



Edward Ennor

Born 1821 at  
Cross House  
Melborne Post

Died in Blenheim NZ  
1907

Photo taken about 1895

Writer of the diary

*Written in 1895*

DIARY OF EDWARD ENSOR.

1821-1907

*Some 700  
= pages  
after*

My Dear Children,

Thinking a sketch of my life may be interesting to you and yours when I am gone to rest, I sit down to jot down those incidents in my life of seventy-five years, that memory still retains any hold of.

I was born at Cross House in the town of Milborne Port, in the County of Somerset, England, on the 28th of June, 1821; but my first recollections are not of my birth place, but of Ferdington near Dorchester, the residence of my Grandfather, Edward Ensor. The residents were my Grandfather and Grandmother, and Aunts Jane and Eliza.

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2 3

Being to the delicate state of my Mother's health after the birth of my sister Sarah, my Aunts had taken charge of me for a time to relieve my Mother, and I became the special charge of my Aunt Eliza, and therefore, of her I have a more vivid recollection, and from her, I received my first religious impressions. This would be in 1825 when I was about four years old, and I remained under her charge for more than a year. When her health began to fail I returned to my own home. Early in 1827, my dear Aunt's health became so bad, that eminent medical advice was called in, and it was declared she was suffering from that devastating disease, consumption, and after a long and lingering illness she truly fell asleep in Jesus on the 20th September, 1827. She was one who most pre-eminently showed forth a Christian life.

From her I gained, while sitting at her knees as she worked at sewing and knitting for the poor, such a knowledge of Scripture History, both of the Old and New Testament, as very few children of my age had acquired, and above all, she so unfolded to me the Love of God, as revealed in and through Christ Jesus our Lord, that made so deep and indelible impressions on my young and tender heart, that all the worldly influences brought to bear upon me in after years, could erase; and from my own experience, I can testify that direct religious instruction should be imparted in earliest childhood, and now in my old age, I deeply deplore that the jealousy of the different sects and especially of the nonconformists, have in too many countries caused a mere secular education to take the place of religious and Bible instruction.

1826.

My first recollection of home life is being conveyed to a Dame's school in "New Town" (a suburb of Milborne Port) in a small carriage something like a perambulator, the school being about a mile and a half from Cross House, and at the same time another youngster, named Willmington, conveyed in a like conveyance to the same school, each being drawn by a boy, who came to fetch us in the evening.

Sometimes these two lads would have a race to see which could arrive first at the school, and the incident my memory vividly preserves is one of these races when the vehicles collided, capsized and precipitated us both in the mud, and we had to be ignominiously taken back home again.

Another incident of this school life I remember, was the Dame's method of punishment. The offender had to stand upon a form with a most gaudy fools' cap on his or her head. On a certain day when I was about six years of age, both Wilmington and myself had committed some offence and were sentenced to stand on the form and wear the fools' cap - but there was but one fools' cap and therefore arose the question who was to wear it. I do not remember the decision of the Dame, but I remember we agreed it should be decided by "force of arms" and a most terrible combat ensued. Blood flowed, and tears more copiously and the whole school was thrown into uproar and confusion, and the result of the combat was that we were ignominiously expelled, the Dame declaring we were too much for her, and thus ended my attendance at a Dame's school.

1828.

I was then sent to a school conducted by a Mr. Earl at "Rid-Brook" Milborne Port. This would be in 1828 when I was seven years old.

I remember but two circumstances during my career at this school, one was - I started one day for school, there had been heavy rain during the night and the brook was swollen, and there being no bridge I returned home. My Father, meeting me at the door, asked why I had returned. I said the brook is over the stepping stones and I can't cross. The answer my Father made was "where there is a will there is a way". Stung with this, I turned round and walked off, went through the brook at the deepest, not the shallowest, part and presented myself to my master dripping from my waist downwards. Of course, he at once sent me back by one of the big boys, and to my Mother's wonder at my pickle, undressed and put to bed and cautioned lest I should take cold. I expect my Father had a curtain lecture that night.

The other incident was that in which my Father gave me the only severe flogging I had in my life. I had been very careless at school, and being so young, Mr. Earl never flogged me. He would sometimes take his bandanah handkerchief and double it up and pretend to flog me with it, and of course, I was more frightened than hurt, and soon discovered it, and consequently, the punishment soon lost its influence, and perceiving this he one day marked one of my books on the margin "Edward very careless" and told me to show it to Father and ask him to put his initials to prove he had seen it. Like a little fool I wrote the initials myself

and took back the book next day, and when questioned told a deliberate lie and said it was my Father's writing. The master said nothing more to me, but sent the book with a note to my Father, who was waiting for me when I got home - ordered me to my bedroom - came up with a birch and laid it on till the blood came from many a cut on my naked body. Doubtless he did realise his own strength and ordered me to keep my bedroom for a week out of school hours, and to have only bread and water during that time. I remember Mamma came up afterwards and cried over my poor bruised body. She said she cried because I had been such a naughty boy, but I think some of the tears were for the body as well as the soul. I expect there was another curtain lecture that night. At any rate, I am sure Mamma's tears made me more sorry for my sin than Father's whipping did, though that enforced the scriptural declaration "Be sure thy sin will find thee out".

