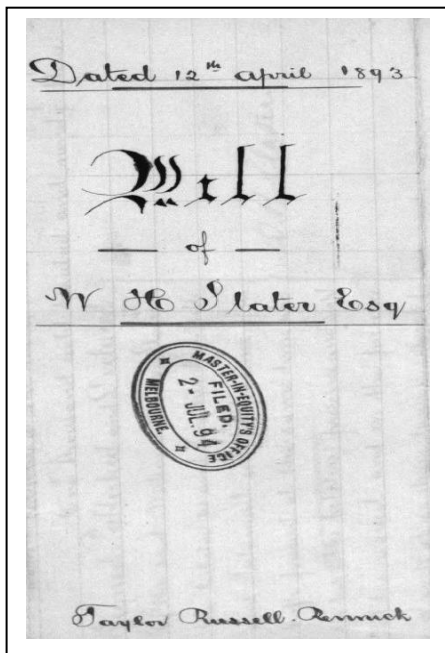
# HARRIET ELIZABETH SLATER

## b. 1858 - d. 1944

### Daughter of William Henry Slater (Snr.)

#### Harriet Elizabeth Slater *continued:*

William did not forget his Daughter Harriet when it came to writing his Will but it cannot be established as to whether Harriet actually came into possession of the land referred to. William's Will is rather a lengthy document but the relevant paragraph is copied below. It will be noted that although Harriet's birth was registered with one 't' her father refers to her in his Will as Harriett.



natural life And after the death of my said wife I give devise and bequeath all the land fronting Barnes Road between Mr Bayleys fence and the northern boundary of my land to my daughter Harriett Wallace absolutely I give devise and bequeath eight and half acres

The above reads: .....And after the death of my said wife I give devise and bequeath all the land fronting Barnes Road between Mr Bayleys fence and the northern boundary of my land to my daughter Harriett Wallace absolutely .....

Harriet Elizabeth Wallace (nee Slater) passed away at Caulfield, Victoria, Australia on the 30 March 1944.



THIRD SCHEDULE.		JH No. 2885
DEATHS in the District of MELBOURNE, in Victoria, Registered by SAMUEL HENRY EDGERTON HOLLOW		
1 No. ...	...	No 2885
<b>Description—</b>		
2 (1) When and where died ...	30th March, 1944, "Grimsdale House", Corner of Balaclava and Orong Roads, Caulfield, City of Caulfield, County of Bourke.	
3 (2) Usual Place of Residence ...	"Grimsdale House", Corner of Balaclava and Orong Roads, Caulfield, City of Caulfield	
4 Name and Surname ...	HARRIET WALLACE,	
5 Sex and age ...	Home Duties, Female, 85 years.	
6 (1) Cause of death ...	Chronic Endocarditis - years.	
7 (2) Duration of last illness ...	Dr. H. Joske, 29th March, 1944.	
8 (3) Legally qualified medical practitioner by whom certified ... and (4) When he last saw deceased ...		
9 Name and surname of father and mother (maiden name, if known), with occupation ...	Unknown Slater, Unknown Slater, formerly Buissey, Orchardist.	
10 Signature, description, and residence of informant ...	<i>S. H. ...</i> Authorized Agent, Sydney Road, Brunswick.	
11 (1) Signature of Registrar ... (2) Date ... and (3) Where registered ...	<i>S. H. ...</i> 4th April, 1944. Melbourne.	
<b>If burial registered—</b>		
12 When and where buried ...	31st March, 1944, St. Kilda Cemetery, J. Allison.	
13 Undertaker by whom certified ...	W. McKenzie, A. Allison.	
14 Name and religion of Minister, or names of witnesses of burial ...		
<b>If deceased was married—</b>		
15 (1) Where ... and (2) At what age ... and (3) To whom ... (4) Conjugal Condition at Date of Death ...	Mitcham, Surrey, England, 53 years in Victoria. Twickenham, England, 25 years, George Henry Friend Wallace, Widow,	
16 Issue in order of birth, the names and ages ...	Dorothy Mary, 57 years, Grace, 51 years, Kathie, 48 years.	

## b. 1855/1857 - d. 1934 Husband of Harriet Elizabeth Slater

### George Henry Frederick (Friend) Wallace:

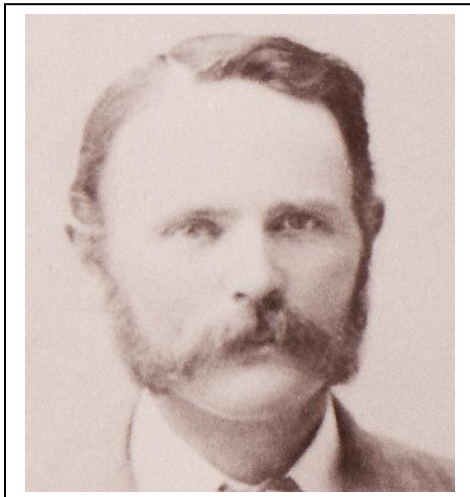
The reader may remember some contradiction with George's year and place of birth. In 1881 when George was working at Ropley House in Hampshire the census revealed that George was born in 1855 ? in Leamington Spa in the county of Warwickshire (*England*). However, his death certificate below seems to indicate that he was born in 1857 in Dartmouth, Devon (*England*).

Further research has enabled this conundrum to be unravelled. According to the 1861 census at the age of 4 he was born in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire (*England*) - but - the family were living in Dartmouth (*England*) and were still living there at the time of the 1871 census. George was then 14. However, just to add a little more confusion into the mix the 1871 census reveals that both his parents were born in Dartmouth ! Indeed three of George's younger siblings were born there so either 'assumptions' must have been made by the census recorder or the parents were briefly in Leamington Spa when George was born.

Further contradiction surfaced when his and Harriet's death certificates both included 'Friend' as one of his names instead of 'Frederick'. He was certainly married as George Henry 'Frederick' but somewhere along the line his mother's maiden name of 'Friend' was adopted. His mother's maiden name is shown on the death certificate opposite.

Harriet's husband George had pre-deceased her by some 10 years, passing away in Prahran, Australia on the 22 November 1934

George - a very handsome man !



