

**Gilbert Harold Slater**  
**1892 – 26 November 1918**  
&  
**Ernest Victor Slater**  
**1895 – 24 November 1918**

**T**hese two only children of *Frederick and Mary Slater* both died within two days of each other, only days after the Armistice of 11 November 1918.. Ernest is buried at Tournai Communal Cemetery Allied Extension, Hainaut, Belgium and Gilbert Harold at Cambrai East Military Cemetery, France.

In 1891 father Frederick and his wife Mary were living at 48 Dean Mills, Halliwell. Frederick was a “packer in Bleachworks” and Mary, who was also born in Bolton, was a “Traveller for Blue Manufacturer”.

On the Census of 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1911, the Slater family were living in 10 Adrian Road, Smithills off Halliwell Road and near the junction with Moss Bank Way. Their father, Frederick, was aged 52 and was employed as a “Package man” in a Bleachworks (presumably owned prior to 1900 by the Ainsworths before shares were transferred to the Bleachers Association) and was Bolton born. Mary, aged 45, was a self-employed “greengrocer” Also in the household was Gilbert Harold aged 19, who was working in a Bleachworks as an “Invoice Clerk”, and Ernest Victor, aged 15 who was working in a greengrocer’s shop presumably helping his mother as he is shown on the Census as a “Greengrocers Assistant”. He is on the Smithills Chapel Memorial presumably because his father and brother were both working for the *Ainsworths*, and one son couldn’t be included to the exclusion of the other.

**Gilbert Harold:** enlisted on a “Short Service Attestation” at Bolton on 11th December 1915 but now his trade is shown as “Grocer”. He was single. On 20<sup>th</sup> May 1916 he was at No. 2 depot of the Royal Garrison Artillery, Fort Brockhurst, in Gosport.



Cambrai

In 1918 he was a sapper in the Royal Engineers attached to the Signal Sub. Section 57<sup>th</sup> Heavy Artillery Brigade, Royal Garrison Artillery when he died on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1918 aged 26 years. He was buried at Cambrai.

**Ernest Victor:** enlisted as a driver into the Territorial Force of the West Lancashire Division of the Royal Engineers on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1915 at St. Helens. Sadly at the top left of his ‘Attestation’ form appears the word “Dead”. He was with the 421<sup>st</sup> Field Company, Royal Engineers when he died on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1918 aged 23 years. He was buried at Tournai.

*The two Slater brothers are buried 12 miles apart.*

The ***Bolton Evening News*** of 9<sup>th</sup> December 1918 had the following entry:

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***“Died on Active Service”***



**“SLATER** – In loving memory of our dear boy, *Ernest Victor Slater* RE who died in a clearing station in Belgium November 24<sup>th</sup> 1918 aged 23 years.

**SLATER** – In loving memory of our dear boy, Sapper *Gilbert Harold Slater* RE Signals who died in a clearing station in Cambrai November 26<sup>th</sup> 1918.

***“The Lord gave and they are in  
His keeping still  
Blessed be the name of the Lord.”***

And lower down is this entry -

*“Mr and Mrs Slater desire to thank all friends for letters and sympathy and prayers in their great trial.”*

It is unclear whether the Slater boys died of injuries or were the victims of the “Spanish” influenza just starting to create casualties.

The Slater brothers are commemorated on a stained glass window at St Thomas’s Church, Eskrick St, Halliwell, Bolton.

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