Soon after this I had two narrow escapes of losing my life. One was from a kick of a donkey. I had been teasing it, as I had seen some of the work boys doing, by poking it with a stick, when going too near, it up with its iron shod heels and struck me just under the right eye. I was completely stunned and the doctor said an inch higher and I should have been killed.

The other was some of the work boys went to bathe in a large Mill Pond and I followed them - saw them strip and jump off into the water, and immediately decided to do ditto, and off with my clothes and jumped as they did, not knowing how deep it was - some seven feet deep - I can remember feeling very comfortably down there till one of them, missing me, dived and brought me up and then the comfort all left me and I felt as if a thousand knives were being driven into my chest, it was the air again inflating the lungs.

1829.

In 1829 a Rev. John Lukes of Yeovil, a congregational minister, opened a Boarding School for Boys and Father decided on sending me there, as it was to be a very select school and under his own direct superintendance. There were about eight boarders at first and we were treated as members of the family. Mrs Lukes a grand lady who came to table in a grand crepe turban and white kid gloves, and we were all called young gentlemen and waited on at table in grand style. The school, in twelve months, became so popular that the number of boarders increased to thirty and day pupils to some fifty, and as numbers increased our priviledges decreased, and at last, Mrs. Lukes with her turban and white kid gloves disappeared, and we were delegated during our meals to the care of a young usher, and tea gave way from skim milk and thin bread and butter, to thick bread and scrape, and our supper of good bread and cheese and ale disappeared altogether.

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1830.

In 1830 King William the Fourth came to the Throne and it was celebrated in Yeovil by a grand and general illumination. Gas works were being erected there and the gas was let into the town from the works for the first time on that day, and it was the first time I had seen gas, and I remember some of the designs were very beautiful. (38)

A young Welsh man, Mr. Llewellyn was the gas engineer who erected, and after managed for a time, the works. He was a Wesleyan and a local preacher - he was very popular. He entered the ministry and ere he died became President of the Old Body.

In the winter of 1830 it was very cold, and sufficient oversight was not given to the boys' health and comforts. I became listless and lost my appetite, but the tutor who had charge of the junior classes, a hardy young highlander, used to the cold of the North, used to drive me away from the fire in the recreation time into the open air, and when I complained of feeling unwell, he laughed at me and told me to run about and get myself warm by exercise. I can even now remember the aching of my limbs and intense depressions I experienced. Providentially my Mother came over to Yeovil to visit a friend and called for me to accompany her. She was quite startled at my appearance and when we arrived at her friend's house (Mrs. Tucker) the old lady at once pronounced that I was suffering from a chill and advised my being taken home at once. My Mother carried out Mrs. Tucker's advice and within a day or two of my arrival at home I was down with a very severe attack of Rheumatic Fever. I was delirious for many days. My first return to consciousness was the dressing of a blister at the back of my neck. Our family doctor Mr. Grey was one of the old regime. Bleeding, cupping, blistering, and salivating with "blue pill" through all which course he took me at last when the fever left me I was reduced to a skeleton and as weak or weaker than a new born babe. I could not move a limb without assistance - I could not speak - I could not move my jaws eno' to masticate my food, and could hardly swallow. All thought I must die as there did not seem eno' vital energy left in my system to rally, when an old friend of ours, a Mr. Westlake, who had been the year before the young Methodist Minister at Yeovil, called and recommended the use of a patent medicine. Dr. Webster's Anglica Ceraveria or English Diet Drink. Some was procured at once and from that time I began to gain strength and with the spring of the year I was restored to health. 2/5

1831.

My illness and the circumstances attending it decided my parents in altering their plans for our education, and they engaged a young man, a son of a Methodist Preacher, who had been educated at the Woodhouse Grove School, Mr. Horner as a private tutor for myself and brothers, myself ten years old, Henry Leader, five, William James four. He remained with us three years and a half and afterwards was appointed school master at Windsor Castle to the Queen's School for the children of the gentle domestics. 9/

For about a year and a half my life was a very happy one. My dear parents did their best to make us happy. My Father, on his periodical visits to London, generally brought us each a present. Two I especially remember. One the joint property of us all, a fine rocking horse, very complete with side saddle for my sister Sarah as well as man's saddle for us boys - and I can see now my sister on the side saddle, Henry one end of the rocker and William on the other and I as the elder brother keeping the horse at full gallop. We were a happy quartet. The other was a small hand organ that played six or eight tunes, this was my own especial property and I suspect now, I and my organ may have been a little bit of a nuisance.