THIRD SCHEDULE.		10381
DEATHS in the District of MELBOURNE, in Victoria, Registered by SAMUEL HENRY EDGERTON HOLLIER.		
1 No. ... ..		10381
<b>Description—</b>		
2 When and where died ... ..	22nd November, 1934. 45 Raleigh Street, Prahran, City of Prahran, County of Bourke.	
3 Name and surname ... ..	George Henry Friend WALLACE.	
Occupation ... ..	Gardener.	
4 Sex and age ... ..	Male. : 77 years.	
5 (1) Cause of death ... ..	Acute Bronchitis - days	
(2) Duration of last illness ... ..	Cardiac Failure - hours	
(3) Legally qualified medical practitioner by whom certified ... ..	Dr. E.S. Joske.	
and		
(4) When he last saw deceased ... ..	22nd November, 1934.	
6 Name and surname of father and mother (maiden name, if known), with occupation ... ..	George Wallace; Mary Anne Wallace, formerly Friend; Farmer.	
7 Signature, description, and residence of informant ... ..	<i>J. Allison</i> Authorized Agent, Sydney Road, Brunswick.	
(1) Signature of Registrar ... ..	<i>S. H. Hollier</i>	
(2) Date ... ..	22nd November, 1934.	
(3) Where registered ... ..	Melbourne.	
<b>If burial registered—</b>		
8 When and where buried ... ..	23rd November, 1934. St. Kilda Cemetery.	
Undertaker by whom certified ... ..	Joseph Allison, acting for Joseph Allison Proprietary Limited. D. Kennedy.	
10 Name and religion of Minister, or name of witness of burial ... ..	A.H.Allison.	
11 Where born, and how long in the Australian States, stating which	Dartmouth, England. 44 years in Victoria.	
<b>If deceased was married—</b>		
12 (1) Where ... ..	Mitcham, Surrey, England.	
and		
(2) At what age ... ..	26 years.	
and		
(3) To whom ... ..	Harriet Slater.	
13 Name in order of birth, the names and ages ... ..	Frederick, deceased. George, deceased. Dorothy Mary, 48 years. Grace, 45 years. Esther, 38 years.	



# TIME LINE

## 1934 - 1960

~ some known and not-so-well-known dates in history ~

Year	Event
1934	<a href="#">Kipling</a> and <a href="#">Yeats</a> awarded Gothenburg Prize for Poetry. Barry Humphries, Australian actor and comedian born. Persia becomes <a href="#">Iran</a> . <a href="#">Adolf Hitler</a> becomes <a href="#">Führer</a> of <a href="#">Germany</a> .
1935	<a href="#">Amelia Earhart</a> first person to fly solo from <a href="#">Hawaii</a> to <a href="#">California</a> . <a href="#">Alcoholics Anonymous</a> is founded in USA. <a href="#">Parker Brothers</a> releases the board game <a href="#">Monopoly</a> in the United States.
1936	King <a href="#">George V of the United Kingdom</a> dies. Construction of <a href="#">Hoover Dam</a> completed. <a href="#">Polaroid sunglasses</a> and Ambre Solaire <a href="#">sunblock</a> first marketed. King Edward VIII abdicates.
1937	German <a href="#">airship Hindenburg</a> bursts into flame. <a href="#">Wallis Simpson</a> marries The Duke of Windsor. <a href="#">Volkswagen Group</a> is founded. <a href="#">Walt Disney's Snow White &amp; the Seven Dwarfs</a> premieres.
1938	<a href="#">Steam</a> locomotive <a href="#">Mallard</a> sets the world speed record for steam by reaching 125.88 mph. A <a href="#">nylon</a> bristle <a href="#">toothbrush</a> becomes the first commercial product to be made with nylon yarn.
1939	<a href="#">United Kingdom</a> , <a href="#">France</a> , <a href="#">New Zealand</a> and <a href="#">Australia</a> declare war on <a href="#">Germany</a> . MGM's classic film <a href="#">The Wizard of Oz</a> premieres. WWII: The <a href="#">United States</a> declares its neutrality.
1940	Brisbane, Australia swelters through its hottest day ever, 43.2 degrees Celsius (109.76 Fahrenheit). The very first McDonald's restaurant opens in San Bernardino, California.
1941	WWII and <a href="#">Attack on Pearl Harbour</a> . <a href="#">John Curtin</a> becomes the 14th <a href="#">Prime Minister of Australia</a> .
1942	Boxer <a href="#">Muhammad Ali</a> born Cassius Marcellus Clay. Japanese submarines infiltrate Sydney Harbour in an attempt to attack Allied warships. Japanese warplanes bomb Darwin, Australia.
1943	The <a href="#">Australian Hospital Ship Centaur</a> is sunk off the coast of <a href="#">Queensland</a> by <a href="#">Japanese submarine</a> . WWII: <a href="#">John F. Kennedy's Motor Torpedo Boat PT-109</a> is rammed by a destroyer.
1944	WWII: The BBC transmits a coded message (the first line of the poem "Chanson d'automne" by Paul Verlaine) to the French Resistance, warning that the invasion of Europe is imminent.
1945	<a href="#">Victory in Europe</a> (V-E Day) as <a href="#">Germany</a> surrenders, marking end WWII in Europe. Adolf Hitler & his wife Eva Braun, commit suicide. Australian Prime Minister <a href="#">John Curtin</a> dies at 60.
1946	The Bank of England is nationalised. At least 800 <a href="#">Indigenous Australian</a> pastoral workers walk off the job in Western Australia, starting <a href="#">one of the longest industrial strikes in Australia</a> .
1947	<a href="#">Princess Elizabeth</a> announces engagement to Lieutenant <a href="#">Philip Mountbatten</a> . <a href="#">The Diary of a Young Girl</a> by <a href="#">Anne Frank</a> published two years after her death in a concentration camp.
1948	UK railways are nationalised to form British Railways. Indian pacifist and leader <a href="#">Mahatma Gandhi</a> is <a href="#">assassinated</a> . The English-built <a href="#">Land Rover</a> unveiled at Amsterdam Motor Show.
1949	Australian citizenship comes into being. <a href="#">Rationing</a> of clothes ends in Britain.
1950	Korean War begins. Apartheid: In South Africa, formally segregating the races. Richard Branson, British entrepreneur born. <a href="#">Ingrid Bergman's</a> illegitimate child arouses ire in the U.S.
1951	<a href="#">Remington Rand</a> delivers the first <a href="#">UNIVAC I</a> computer to the <a href="#">United States Census Bureau</a> .
1952	<a href="#">Elizabeth II is proclaimed Queen of the U.K.</a> <a href="#">Lynmouth</a> , <a href="#">Devon</a> , UK is devastated by <a href="#">floods</a> .
1953	<a href="#">Ian Fleming</a> publishes his first <a href="#">James Bond</a> novel. <a href="#">Jonas Salk</a> announces his <a href="#">polio vaccine</a> . The <a href="#">Melbourne Knights</a> is founded as Croatia SC in <a href="#">Melbourne</a> . The <a href="#">Korean War</a> ends.
1954	<a href="#">Bill Haley &amp; His Comets</a> record " <a href="#">Rock Around the Clock</a> ", starting the <a href="#">rock and roll</a> craze. <a href="#">Elizabeth II</a> first reigning monarch to visit Australia. <a href="#">RCA</a> manufactures first colour television.
1955	The game <a href="#">Scrabble</a> debuts. A young <a href="#">Jim Henson</a> builds the first version of <a href="#">Kermit the Frog</a> . Winston Churchill resigns as Prime Minister of the U.K. due to ill-health at the age of 80.
1956	Actress Grace Kelly marries Rainier III, Prince of Monaco. The <a href="#">Broadway</a> musical <a href="#">My Fair Lady</a> opens in New York City. British <a href="#">House of Lords</a> defeats the abolition of death penalty.
1957	<a href="#">Cavern Club</a> opens in <a href="#">Liverpool</a> . <a href="#">Humphrey Bogart</a> passes away. <a href="#">Boeing 707</a> first flight.
1958	Parking Meters are installed in Britain. Instant noodles go on sale for the first time. The U.S. Army inducts <a href="#">Elvis Presley</a> . <a href="#">Pizza Hut</a> is founded. The <a href="#">Bossa nova</a> is born in <a href="#">Rio de Janeiro</a> .
1959	The <a href="#">Xerox 914</a> , the first plain paper copier, is introduced to the public. The first known human with <a href="#">HIV</a> dies in the <a href="#">Congo</a> . The original <a href="#">Mini</a> designed by Sir <a href="#">Alec Issigonis</a> is launched.
1960	Re-named Beatles begin 48-night residency at Indra club in Hamburg, W. Germany. <a href="#">Elvis Presley</a> returns home after 2 years in the Army. John F Kennedy elected President of USA..

