

Leonard Keller (1912 – 1938)



Leonard Keller (1912 – 1938) was born in Eckington in Derbyshire. His parents were Albert Keller (1885 – 1957) and Edith Ward (1884 – 1962). His father had also been born in Eckington and his mother was from Mosborough. Leonard was baptised on 8th January 1912 in Eckington. Leonard was the third of six children. In 1935, at the age of 23 he married Nellie Sylvia Pass (1914 – 1989). Their marriage was reported in the Derbyshire Times

Derbyshire Times 27th September 1935

Keller – Pass

The wedding was solemnised at New Whittington Church yesterday, between Mr Leonard Keller, second son of Mr. and Mrs. A Keller, 81, High Street, Eckington and Miss Nellie Sylvia Pass, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Pass, Cross London Street, New Whittington. The bridegroom was formerly secretary to Eckington Wheelers, while the bride is also an enthusiastic cyclist.

Given away by her father, the bride wore a dress of blue flowered georgette, with hat and shoes to match, and she carried a bouquet of white chrysanthemums. She was attended by Miss Phyllis Keller (sister of the bridegroom), who wore a dress of Margaret Rose pink crepe suede. Her bouquet was of white chrysanthemums. Mr Frank West, Eckington, was best man and Messrs, Leonard Pass (brother of the bride) and Jack Keller (brother of the bridegroom) groomsmen. The ceremony was performed by the Vicar (Rev. W. T. Thornber). A reception was held at the bride's home. Mr and Mrs Keller are to reside at South Street, New Whittington.

Just three weeks before the disaster, the only child, Alan Royston Keller was born.

At the time of the disaster, Leonard, Nellie and Alan Royston were living at 15, South Street, New Whittington. Leonard was employed at Markham Colliery as a belt turner.

After the disaster there were several newspaper reports that mentioned Leonard.

Sheffield Independent 11th May 1838

Leonard Keller, (27), who lives at Whittington, Chesterfield was among the missing. He had been married for three years and his wife had a baby about three weeks ago. He was shocked by the last disaster at the pit in January, 1937, and said he would never work in a pit again. He eventually returned to the pit, although he was looking out for other work.

He told his brother only last week that he thought he would be able to start work shortly as a lorry driver.

Keller's brother had been working on the night shift and had only just got back when he heard news of the disaster. The father was told that Keller's mate had been rescued and taken to Chesterfield Hospital. Their son was not there.

Derbyshire Times 13th May 1938

Leonard Keller (26), 15, South Street, New Whittington, had been married for three years. The happy event of their first baby, born three weeks ago and christened last Sunday, emphasises the sorrow of the young wife. Keller, after receiving shock in the last disaster in January 1937, said he would never go down the pit again, but like most miners, his fears were soon forgotten. Recently he had hopes of securing employment as a motor driver. A native of Eckington, where his parents still live, Keller was formerly a keen cyclist, being captain and secretary of the old Eckington Blue Bird Cycling Club. Later he became a motorist, and had arranged to take another of the dead men, Colin Gee-Pemberton, of Renishaw, to Skegness in a week's time.

A year after the disaster, family members placed several In Memoriam notices in the Derbyshire Times.

Derbyshire Times 13th May 1939

KELLER – Treasured memories of LEONARD KELLER a dear husband and father, who fell asleep in Markham Pit Disaster. May 10th 1938.

For both of us he did best
Grant him, O Lord, eternal rest

- From Sylvia and Baby Alan

KELLER – To the memory of our dear son and brother, LEONARD, formerly of Eckington, who died in the Markham Colliery Disaster May 10th 1938.

“Ever in our Thoughts”

- From Mother, Dad, Brothers and Sisters.