1832.

It was during 1832 that the First Reform Bill passed. I have a vivid recollection of the last election at Milborne Port, who before the passing of that Bill, sent two members to Parliament.

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Whig

The two territorial magnates of the Borough were the Marquis of Anglesea, and Sir William Medlicotte, the former a Whig and the latter a Tory. My Father was returning officer. The contest was a severe one. My Father was in favour of reform and as he employed a large proportion of the inhabitants in his business as a Kid Glove manufacturer which trade he introduced into the town, of course his influence was strong, and tho' each party had two candidates in the field, yet the Reform Party carried the day, tho' the inhabitants knew the result would be, if the Reform Bill passed, they would be disfranchised.

I was too young to enter into the nature of the contest, but I remember, boylike, I enjoyed the fun of the bands playing and the flags waving and the whole exciting scenes during the contest.

About this time my dear Mother's health began to fail and towards the end of 1832 she was evidently a prey to rapid consumption. Early in January 1833 the end came. The evening before her death she had us children to her bedside and Oh how fondly she told us of her love for us and yet there was one she loved better and who was calling her to be with Him, Her Saviour and our Saviour. She addressed herself especially to me as the eldest and urged upon me by both example and precept, but especially the former, to keep my sister and brothers to meet her in Heaven. About midnight as my Father was at her bedside she felt her time was come. Her last words to my Father were "Tongue cannot describe the love and gratitude I feel to my dear Saviour - for the way He has gently led me and holds me now" and then she fell asleep in her thirty third year and we poor children were Motherless. Oh how empty, the world, home and everything felt to me!

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1893

Exmoor

When my Mother's health began to decline my Father bought me a little ex moor pony and had a small gig built to match it and in it I used to drive my dear Mother out for the air and on her visits to her Mother's farm at Pointington and to Sherbourne the neighbouring town,

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1833

and I had, tho' so young, become a good horseman and also whip. As you may well suppose I loved my little pony very much and we were very good friends, and out of school I was generally on horseback roaming over the country, but after my dear Mother's death I did not seem to care to ride or drive and I fell into a very melancholy state and what seemed to put a climax to all, in the following May, only about four and a half months after my Mother's death, my Father married again. He married a Mrs. England of Lyme Regis in Dorsetshire, a woman sixteen years older than himself, much to the surprise of all, and to the displeasure of many of his friends and relatives. I am quite sure my Father's motives were pure - a young family, himself deeply engaged in business from early morning to night My Aunt Anne, my Mother's sister, a truly pious woman and a very dear friend of my Aunt Jane Ensor, would have competent to look after house matters and the comfort and health of us children, but she herself was not strong, as she suffered from Chronic Asthma, and so my Father deemed wiser to take to himself another wife, but to insure there not to be two families, he married a woman much older than himself. At the time, influenced by my dear Mother's family, I was deeply grieved and incensed that my Father should so soon replace my adored Mother by any other woman, and while I think I respect, and I think, understand his motives, yet I know in my mature old age, and having myself lost my dear wife while some of my children were yet young. I cannot but think he made a great mistake. One thing he thought in her favour was she had property, only one daughter, her youngest, Ophelia Jane, about seventeen, unmarried. The two others settled, as he judged, permanently and happily. Yet with her family he afterwards suffered severe losses and far more anxiety than with his own family.

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1834.

1780/1

A woman may be, and often is, happy with a man much older than herself, but I doubt if it is ever so with a man still young (as my Father was) only thirty six years old and the woman fifty three or fifty four. I am certain Mr's England entered our family fully intending to do her duty to the children, but she was very much handicapped by the prejudice against her, and so after a few months the united family circle was broken up. Mr. Hornor left us. I was sent to a Boarding School conducted by a Mr. Shaw at Kingsdown House near Bath. My sister Sarah to a school conducted by a Miss Sibly at Oakhill and Henry to Crewkerne to a school conducted by a Mr. Ford. William for the time being kept at home to be instructed at odd times by my Father. The arrangement was carried out at Midsummer 1834. I remained a pupil at Bath until Christmas 1835, when I left school to enter upon a new phase of my life - to be introduced into business. My Father wished me to try the Glove Manufacturing and to be apprenticed himself, but he thought best for me to try how I like it for a few months before I was bound, and I put on the harness. I

6.1798

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should have said that my dear Mother's death was the turning point of my life. The impression made on my mind by her peaceful, yet rather triumphant death, and the empty void her absence made, drew me to my Saviour and I there and then gave my heart to Him. My dear sister Sarah too at school at Harwick House, Oakhill (thro' a gracious awakening among the girls thro' which many were brought to decision, she amongst the number) and so we soon became reconciled to our Father's marriage and did our best to make a new mother comfortable amongst us.