# ESTHER WALLACE

b. 1896 - d. 1959

Grand Daughter of William Henry Slater Snr.

## Esther Wallace:

The youngest of George and Harriet's daughters Esther was born at Armadale, Australia 3 February 1896. Refer to: William Slater's Family Tree 'The Australian Connection'.

Esther married Harold Percy Down on 1 January 1921 at Melbourne Grammar Chapel, Domain Road, South Yarra, Victoria. A delightful photograph of their wedding is below:

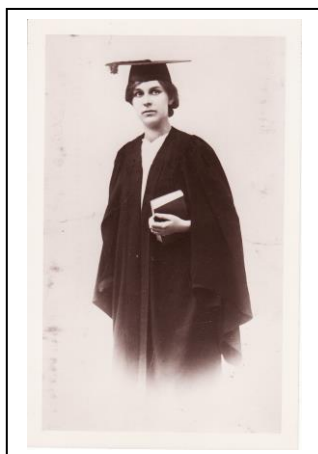


CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.													
Year 1921. Parish or Church District— <i>Melbourne Grammar School</i>				Denomination—				C					
No. in Register.	When and where Married.	Name and Surname of each Party.	Original Condition, also Date of licence of each Party (if Widowed, or Date of Order Absolute if Divorced).	Children by each former Marriage.		Birthplace.	Occupation.	Age in Years (last Birth-day).	Exact Residence of Each Party.		Parents' Names.		
				Male.	Female.				Present.	Usual.	Father.	Mother.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	
67	1 Jan 1921 Chapel of St Peter Melbourne Grammar School	Harold Percy Down  Esther Wallace	bachelor  Spinster			<i>Armadale, Vic.</i>	<i>Schoolmaster</i>	30	<i>Melbourne Victoria S. Yarra</i>	<i>Melbourne Victoria S. Yarra</i>	<i>Harold Percy Down</i>	<i>Christina Jane Brennan</i>	
							<i>Schoolmistress</i>	24	<i>Melbourne Victoria S. Yarra</i>	<i>Melbourne Victoria S. Yarra</i>	<i>George Wallace Carroll</i>	<i>Harriet Slater</i>	
We declare that the above is a true statement of the particulars relating to each of us respectively; and that Marriage by banns was solemnized between us on the date and at the place mentioned according to the rites of the <i>Anglican</i> Rite.				<i>Harold Percy Down</i> <i>Esther Wallace</i> Signatures of the Parties.				I, <i>Leonard Percival H.A.</i> , being a <i>minister of the Church of England</i> , do hereby certify that I have, this day, duly celebrated Marriage between the above-named parties, after notice (had been dispensed with by permission of <i>Her Majesty</i> ) and after declaration duly made as by law required (and with the written consent of <i>Her Majesty</i> ). Dated this <i>1st</i> day of <i>January</i> 19 <i>21</i> . Signatures of Minister, Government Statist, or Registrar of Marriages: <i>Leonard Percival</i>					
Signatures of Witnesses: <i>Teria Mary Jones</i>													

**ESTHER WALLACE**  
**b. 1896 - d. 1959**  
**Grand Daughter of William Henry Slater Snr.**

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**Esther Wallace** *continued:*



As can be seen by the photographs above Esther was student and passed into the Melbourne University at the early age of 16. She died on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1959 and the following obituary in a local newspaper gives a very good account of her life.

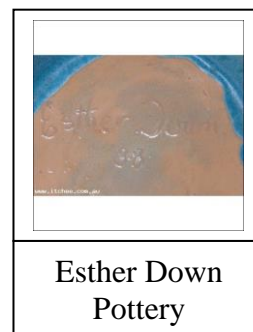
**Well – Known Educationalist Passes**

*On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> inst. the death occurred at her home at 42 Smythe Street, Benalla of Mrs Harold P Down. The deceased was the third and youngest daughter of the late Mr George Henry Friend Wallace of Dartmouth and his wife Harriet Slater of Croydon, England, and later of Melbourne.*

*As a student, she won a Government exhibition and passed into the Melbourne University at the early age of 16 years. Graduating in Arts before she was 20, she continued her studies and gained the Diploma of Education. After graduating she joined the teaching staff of Clyde School in Alma Road, St Kilda but when Clyde moved to Woodend she transferred to the Camperdown Church of England Girls' Grammar School, when after 12 months, she was appointed as headmistress, a position which she held until her marriage in 1921 to Mr Harold P. Down who occupied a senior teaching post at the Melbourne Grammar School.*

*When in 1925, her husband became principal of Grimwade House, Mrs Down contributed much to the social life of the school. She was loved by parents and boys and also by the teaching and domestic staffs of the school. On Mr Down's retirement in 1952, she collaborated with him for two years in literary work. On taking up residence in Benalla, Mrs Down's health began to fail, and eventually she succumbed to the effects of arterio sclerosis.*

*Mrs Down was interested in a variety of hobbies and until after the second World War was a member of the Lyceum Club. She exhibited pottery with the Art & Crafts Society. For several years during the Second World War, she became a member of her husband's teaching staff, and taught mathematics until the end of the war. Her husband and two married daughters survive her. The funeral was private.*



# MITCHAM – VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA

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Mitcham Railway Station  
The 'old' and the 'new'.



Mitcham Post Office



The Rotary Club of Mitcham



Local Café



William Slater certainly started something !  
Lavender had to feature somewhere here.  
**Blueberry Ruffles** – this is one of the  
'Ruffles Series' which was specially bred in  
Victoria for Australian conditions.