Parents

Father: Albert Keller (1885 – 1957)

Albert Keller (1885 – 1957) was born in Eckington in 1885. His parents were William Keller (1862 -1940) and Sarah Ann Staton Hazlehurt (1863 – 1925). Both of his parents were natives of Eckington. Albert was their first son, following their marriage in Handley by Staveley on 23rd December 1883. On the 1891 Census, Albert, aged 5, was living with his parents, and two younger siblings at 81, West Street, Eckington. His father was employed as a coal miner. Ten years, Albert, aged 15 was still living at the same address with his parents and three younger siblings.

On the 30th April 1907, at the age of 21, Albert married Edith Ward (1884 – 1962) in Eckington. On the 1911 Census, Albert was working away from home in Wath on Dearne, Yorkshire. He was boarding at the home of William Froggatt, 52 Avenue Street, Wath on Dearne. His occupation was described as coal miner – hewer. His family home was 84 High Street, Eckington.

When Leonard was killed, Albert, Edith and two other children (Evelyn and John) were living at 81 High Street, Eckington. They were still living there at the end September 1939.

 Keller household (4 people)								
First name(s)	Last name(s)	DOB	Sex	Occupation	Marital status	Schedule	Schedule Sub Number	
Albert	Keller	10 Jun 1885	Male	Ripper In Coal Mine (Stone Contractor)	Married	243	1	
Edith	Keller	27 Apr 1884	Female	Unpaid Domestic Duties Telephonist Post Office Board (Switch)	Married	243	2	
Evelyn	Keller	15 Apr 1916	Female	Telephonist Post Office Board (Switch)	Single	243	3	
John	Keller	13 Jul 1921	Male	Sheet Baker (Steelworks Hw)	Single	243	4	

Albert died in 1957, aged 78, nearly 20 years after the death of Leonard.

Mother: Edith Ward (1884 – 1962)

Edith Ward (1884 – 1962) was born in Mosborough in 1884. Her parents were John Ward (1864 – 1936) and Harriett Large (1865 - 1919). Her father was a native of Eckington, and

her mother was a native of Mosborough. Edith was their first child, following their marriage on the 16th March 1884 in Eckington. On the 1891 Census, Edith, aged 7, was living with her parents, three younger siblings and two boarders at 46, South Street, Eckington. Her father was employed as an iron moulder. In 1901, the family had moved to the High Street in Mosborough. Edith now had four younger siblings. In 1907, Edith, aged 23, married Albert Keller in Eckington. On the 1911 Census, Edith is living at 84 High Street, Eckington, while Albert is working in Yorkshire. They had been married for four years and had two children, Doris and Reginald. Albert and Edith would have a further four children including Leonard.

Edith died in 1962, five years after the death of her husband and 24 years after Leonard was killed at Markham Colliery.


Wife: Nellie Sylvia Pass (1914 – 1989)

Nellie Sylvia Pass (1914 – 1989) was born on the 6th December 1914 in New Brimington. Her parents were John Robert Pass (1870 – 1958) and Ada Frances Ellis (1875 – 1970). Her father had been born in Brimington, Drrbyshire and her mother was a native of Sculcoates, near Kingston upon Hull. They had married on the 1st October 1895 in Coddington, Nottinghamshire. On the 1911 Census, her parents were living at 82 Victoria Street, New Brimington. Her father was employed as a blast furnace labourer, making pig iron.

Nellie married Leonard in 1935 in New Whittington. Their son, Alan Royston, was born just three weeks before the disaster in May 1938. On the 1939 Register, Nellie and her son were still living at 15, South Street, New Whittington. In 1942 Nellie married Stanley Slaney and had three daughters.

Nellie died years after her first

in 1989, 51 the death of husband.



Nellie S Slaney (Keller)'s life in 1939

📍 15 South Street North, Chesterfield M.B., Derbyshire, England

Slaney (Keller) household (4 people)

First name(s)	Last name(s)	DOB	Sex	Occupation	Marital status	Schedule	Schedule Sub Number
Nellie S	Slaney (Keller)	06 Dec 1914	Female	Unpaid Domestic Duties	Widowed	78	1

🔒 The record for this person is officially closed. [Can I get around this?](#) >