The head of our school, also a son of a Wesleyan Minister, himself a Wesleyan, took us on Sundays to New King Street Wesleyan Chapel, Bath, we were about two miles from the Chapel. I attended a seven o'clock class meeting at the Vestry of the Chapel. Once the whole school attended the Public Services Morning and Evening, and that Sunday was a hard day as to exercise. Twelve miles walking and four of them before I broke my fast, and I have a vivid recollection in passing through the streets on my return from the class meeting, the smell of fried bacon, fried sausages and other such comestibles making my mouth water and set one longing the more as I knew nothing awaited me at the school but "bread and scrape and sky blue".

As the Chapel was one of the most important in the Wesleyan Connection I had, during my residence there, the opportunity of hearing all the leading preachers, such as Dr. Bunting-Dixon, Newton, etc.

But to return to my engagement to the Glove trade. About this time, the results of the passing of the Reform Bill began to be shown in the altered views of a large portion of the members as to "protection" and "free trade" and the duties were being gradually reduced in many manufactured articles imported into England, amongst others Kid Gloves. My Father, very conservative in his views, did not agree with this movement and he foresaw that it would very seriously interfere with the home manufacture. I therefore made up my mind to try some other trade and as I had formed a very intimate friendship with an apprentice of Messrs. W. & T. Dingley, Drapers of Sherbourn, named George Doroty, I decided I would try the drapery trade and on June 28th, 1836 I was apprenticed to Messrs. W. & T. Dingley for the term of four years. At that time there were with myself, five apprentices, viz., George Doroty, John Clarke, John Tucker, John Pearce, and myself. Within the year George Doroty and John Clarke completed their term of apprenticeship and two more took their place, Henry Pearce, a cousin of John Pearce, and a young lad whose name has slipped my memory. The senior partner, William, was a very strict master, himself a hard worker, very pushing. He kept us all up to the mark. He had no forbearance for idleness or carelessness, but if we did our duty he became our friend for life, and until his death I received very many acts of kindness from him. A very familiar expression of his when any one had forgotten any

duty or made any blunder was - "What did God Almighty give you a head for." He was a Wesleyan Methodist, a leader, a local preacher and Sunday School Superintendent. As a local preacher he was very apt, having a good memory, to "steal" other persons sermons. Once there "travelled" in the Sherbourne Circuit a Mr. Awltry, who had been in the Army and there had the rank of Captain, so he was as often called Captain as the Reverend. One Sunday morning, Mr. Awltry preached at Sherbourne and Mr. Dingley was one of his hearers. In the evening, Mr. Dingley had to preach at Milborne Port and he preached Mr. Awltry's sermon. Under that sermon one of my Father's workmen called Coffin, professed to be converted and at a Line Feast held at Milborne Port some weeks after at which Mr. Awltry presided, Coffin among others, related his conversion and said that Mr. W. Dingley was his "spiritual Father" for on such and such a day a Sermon giving texts and leading thoughts, he was converted. Mr. Awltry afterwards addressing him said, Well Brother Coffin, if Mr. Dingley is your spiritual Father I must be your spiritual Grandfather, for he preached my sermon.

Next to his business, Mr. W. Dingley was a most devoted Sunday School man, and when his sons grew up so as to be competent to take oversight of the business, he threw all his energies in the schools, and the Sherborne Sunday Schools were the Model Schools of England. (This was after I had left him, and indeed, England too) Mr. W. Dingley had a residence in Ackerman Street away from the business. Mr. Sam Dingley lived in Half Moon Street in a house behind the business premises, and the apprentices lived with him. The two brothers had married two sisters by the name of Pearce - they were all Cornish from the neighbourhood of Launceston. Mrs. W. Dingley was very deaf and there were many attempts to contrive for her to hear the preacher, and one was an oval machine something like an inverted dish cover inlaid in the book-board in the pulpit with a tube from it to Mrs. Dingley's seat - but it was but a partial success as if the preacher held his head up the sound passed over, but on the other hand if he looked down on his book she heard distinctly so the preacher that used notes was heard better. Mrs. Sam Dingley was not deaf but I doubt if she ever heard the sermon better than her sister as she invariably slept thro' the whole sermon, in fact many times I have seen her fast asleep before the preacher had twice repeated his Text.