# THE 'SLATER RESERVE' - AUSTRALIA



~ Linda at the 'Slater Reserve' ~  
The 'Slater Reserve' (on the left)  
is actually in Blackburn North which is  
about 4-5 kms from Mitcham.

Slater Avenue is just to the  
right of the Slater Reserve.



# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

## The Eastern Times

### Victoria, Australia

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**Reprinted from the Eastern Times (date unknown) estimated 1961:**

**Mitcham – Blackburn Link – Slater Family Came Here in 1854** (1858). A woman whose grandparents came to the North Blackburn district from Mitcham, Surrey, England, 107 years ago recently completed a holiday visit to Melbourne from West Australia. She was Mrs C T Browning of Nedlands, West Australia, who was on a brief holiday visit to stay with her sister Mrs S C T Cosley, 12 Laburnum St. Blackburn.

Mrs Browning (her sister is a keen reader of the 'Eastern Times') said that her grandparents **Mr & Mrs William Slater**\*\* – came from Mitcham, Surrey, England in 1854 (1858) to settle near the Koonung Creek close to today's Surrey Road North Blackburn, on a property that extended northwards into Doncaster. They brought the name of Mitcham to Australia. The Slaters called their property 'Mitcham Groves' (*Grove*) after the Mitcham they knew in Surrey – a name which was later applied to the well known road of today. (\*\**Later evidence has established that William Slater travelled with a lady called Mary Slater who was not his wife at that time. William Slater & Mary Ann Cresswell did not marry until 1864.*

Her grandparents, Mrs Browning said, began by growing lavender for perfume on this property and later established a distillery manufacturing eucalyptus oil for medicinal purposes. It was one of the first – if not the very first – venture of its kind in Australia, Mrs Browning added. The particular brand name they gave to their eucalyptus oil was 'O'Possum' (*Old Possum*) and the project developed to such an extent that large quantities were sold to the Melbourne firms and some was exported from Australia.

Mrs Browning (her name was Bailey) (*Bayley*) said her grandmother used to spend many anxious times alone at Mitcham Groves (*Grove*) when Mr Slater was absent on business and at a time when settlers had to keep a watchful eye out for wandering or hostile aborigines. Mrs Browning has lived in West Australia for about the past five years. There were still branches of the Slater family living in North Blackburn, Mrs Browning said.

# A SHORT HISTORY OF NUNAWADING

Compiled by E M Ronaldson BA B.Ed

Nunawading Historical Society – April 1971

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## The following are extracts from the above:

..... another problem of an intending farmer was to clear the land. The growing township of Melbourne was prepared to buy the timber from Nunawading, especially as fuel. The roads to the city were no better than tracks so that the bullock drays carrying timber made slow progress. Some of the early settlers found it easier to burn their timber carefully and then sell the charcoal in Melbourne.

Once the land had been cleared the settlers experimented with various types of farming to determine what could be produced successfully in the district. Maynes and Frankhausers in the south were among the first to grow apples which proved to be the most suitable crop in that area. In the northern section of Nunawading, near Koonung Creek, a different type of farm was successfully established by **William Slater and his wife**, a medicinal herb garden.

**Slater** worked for sixteen and a half years in the medicinal gardens of Potter and Moore's in Mitcham, the county of Surrey in England. When he emigrated to Australia he brought cuttings in sand and special seeds with him. The present town of Mitcham, which takes its name from the English town, is some distance from the Slater property and the reason for its name occurring in this location is unknown.

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**William Slater's** herb garden continued to flourish. He supplied dried herbs and perfumes from distilled plants to Rocke Tomsitt and Felton Grimwade. He also made use of the local plants, especially the peppermint gums to distil fine eucalyptus oil, "Opossum Brand". In 1886 **Slater** gave evidence before a Royal Commission enquiring into horticulture. A list of the plants grown in Mitcham was given and an explanation of their uses.

"Onions for sprains and earache, marshmallow in ointment to relieve burns and sprains, horehound for beer and coughs, sage tea for chest troubles and an excellent tonic, parsley for a kidney tonic, lemon scented verbena, thyme or rosemary for baths and to soak the feet, and the deliciously scented geranium with lavender for sachets to put among linen and in clothes drawers."

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<b>Timeline:</b>	1865	William Slater arrives in the district. ( <i>revised 1858</i> )
	1886	William Henry Slater ties for a position on Nunawading Shire Council – lost on the toss of a coin.
	1892	W H Slater testifies to the Royal Commission on Vegetable Products.
	1979	Slater Reserve established through purchase by City of Nunawading.

# THE HISTORY OF NUNAWADING

by Niall Brennan

1972

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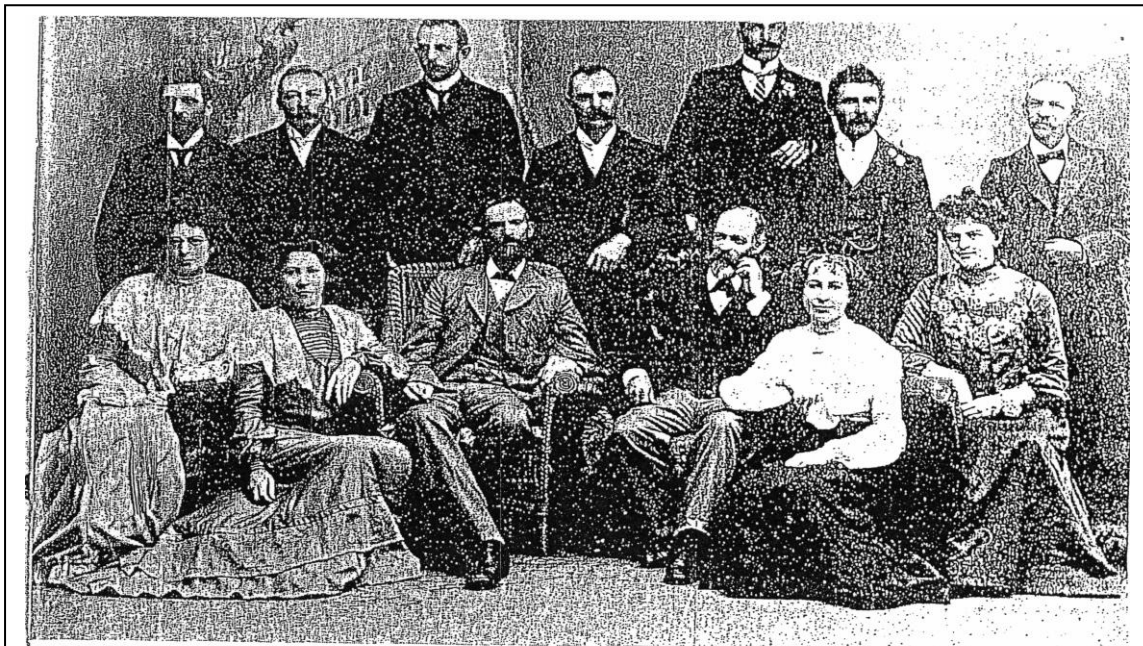
**The following are extracts from the above:**

Further east was a reminder of an old town in England; the **Slater** family called their property 'Mitcham Grove' and the district soon became known as Mitcham.

