

# William Thomas Shute

(1861 - 1920)



William T. and Marion "Mattie" (Rust) Shute

In 1861, William T. Shute was the third child born to James L. and Abbie Shute, and was named after his mother's brother and father's business partner. He appears to have been the only one of James' children that joined the family business, Shute & Merchant, eventually becoming a partner in the firm.

As a young man, William T. attended school and, when he was old enough, began working as a clerk for Shute & Merchant. During his young adult life he met Mattie Bruce Rust, and they were married in Gloucester on October 2, 1884. As their wedding gift, James L. Shute had a house built at 9 Bellevue Avenue in Gloucester, and it was here that William and Mattie raised their family of five. -- When number 9 was built, the street was unpaved and there was no through traffic. There were only four other houses on their side of the street, and their house had open fields on both sides. In the back, the yard sloped away and provided a great view of the river. -- After his death in 1920, Mattie and the children continued to reside in that home until all of them were grown and married.

Shute & Merchant suffered through some difficult times while William T. and his father were partners, yet the company was able to recover from its debts of the late 1890's and continue on successfully. It was in 1906 that a group of four other fish companies banded together to form Gorton-Pew Fisheries. Among them was the David B. Smith fish company owned by the father of William T.'s good friend Benjamin A. Smith.



As part of the way to introduce a new line of products in 1906, it may very well have been William who chose to use a series of advertising postcards with scenes of Gloucester to spread the word to the various stores and consumers who might purchase Shute & Merchant products. About this same time, many businesses were experiencing financial concerns and it seems likely that by the following year William T. decided it would be beneficial to join the larger Gorton-Pew Fisheries. In 1907 an agreement was reached, and Shute & Merchant ceased to exist as it was absorbed by the larger firm. William continued working as part of Gorton-Pew by overseeing the business activities still taking place in the former Shute & Merchant buildings and by serving as the President of the Merchant Box Company. He continued in those positions until his death in 1920.

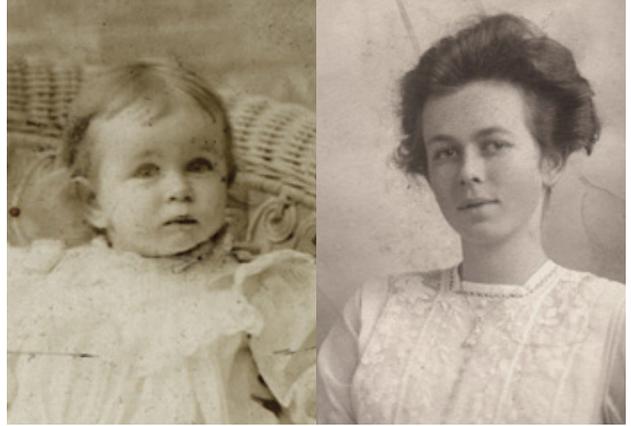
## The children of William T. and Mattie (Rust) Shute

Kenneth Bruce 1886 - 1941  
Margaret Grover 1894 - 1977  
George Haase 1897 - 1968

James Lovell, III 1900 - 1981  
Benjamin Smith 1904 - 1998



Kenneth B. Shute



Margaret "Peg" G. Shute



George H. Shute



James "Jimmy" L. Shute, III



Benjamin S. Shute

## 9 Bellevue Avenue Gloucester Massachusetts



This house still stands in 2016, and some of the original interior details have been rediscovered under added walls.

## Patents developed by William T. Shute

William T. Shute, was just as inventive as his father had been, and had two items he developed patented. One in 1890 was clearly connected to the fishing business of Shute & Merchant. This particular device was invented to more rapidly tie string around packages, the very thing needed for certain types of the fish products being packaged by the firm.

His second patented invention had nothing to do with the fishing industry. Instead, this 1905 device was a picture hanger. The written description states that this device will make it possible to hang pictures from the floor, without the need of climbing onto chairs or step ladders.