Soon after I went to Sherborne my Father decided on giving up the Glove Trade. At first he thought of retiring from business altogether and employ himself in the education of my two younger brothers, but soon after he was persuaded to remove to Lyme Regis where Mrs. Ensor had resided before her marriage to my Father and where she had an interest in a Cloth Manufactory carried on under the firm of England & Glyde. Mr. Glyde had married Mrs. Ensor's sister and they lived in adjoining houses. The family were not satisfied with Mr. Glyde's management of the business, and there burst out a terrible family quarrel and Father was very unfortunately drawn into it by Mr. Hook, Mrs. Ensor's son-in-law and was persuaded to put his capital into the business and to buy Mr. Glyde out, and so in 1837 he removed

*Milborne Port*

to Lyme Regis, and my Uncle Thomas Ensor took over the Glove Trade and Cross House where I was born.

1837.

In 1837 King William the Fourth died and our present Queen ascended the Throne. This event gave a little impetus to trade which had been very languishing, and kinds of pretty things in shape of ribbons, scarfs, neckties and gloves with the Queen's initials woven in them were got up and met with very ready sale, but this did not last and trade became very depressed and very many of the working men in the west of England emigrated and among them many of my Father's old workmen. This came very heavy on the Wesleyan Methodists of the Sherborne Circuit, Yeovil and Milborne Port being the seat of the glove trade and both in the Sherborne Circuit, some twenty local preachers emigrated and Sherborne being a large Circuit with about thirty places on its local preachers "plan" the Superintendent minister was driven to his wits end to supply the places each Sunday. So he looked round for any young men who were at all suitable and he laid hold on John Fearce and myself. I was not yet seventeen yet such was the urgency of the case, that I was pressed into the service and in March 1838 my name was put on the local preachers "plan" on trial.

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1838.

I remember that first quarter April to June I preached twenty times and from that time until I left Sherborne my Sundays were fully occupied, often having to walk twenty miles and preach two or three times, therefore all must admit the quantity was great, but I fear the quality was not in proportion. Just after I began to preach the Rev. Ino Radford came to Sherborne. He and his wife were both Methodists of the John Wesley type. Both truly devoted to Christ and to each other. They were both true gentlefolk in the highest acceptation of the word. He was no orator nor was he a ranter, but all he said came with power, and during his ministry very many were brought to decision for Christ. He took a great interest in me. Often took me with him to his week night appointments at the country places and gave during our walks, much very valuable instruction and lent me books and advised me what to read. I had not much time for study as we had to be in the shop at seven in the morning and did not leave it except for meals until nine at night, but I generally spent until midnight reading and thus managed to make some progress in the study of Theology, but as to any other studies I had to depend on what I had already picked up at school, and now I felt thankful that during the year and a half I spent at Bath I had devoted my whole time to study only taking just as much time as my masters obliged me for health's sake even in recess.

1839.

In March 1839 I was after a short examination by the Superintendent at the Local Preachers quarterly meeting, accepted by them as a duly accredited Local Preacher.

This year my only sister Sarah went to join our dear

Small pox raged in the village and my dear sister was laid down with it. She had it very lightly and was not at all disfigured by it, and we hoped she was entirely recovered but it soon was seen that tho' no outward marks were left it had left internal seeds of disease that soon settled on the lungs and she therefore left school and returned home to my Father at Lyme Regis for some time. We hoped she may recover, but about midsummer she began to sink rapidly and so my Father wrote for me to come home to see her and spend a few days with her. It happened to be our busy time and I could only get leave for a week's absence, so Uncle Thomas lent me a stout little horse and celebrated tetter, and I rode across country to Lyme Regis, a distance of thirty-two miles. I left Sherborne at eleven o'clock a.m. and arrived at Lyme Regis at two-fifteen p.m., having rested one hour at Crewkerne. I found my dear sister very weak but very happy. She had entirely given herself into Christ's care, not a doubt troubled her. She just left everything to Him. Her mind was kept in perfect peace and she fell asleep in Jesus a few days after my return to Sherborne and was buried in a vault my Father had made in front of the Wesleyan Chapel in Lyme Regis. (137)

Soon after this my health began to fail. I had charge of the wholesale department of our business and this entailed upon me (as we kept no porter) the lifting and carrying of heavy weights and I suffered from a continual pain in my side. With my Mther and sister's death before me I felt it necessary to take medical advice, and as there resided in Crewkerne a medical man very celebrated in pulmonary diseases I went down to Crewkerne to consult him. He examined me and told me there was no permanent injury, but that I was below par, needed very nourishing food and a gentle stimulant such as wine or porter, and above all things, I must avoid lifting heavy weights or taking violent exercise, and giving a prescription, sent me home, with a mind very much relieved, as I did not feel as my sister had done, quite ready to die.

1840.