The harsh terrain of Victoria east of Melbourne was not the land of opportunity which many migrants might have hoped for but one at least was to advance himself on the basis of skills which he brought with him from England where he had been a servant and was able to become in a big way, a master. **William Slater** had acquired a considerable knowledge of herbs and horticulture while working as a contractor in Mitcham, Surrey, in the south of England. He seems to have been a contractor supplying pickers and other labourers and one of the people who employed him was Major Moore, of Potter & Moore perfume fame. Moore grew roses by the acre and **Slater** and his assistants gathered them so that the buds could be distilled for perfume. Moore also grew mint and lavender as well as fruit trees.

**Slater** migrated to Australia in 1856 (1858) and bought land on the south side of Koonung Creek with frontages to tracks now know as Surrey and Springfield Roads. Here he built a home, cleared the land and planted acres of roses in order to dry and distil the buds for perfume. Over a period of twenty years he built up on five acres a remarkably successful but highly specialised farm in herbs and distilled essences. He produced among other things a brand of eucalyptus oil from local trees which he marketed as Possum Brand. He even built up an export trade to America.

**Slater** was also interest in a scent farm at Dunolly but in the long run, labour costs became too high and in the early 1900's (1894) he died and took most of his recipes with him. His fruit production was more profitable and his orchard remained in production until recent years. It even expanded and was used for University field days. When his grandson retired, the whole property was subdivided. **Slater** was certainly one of the people directly responsible for naming Mitcham.



*Typical group of stylishly-attired Nunawading citizens*



# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

## Nunawading Gazette

### Victoria, Australia

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Reprinted from the Nunawading Gazette 15 September 1982:



● Mr Robert Slater, 86 — at home in Blackburn.

**It began with a herb farm 117 years ago** – The man whose family name has been given to Nunawading City's newest public parkland is 86 and still living in Blackburn. Mr Robert Slater's family links with Blackburn North go back at least to 1865 (*1858 revised*) when his grandfather established a herb farm there. Mr Robert Slater, who moved only quite recently moved from Blackburn North to a flat in Vine St. Blackburn, was born in Surrey Rd, Blackburn, in 1896 and has lived nearby since.

His grandfather, **William Slater**, came to Australia from England in 1830 (*1858 revised*) and started the Slater tradition on the Blackburn scene. The herb farm William Slater established is believed by Nunawading Historical Society to have been the first in Australia. The expansive original Slater property stretched between Surrey and Middleborough Roads to the north of Springfield Rd.

“My grandfather used to grow herbs and make scents and medicines. He also grew roses and made scent from them and exported some of it to England” Mr Robert Slater said. The rest of the big property included apple, plum and cherry orchards.

Mr Robert Slater went to school at Blackburn Primary School on Whitehorse Rd and later worked on the orchard property of his Uncle, Mr Len Bayley, who had one orchard on Koonung Road and two on Springfield Rd west of Surrey Rd. Robert obtained his orcharding knowledge from his father, William Henry Slater Jnr., (*son of William Slater*), on another section of the large property.

After his marriage in 1920 Mr Robert Slater bought 10 acres of orchard on the north side of Junction Rd, stretching north to Koonung Creek. His brother, Frederick, who died many years ago also had an orchard off Junction Rd. In the 1950s the Board of Works bought seven acres of Mr Robert Slater's property and this land, finally bought by Nunawading Council in 1979, forms most of the new Slater Reserve. The three-and-a-half acres which Mr Slater retained is now all sub-divided and built on.

Until he moved this year to the small flat, Mr Slater, whose wife, Ethel, died about three years ago, had continued to live in the Junction Rd area close to his original orchard property.

# WINDOWS on NUNAWADING

## By Diane Sydenham

### 1988

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#### The following are extracts from the above:

**William Henry Slater** came to Victoria from Mitcham in England in the 1860's (*1858 revised*) and is believed to have introduced the name Mitcham to Nunawading. After having spent many year working with the large perfume manufacturer Potter and Moore, he bought land on the Koonung Creek, stretching back from Surrey Road and began growing medicinal herbs, and plants for perfume oils.

Slater called the property Mitcham Grove after his community in Surrey and grew peppermint, lavender, horehound, hyssop, pennyroyal, rue, broom, camomile, tansy and several other species on "ordinary land, rather of a loamy nature" with a clay subsoil. He found neither the soil not eh crop very different from what he had been used to in the United Kingdom, No artificial irrigation was necessary; he simply relied on the natural rainfall.

Slater prepared his own crop, distilling peppermint and lavender oils which commanded good prices on the internal market. Colonial-grown lavender was fetching fifty-six shillings a pound in 1886 and would fetch as much as one hundred shillings a pound when it was very scarce in England. Other herbs were dried, pressed and packaged. Slater believed there was plenty of opportunity for others to get into the business. He certainly had no trouble disposing of his crops; his major difficulty was in obtaining labour.

When he explained this problem to the Royal Commission on Vegetable Products in 1892, the commissioners brushed it aside in the belief that "the families of the intelligent farmers of Victoria" would overcome this difficulty. Encouraged by Slater's evidence and that of others like Felton and Bosisto, who were also active in distilling essences, the commissioners were eager to encourage more growers to this seemingly attractive and lucrative area. But the Royal Commission sat for several years before it was finally dissolved with very little to show for its time. The commission produced several inter reports before it was wound up in 1892. Its final report did into appear until 1895.

Slater also put the expertise he had acquired in herb-drying to good use in drying fruit for the local market. He had approximately ten acres planted as orchards, concentrating on apples, plums and cherries. At times he planted as much as three acres of strawberries which, he told the commission, paid well. He packed strawberries in eucalyptus leaves from trees on the property for safe transport to the Melbourne market. Eucalyptus was apparently also the basis for another course of income which he did not detail to the Royal Commission. Will Henry Slater established one of the first eucalyptus oil extraction plants and marketed his product under the O'Possum label.

Slater was an active and well-known citizen. He stood twice for election to the Nunawading Shire Council, both times unsuccessfully. In 1883 he lost to William Ellingworth and in 1886 tied for a position on the council with Alfred Rawlings and lost on the toss of a coin.

Like so many other orchard properties in Nunawading the Slater holding was overwhelmed by land taxes and rates and was slowly broken up. A small reminder of its existence remains in Slater Reserve. These seven acres were purchased by Nunawading Council in 1979. They now offer a delightful green space backing onto Koonung Creek. In a development recalling something of the original use of the land by early settlers, the Slater Reserve has also been made available for a community garden project.