P 34  
Mr. Dingley gave me charge of a lighter department and opportunities of rides and drives in the country and so I soon regained my usual good health, and on the 28th June, 1840 I completed my apprenticeship and Mr. Dingley endorsed my indentures with this sentence "Well and faithfully kept", and I returned to my Father at Lyme Regis to consider what my next move in life should be. After a few days rest and quiet at Lyme Regis I began to look out for some situation where I could improve myself and seeing in the "Watchman" an advertisement for an assistant by a Mr. Hicks of Woolwick I answered it and enclosed my testimonials and in a day or two received a reply accepting me. My Father was contemplating a journey to the Midland counties and it was decided I should accompany him before I settled down to my new life of labour. About two years previously to this Mrs. Ensor's second daughter Louisa, who had married a Mr. Joseph Bourne of Church Gresby in the county of Derbyshire, had died there and within a few months Mr. Bourne died also leaving four children, Emma, Adelaide, William, and Ophelia. He was a Fire Brick Manufacturer, and my Father in the interests of the orphans had gone up to investigate (12)



his affairs. He found them so involved that if there was a winding up and sale, there would be nothing left for the orphans, so he decided to take over the concern, place a competent man to manage the business and send my next brother, Henry, to learn the business. Mr. Hooke, the husband of Mrs. Ensor's eldest daughter, took charge of Emma and Adelaide to educate with his own daughter, and my Father took charge of William, then about eight and Ophelia about four. They had an Uncle William Bourne in London acting as London agent and shipper for the firm of Joseph Bourne and Son of Derby Pottery in Derbyshire, but as he had no children and his wife was a woman of delicate health and not very fond of children, it was thought better for all the children to be together at Lyme Regis and when they grew older Mr. William Bourne would keep their interests in view. I therefore took this trip with my Father. We took coach from Lyme Regis to Bridgewater, the then terminus of the Great Western Railway, and as I had never seen a railway, it excited my keenest interests, as (then unknown to me) a taste for mechanics lay dormant within me. This was my first visit too, to the town and I little thought then that forty years after I should spend some weeks in that town superintending some extensive brick works for a large firm of Brick and Tile Manufacturers being machinery on a new principle patented by myself.

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We went that afternoon from Bridgewater to Bristol slept there and took coach next morning for Gloucester, the then terminus of the Midland Railway for Derby to Bristol. We took train again at Gloucester for Burton on Trent where we found my brother Henry waiting for us and drove to Gresley Cottage the dwelling house connected with the Fire Brick Works. These works were situated on a Common between three villages, viz., Church Gresley, Swadlincote, and Wooden Box, called so because 'ere the village sprung up there was a toll bar put up and a little hut like a sentry box as a shelter to the toll keeper, after a time the inhabitants not thinking the name good eno' got the Post Office authorities and the Magistrates, also the Railway Company, to accept the new name of Woodville, by which it is called to this day. The works were very small consisting of one shed and two small Scotch Kilns, i.e., the Kilns or ovens oblong in shape and an arched roof. There were about ten men and about twenty boys and girls employed and all the goods manufactured had to be conveyed in waggons drawn by horses either to their destination or to the Railway Station at Burton on Trent and there transhipped into railway trucks. In coming in contact with the work people I felt almost as if I was come to a foreign country, the dialect was so different to that of the West of England. My Father addressing one of the workmen asked him how he was, the answer "Is alles starved Meister" as he looked quite stout and hearty I asked my Father when we moved on what does he mean, he looks fat and well. Oh my Father said they don't mean they are wanting food, only they are cold. Also for a scarcity of food they say that are clemmed. I did not take then much interest in the works and

16 17  
18 33

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little thought than in twenty years afterwards I should be the managing partner of the works, covering twenty times the area they did then. We after a day or two, took the gig and drove to Derby the County town, the centre of the Midlands system of Railways, then quite a small station and in fact the company in itself was only in its infancy. From there we drove to Derby, the residence of Mr. Joseph Bourne the proprietor of extensive pottery works. Here we met two men who afterwards became men of note, Mr. Jobson, a Wesleyan Minister who afterwards became Doctor Jobson, Wesleyan Editor-Manager of the book room, and during that time President of the Wesleyan Conference, and Rev. W. Griffiths, who was engaged to Miss Bourne, and afterwards became one of the three who split Methodism into two parties. On our return to Church Gresley I wished good bye to Father and brother and started by rail for London and Woolwich.

On arriving in London I found that even that short distance could not be accomplished in one stage as the railway from London Bridge only went as far as Greenwich and from there to Woolwich I had to take the omnibus to Woolwich. On arrival at Mr. Hicks shop I must say I was woefully disappointed. I found a little shop, low and badly lighted, and only a little lad as an apprentice, and in a few days I found the business was small and of a very poor type. Very few if any good customers, and in fact nothing to be learnt there by which I might improve myself, but I made up my mind to make the best of it for a time especially as I felt Mr. Hicks was a kind and good man, but I had not been there a month before I felt my health was suffering from the miasmas all around the town. My bedroom was very small and low and I had to occupy it in company with the apprentice. Bugs swarmed in every crevice in the walls. Next door was a Costermongers Shop and decaying fruit and vegetables quite poisoned the air. Then I had a sharp attack of ague so I made up my mind to make a move as soon as possible.

My next move was to Cheltenham to the firm of Fox Brothers, General Drapers and House Furnishers. There were two establishments one general furnishers and the other drapers. I was in the drapery establishment. There were four of us. The domestic part of the concern was in charge of two sisters who acted as cook and housemaid. They were small farmers daughters very superior to ordinary servants and made the place very comfortable for us young men. The one disagreeable person was Mr. Dodge the shop walker. He was engaged to Miss Fox and expected at their marriage to be taken into partnership, and consequently gave himself airs - put on too much of the "Master" which we fellows did not like, and hence frequent jars.

On arrival at Cheltenham I found that Rev. W. Griffiths was married and stationed at Gloucester and as it was only nine miles distant and a train each way ran on Sundays, I

frequently went over and spent the Sunday with them. As Gloucester was a single preachers station the rule was that once in three months he must change with one of the preachers in the Cheltenham circuit and the time came that Mr. Griffiths was to take the Cheltenham Pulpit. Now at Cheltenham on the Sunday morning we had the full prayers of the Church of England and I was at Gloucester the Sunday previous, Griffiths asked me to "coach" him up in the prayers, so went carefully thro' the whole course with him showing him where the Psalms came in, also the Lessons and the general prayer and general Thanksgiving, and we both thought he had quite got it all at "his fingers end" at least he said so - unfortunately - as it turned out it was not in his head, for on the Sunday he missed the Psalm altogether, got the prayers mixed up and made a regular jumble of it, and then to make matters worse when he went into the pulpit and gave out the Hymn preceding the sermon he said "Let us commence the worship of God by singing Hymn so and so" He told me afterwards that it came out quite unawares and the moment he had said it he felt that was the last day he would be permitted to preach at Cheltenham Wesleyan Chapel, and so it proved for a deputation of the leading men of the congregation waited on the Superintendent minister to request him not again to appoint Mr. Griffiths to conduct service in that Chapel and so from that time forth as long as he remained in Gloucester he had to take country places on the day of exchange.

Christmas came during my stay at Cheltenham and I received an invitation from Mr. George England, the brother in law of Mrs. Ensor, to spend my Christmas with them at their residence at Dudley, which I accepted and spent two or three very happy days with them. Mr. England was a brewer in rather a large way. There were two sons and four daughters. The second daughter Selena, was about my own age, and her I first thought I fell over head and ears in love with her, and to see more of her I overstaid my furlough two days. On my return I found a letter awaiting me from Father informing me that he had taken over the drapery business of a Mr. Edwards of Lyme Regis and I was to come home to take the management of it as soon as I could. I quite expected I should get a blowing up from Dodge for overstaying my time, so I made up my mind then when he began I would quietly say as you do not seem satisfied with me I will leave this day month, but to my extreme mortification, Dodge came and handed me a months notice written by Mr. Fox. I was made to be thus forestalled but I kept it from being seen, and I said quietly well this has saved me the trouble of giving notice as my Father has just bought me a business at a rising seaside watering place and I am summoned home, perhaps Mr. Fox will kindly permit me to leave at once. Oh how mad he looked at me. I went to Mr. Fox and explained how it was I was detained told him plainly, boylike, I had fallen in love with a young lady and could not resist when the family asked me to stay over a party, and now would he let me go at once. Mr. Fox was very kind, laughed and said well your excuse is certainly a very powerful one. You can go at once and as you have been attentive to your duties while you were here up to this time

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I will pay you as if you had handed out your notice. When I told the fellows in the presence of Dodge they all laughed. Dodge looked as if he would like to have knocked my head off. I do not know to this day what he said to Fox to induce him to write out my notice to leave.

1841.