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

## Nunawading Gazette

### Victoria, Australia

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#### **Reprinted extract from the Nunawading Gazette 10 January 1990:**

Nunawading's Herb Society is carrying on a tradition that began in the municipality more than a century ago. The president of the society, Ms Judith Fry, said the first commercial lavender and herb garden in the Nunawading area was farmed by pioneer **William Slater** in 1860. (*He arrived in Australia in late 1858*).

**Slater** bought seeds from England and his farm was so successful he exported herbs and seeds back to his homeland and to the United States. Many of the traditional herbs used at that time can be found in the garden of Schwerkolt Cottage in Deep Creek Rd, Mitcham.

“Herbs and flowers were brought to Australia by women from England”, Ms Fry said. “The plants were brought for their medicinal and cooking properties and as a fragrant reminder of their home country”.

#### **Reprinted from the Nunawading Gazette 28 March 1990:**

**Herbs Pioneer** – the interesting role Nunawading played in the development of the herbal medicine industry in this country was recalled when Mr Ron Pearce was a guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Nunawading Historical Society. Mr Pearce is a grandson of a local pioneer, **Mr Slater**, who established a medicinal herb farm along the then heavily timbered banks of the Koonung Creek in the 1960's after moving to Australia from Surrey, England, where he worked for Potter and Moore.

**Mr Slater's** pioneering role in growing herbs for medicinal purposes was earlier researched and documented by a foundation member of the society, the late Mrs Pat Faggetter of Vermont, herself a noted authority on herbs. Because there was no one in the **Slater family** to carry on the herb industry the land was later cleared for orchards and then subdivided for housing. To commemorate his family's link with the area, Mr Pearce presented the society with an apple picker's canvas bag (which holds equivalent to the old bushel) a soft fruit container which used to be hung from a branch as the picker gathered fruit.

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

## Nunawading Post

### Victoria, Australia

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#### **Reprinted from the Nunawading Post 25 August 1993:**

In the early days, most settlers in the Nunawading area worked on orchards or were farmers. One of the best known orchardists in the district was Edward Henry Pearce, known by everyone as Harry. Harry started working at an orchard in Springfield Rd in 1907, and later became manager, eventually buying the property in 1924. He grew a wide range of fruit including, peaches, apricots, plum, lemons and apples. But it was for his cherry crop that he was best known and he was called the 'cherry king', because of the excellent quality and quantity of his crop. He sold his cherries to MacRobertsons for their famous Cherry Ripe chocolate bar. This was long before the catchy slogan of 'everything you want and a little bit more' was advertised on our television screens.

Pearce was related to the man thought responsible for the name of Mitcham. **William Henry Slater** came from Mitcham, England in the 1860's (1858) and worked for years with large perfume manufacturer Potter and Moore (*in the UK*). **Slater** also worked as a farmer, growing herbs and apples, plums and cherries on about 10 acres of orchards. As a prominent citizen, **William Henry Slater** stood for election on the local council. In 1886, he tied with Alfred Rawlings for a position on the Nunawading Shire Council. The decision was made with the toss of a coin and **Slater** lost. Like his ancestor, Harry Pearce was good farmer and for years he travelled to the Victoria Market to sell his and other local growers crops.

During World Word I, fruit was considered non-essential so orchards were left abandoned while men went off to fight. However, during WWII, orchards were considered an essential industry and Pearce was able to maintain the orchard throughout the war and planted vegetables in the spare bit of dirt. In the late 1950's 22½ acres of the Pearce orchard was bought by the Education Department. Blackburn High School was built on the site, opening in 1956. But Cherry Ripe is still going strong under the management of Cadbury Chocolate.

# MAGAZINE ARTICLE

## 'Family Tree Magazine' - Australia

by Helen Oliver - September 2000

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### Who will buy my Mitcham Lavender ?

Since Roman times, possibly earlier, lavender has been valued for its aromatic oil and used for cosmetic and medicinal applications. Looking at the town of Mitcham in Surrey today, it is hard to visualise the summer fields of lavender awash with mauve haze and alive with the humming of bees. Yet there was an industry here which lasted until the Second World War, growing sweet herbs and distilling the oil.

There was already a tradition of physic gardeners who grew lavender and herbs in the area, when, in 1749 Ephraim Potter and William Moore began extracting oil of lavender on a commercial scale at Mitcham. The variety grown in the area was considered the most fragrant, and the soil in the Mitcham, Carshalton and Wallington district particularly suited sweet herbs.

The business was continued by Ephraim's son James Potter, a successful manager and grower who enriched both the business and himself. James Moore was a grandson of William Moore and a nephew of James Potter and he carried on the business through another successful period. He became Deputy Lieutenant of the County of Surrey and was a respect employer. James Moore's farm covered 500 acres and he had 16 work horses. Teams of four were used for each wagon, and some went up to London every day to take herbs and straw and came back loaded with dung to spread on the farm. He had various carts and wagons and, so that they could be independent, he employed a carpenter, wheelwright and blacksmith.

It was said that the best lavender crop came from three-year-old plants but the bushes could be cropped for six years in succession and then they were disposed of. Replacements were planted annually; the old bushes sometimes used to thatch the sides and ends of sheds or often kept to make a good blaze on Guy Fawkes Night bonfires. Not only was lavender grown but also peppermint, rosemary, camomile and roses. A reporter, in the *Croydon Chronicle of 29 August 1896*, remarked that the Mitcham district had a world renowned reputation of more than 150 years for the growing of herbs used in perfumery and medicine.

Potter and Moore's Herbal Distillery at Figges Marsh, Mitcham, was demolished in the late 1880s after James Bridger, the natural (illegitimate) son of James Moore, had died. The name and goodwill of the company was acquired in 1888 by W J Bush and Company who continued to distil oils and essences in their works off Church Road.

In 1882 the lease of an out-of-use lavender still was taken over by an energetic Frenchman, Philip August Lelasseur (1838-1921) who was a chemist and agriculturist. In France, the Parisian perfume manufacturers complained that they were unable to obtain truly pure oils. So Lelasseur came to Mitcham because of its excellent long established reputation. He rebuilt the distillery and installed modern steam power, and opened for business in 1885. The business operated under the name of John Jackson and Co, and at first Philip Lelasseur purchased lavender from local growers but thought he was being overcharged. Lelasseur acquired two farms in nearby Wallington and Carshalton which gave him 600 acres to cultivate, and later he bought 700 acres at Dorking, Surrey. He built a distillery there, at Bury Hill. John Jackson & Co eventually exported 90% of their oils to Europe. They also became major supplies of peppermint oil to the confectionery industry and for medicinal purposes.



*The initials of J J & Co. can just be seen on the sacks in the photograph above.*

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*Continued.....*

*Reprinted from the Family Tree Magazine September 2000 by Helen Oliver – continued:*

**Other major growers and distillers in the area were James Arthur who employed a large number of men and women, Mr Edward Martin who had a farm at Nonsuch in Cheam, the Newman family, and William Sprules who operated from a mill on an island in the River Wandle. Others were the Slater, Weston and Miller families.**

These lavender and herb growers provided employment for many inhabitants in Mitcham and surrounding areas who tended the fields and harvested the crop. Lavender was usually gathered in August and small bagging hooks, known as mint hooks, were used. These were sturdy short, curved knives, like a small sickle, and were still available for sale from Mitcham even after the industry faded, as many people found them useful.

The lavender was bunched and thrown loose into 1.cwt bundles, called mats, wrapped in coarse cloth and carried into the still room. The cutting cost was twenty one shillings per acre and the oil was sold to the perfumers and chemists at forty shillings per pound. Women were employed to strip the flowers from the stalks. The copper stills could take about half a ton of blossom and this took 20 to 30 women six to seven hours to do. Then it was trodden down firmly by small boys, who were often stung by intoxicated bees still caught up in the flowers. Apparently the lads became used to this after a day or two !

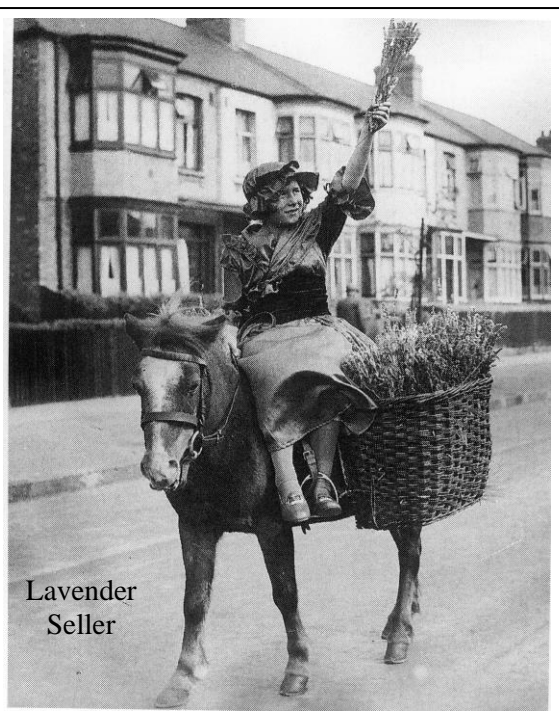
The peak of the lavender and herb trade was the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *The Post Office Directory of 1862* mentions a thriving industry; but by 1903 the same directory commented that, “cultivation of lavender and roses has, to a great extent, now ceased.” It had provided employment for many years in Mitcham and surrounding areas.

**Mr Edward Slater, who died in 1943 at the age of 91, was said to be the last of the commercial lavender growers in Mitcham. His family had grown lavender and peppermint for 150 years or more. Ben. Slater, a grower (of the same family), believed that the peppermint was healing, as he said he had at times cut himself badly whilst harvesting but “after bleeding freely for a while it would stop and heal in 24 hours”. One of the Slater family, William Slater, emigrated to Australia, where he continued the lavender trade and developed eucalyptus oil on a commercial basis.**

The distilling of lavender and other oils continued, however, and in 1933, W J Bush & Company’s distillery in Mitcham Road was the scene of a devastating explosion which caused the death of one young boy and seriously injured 23 people. Many nearby homes were damaged and their occupants had to be evacuated. Market gardening had taken over much of the land and the Mizen Bros were successful growers for some years, but eventually the area was built up and even the distillery in Mitcham Road was sold to the Oliver Typewriter Manufacturing Co Ltd in 1949 and finally demolished in 1960.

For some years after the decline of the commercial lavender trade in Mitcham lavender was grown by smallholders on a small scale and sold to the London markets where people would buy bunches to sew into bags to scent their clothes. Nowadays, the majority of Lavender oil is imported for use in the manufacture of soap and perfumery items. However, there is a thriving lavender growing industry in Norfolk\*.

But no longer do the old cries ring out “sixteen bunches a penny, sweet lavender”, however it only takes a little imagination to conjure up the scent of a field of lavender in Mitcham on a hot August day .



\* A list of other lavender nurseries can be found in this book.

# LAVENDER – What’s in a name ?

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The Romans called it ‘lavender’ which may have come from the Latin verb ‘lavare’ which means ‘to wash’ or from the word ‘livendulo’ which means ‘livid or bluish’. The Greeks referred to it as Nardus after the city of Naardus in Syria. People in India called it Spikenard, reference the shape of its flowers.

## THE ANCIENT WORLD:

### Egyptians:

Lavender was used in ancient Egypt for embalming and cosmetics. When the tomb of Tutankhamen was opened, jars filled with unguents containing something resembling lavender were found. These unguents were used only by the royal families and high priests in cosmetics, massage oils, and medicines. Wealthy men put solid cones of this unguent on their heads, which melted and covered their bodies with perfume.

### Greeks:

The Greeks learned much from the Egyptians regarding perfumes and the use of aromatics. The Greek physician Theophrastus (3rd cent.BC) wrote about the healing qualities of scents in his book ‘Concerning Odours’. Unlike the ancient Egyptians who anointed their heads, the Greek philosopher Diogenes preferred to anoint his feet instead saying, ‘When you anoint your head with perfume, it flies away in the air and birds only get the benefit of it, whilst if I rub it on my lower limbs it envelopes my whole body and gratefully ascends to my nose.’ Anacreon recommended that the breasts be anointed since it was said they were the seat of the heart. Pliny the Elder, a Greek writer/encyclopaedist, noted benefits in helping with menstrual problems, upset stomachs, kidney disorders, jaundice, dropsy and insect bites.

### Romans:

Ancient Romans recognized lavender for its healing and antiseptic qualities, for its usefulness in deterring insects, and used it in washing. The first written record of the healing uses of lavender appears to be that of the Greek military physician Dioscorides in 77 AD. Dioscorides, a Greek military physician under the Roman Emperor, Nero, collected medicinal plants from around the Mediterranean. He described these plants and provided information about their medical uses in a 5-volume work entitled *De Materia Medica*. Lavender, he noted, when taken internally relieved indigestion, headaches and sore throats. Externally, lavender could be used to clean wounds and burns or treat skin ailments. Roman soldiers took lavender on campaigns with them to dress war wounds. Lavender was strewn on the floor to sweeten the air, fumigate sick rooms and as incense for religious ceremonies. Romans, who perfumed themselves lavishly, used the aromatic oils to perfume their hair, their bodies, their clothes, their bed, their baths, their military flags, and the walls of their houses. One of their most famous scented oils was nardinum, which included lavender. Women hung lavender next to their beds to incite the passions. The Romans may have known about *L. pendunculata* and *L. denata*, but included them under the name *L. stoechas*.

### Arabians:

The *De Materia Medica* served as the foundation for Arab physicians who read Syrian and Old Persian translations. The Arabs dominated the Mediterranean culture around the seventh century AD. They brought their medicine to Spain where it spread to the rest of Europe. Their greatest known physician, Abu Ali Sina, known as Avicenna (-980AD – 1037AD) mentioned the healing uses of lavender. Some varieties of lavender were first thought to have been domesticated in Arabia.

## MIDDLE AGES:

Lavender was little used in the Dark Ages except by monks and nuns. Monasteries preserved the knowledge of herbal lore in their physic gardens. They copied ancient manuscripts and recorded the medicinal effects of various plants. Under an edict of the Holy Roman Empire in 812 AD, they were charged with growing vegetables, medicinal plants, flowers and trees. **Lavender was one of the herbs listed as being grown at Merton Abbey which was to become the centre of lavender production in England - Mitcham. Lavender is first mentioned in 1301 in the records of Merton Priory as being used to raise money for King Edward I.**

## **MIDDLE AGES** *continued:*

Lavender experienced a renaissance in Tudor England. When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, lavender moved to domestic gardens. The ladies of the manor used lavender for all kinds of things. It was placed among linens, sewn into sweet bags, used to freshen the air, and mixed with beeswax to make furniture polish. Traditionally it was planted near the laundry room and linens and clothing were laid over the plants to dry while absorbing the fresh odour of lavender. It was also useful in repelling insects. Queen Elizabeth, who loved lavender, used it in tea to treat her frequent migraines and as a perfume. (Lavender is one of the oldest perfumes used in England.) She encouraged the development of lavender farms. Henrietta Marie, wife of King Charles I, who brought cosmetics to the English court, used lavender in perfumed soaps, potpourris, and water for washing and bathing. King Charles VI of France had his seat cushions stuffed with lavender. In the twelfth century Hildegard of Bingen noted that oil of lavender was effective in the treatment of head lice and fleas.

## **RENAISSANCE:**

In 16th century France lavender was regarded as an effective and reliable protection against infection. Glove makers who were licensed to perfume their wares with lavender often seemed to escape cholera. 17th century lavender was found in most herbals as a cure all. The great English herbalists Gerard, Parkinson and Culpepper all wrote about lavender. Great interest was generated and lavender street sellers appeared. Prices were high during the Great Plague of 1665 when lavender was thought to protect against this terrible disease. Grave robbers washed plague victim's belongings in Four Thieves Vinegar, which contained lavender.

## **VICTORIAN ERA:**

Queen Victoria was a great enthusiast in the use of lavender. She appointed Miss Sarah Sprules 'Purveyor of Lavender Essence to the Queen.' Lavender was very fashionable among the ladies. They bought it from street sellers who brought it up from **Mitcham**. Fresh lavender was dried and put into muslin bags for wardrobes, used to wash walls and furniture and lavender bags were stuffed between sheets in linen presses. Lavender was used to repel insects, treat lice, as a perfume and a potpourri, in furniture polish and soap and as a cure-all in household medicine cupboards. Smaller bags were made for young women to wear in their cleavage in hopes of attracting a suitor. Lavender appeared in the London Pharmacopeia. Its overuse contributed to its loss of popularity in the early 20th century when it became associated with old ladies.

During Victorian times **Mitcham**, a London suburb, was the centre of lavender oil production. English lavender products become known all over the world. Lavender production nearly died out because of the pressure of increasing land values in **Mitcham**, Wallington, and Carshalton. In the US, Shakers grew lavender commercially. It was popular in gift items and medicines.

## **MODERN ERA:**

Rene Gattefosse, one of the founders of modern day aromatherapy, verified the healing and antiseptic qualities of lavender when he burned his hand badly while working in his lab. He used lavender oil; the pain stopped and the burn healed quickly with no infection or scarring. Lavender oil was used to dress war wounds during the 1st world war medical antiseptics were in short supply.

Provence is now the world's largest lavender producing region. The Romans first brought it into the area. By the 20th century shepherds collected it to sell to perfumeries of Grasse. Just before World War I, perfumers and the French government saw lavender production as a means of keeping people from leaving the area so they cleared the almonds orchards and planted lavender. Other producers are Spain, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Bulgaria, Russia, Australia, Japan, Canada, and U.S. Today it is used to induce sleep, ease stress and relieve depression. It is also used as a tea, to make compresses for dressing wounds and to apply to the forehead to relieve congestion on sinuses, headaches, hangovers, tiredness, tension and exhaustion.



# ARTICLE by RON PEARCE (2001)

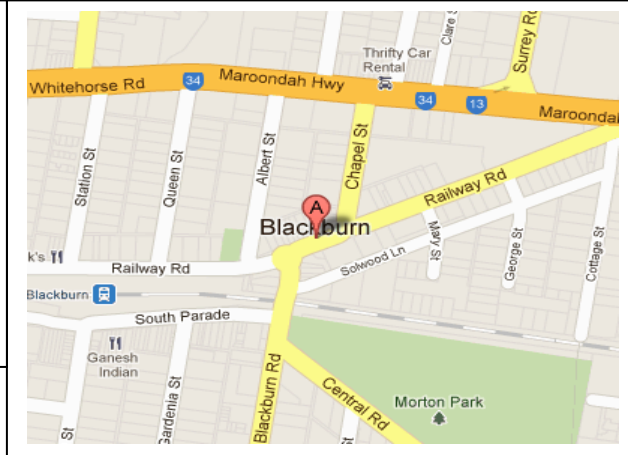
## Great Grandson of William Slater Snr.

And finally, because of the length of the hand written document that follows it was decided to reserve a place for this at the back of the book. It is a very important and valuable first-hand account of life in the early 1900's. However, the following are relevant extracts from this document:

*Ron Pearce's Grandma (Mrs M Pearce) .....* “established what is a reputed to be the first shop in Blackburn (*a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia*) - on the corner of Railway Road and Chapel Street about 1878, selling groceries and greengroceries until sometime in 1999. Her son Duncan Spencer Pearce helped her in the shop; they had a horse and cart and used to deliver around the district. As a child I used to go with Uncle Spencer on his rounds.”

“Mrs M Pearce was the daughter of William Slater (*Snr.*) who emigrated to Australia about 1856 (*1858*) and bought land on the south side of Koonung Creek with frontage to tracks now known as Surrey and Springfield Rds. He cleared the land and planted acres of roses and various herbs – he came from England where he had been employed by Potter & Moore the perfume manufacturers. He built up a successful business in herbs and distilled essences. He produced his own brand of eucalyptus oil which was marketed as “Possum Brand.”

“He had an orchard also which was expanded and used for University field days, my father and I kept this going until it was finally subdivided for building blocks. Grandma used to tell me about getting up at dawn to pick the roses for oil of roses and attar of roses.



Reputed to be the first shop in Blackburn, Vic. Aust. - on the corner of Railway Road and Chapel Street about 1878, selling groceries and greengroceries until sometime in 1999.

The map above shows the two streets and the approximate location.