In the new year of 1841 I entered the management of the business at Lyme Regis. As soon I saw into matters I knew my Father had been completely taken in by Mr. Hooke, himself a draper and tailor in the same town. Mr. Edwards was not only draper, but he also was manager of the Lyme Regis branch of Williams & Cox Bank, headquarters being at Dorchester. With the draper business would go the management of the Bank if my Father took it over as our family were well known at headquarters, and both my Grandfather and my Uncle John had been and were, customers of the Bank, and also the cloth manufacturing firm of England & Glyde had their banking account with them. But as soon as the arrangement was made and agreements signed, Hooke got my Father to agree to let the Bank be removed from Edward's premises to his, and this was done at once before I got home. I at once told my Father he had been done. That the fact of the Bank being under Edward's management was the making of his business - that the Bank being removed to Hooke's would now give him the advantage - that people would look upon Edward's business as only an appendage to Hooke's, and with all my care and attention, as Hooke was to buy for both concerns this would soon be generally known and the business was not worth the toss up of a penny and within twelve months would not pay even my personal expenses. My Father was so blinded by Hooke who, when he perceived I was too sharp for him, at once began to poison my Father against me, and when, as I foretold, the returns got less and less, he laid the blame all on me. At last I told Hooke what I thought of him and we had a desperate quarrel and he threatened to kick us out of the house and I told him to try it on as two could play at that game, and he thought better of it and I walked out and never entered his doors again.

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I should here say that just before I came to Lyme Regis the principal cloth mill was burnt down and as the trade in the West of England was being undermined by the North Country manufacturers by the introduction of "Shoddy" i.e. old cloth rags torn up by machinery and mixed in larger or smaller quantities with new wool, it put West of England trade in this dilemma, they must either follow suit or be undermined as the cry on all hands was for cheap goods. So it was decided not to rebuild and the firm was broken up and the trade as far as Lyme Regis was concerned, died out. When therefore, it was decided also to close the drapery business, my Father decided to remove to Church Gresley and take the management of the Fire Brick Business into his own hands. I consequently began to look out for a new situation and one day taking up the "Watchman" newspaper I saw an advertisement for an experienced hand to take charge of a drapery establishment in Grahamstown in South

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1803  
Old Factory  
Wm Stanton  
& Boen

Africa, and  
I wrote at  
once to the  
Party Messrs  
Living

Lydgate & Co., Merchants & Shippers, London, and sent them my testimonials, also my local preachers plan, as being advertised in the "Watchman", I presumed they were Methodists who wanted assistance.

1842.

This was in November, 1842. I was requested to come up to London - did so. Saw Mr. Lydgate who after a conversation requested me to call on a draper in the "Minories" who was to examine me as to my capabilities to manage a trade. He happened to know my late masters, Messrs. W. & S. Dingley and on seeing my indentures with their endorsement said this was quite eno' as their apprentices always, if they stayed out their term of apprenticeship, turned out good tradesmen, so I was engaged and was to be ready to set sail on the 14th December, so I had not much time to get ready.

I returned to Lynd Regis and it was arranged that my Father should start on the 1st December and take my stepmother with him in his own conveyance and drive slowly northward and that I should meet them in Birmingham on a certain day, go with them from thence to Church Gresley and stay a day or two with my brother Henry, and then, bidding them all good-bye, go up to London and join the "Susan Crisp" barque by which vessel my passage was taken.

Mr. Lydgate sent a clerk with me to a shop to buy all necessaries such as bed and bedding and then on the evening of the 13th December I went down to the docks and went on board the "Susan Crisp". I found only the Custom house officer on board as the Captain, Mates and Crew were all on shore bidding good-bye to their friends and would not be on board till the morning. I found I had a cabin to myself and as all my things were just as they came on board I unpacked my bed and got out my blankets and sheets and set my cabin to rights as we were to leave the docks the first thing in the morning, and I had my misgivings as to how far I should be capable to do anything for a day or two after we set sail. All being ship-shape I went out into the saloon and there found the officer "broaching stores" in the shape of a bottle of Port Wine. I found him a regular tooper, so to save myself from too much Port Wine I made an excuse that I was very tired and turned in and was soon fast asleep. As soon as it was daylight I heard a stir on deck and soon put in an appearance there and found Captain, mates, and crew all on board and the ship being warped out of dock at Gravesend. We took in ~~our~~ only other passengers, a Mr. and Mrs. De Toit, and again were being towed down the river and in the evening at the "Downs" the tug cast us off and we sailed away down the Channel. I soon began to ~~feel~~ the effects of the movement and for two days wished myself on shore again. The steward was very kind and on the third morning after leaving the River I found my way on deck and was congratulated by the Captain and mate as being the first to put in an appearance. The fresh air set me quite right in an hour or two and from that time I was always on the anxious look out for meal times, were it breakfast, dinner or supper. We had very little livestock on board and only had "soft Tack" even in the cabin on Sundays, but nothing came amiss to me. We met with head winds in the Channel and it was not till the 30th December we lost sight of England. By this time my fellow passengers had got quite over the sea sickness. I found Mr. de Toit was a Dutch-Africander, i.e. of Dutch extraction born

At this stage the diary ends and though it was probably Mr. Ensor's intention to continue, further writings are not known of.

After a few years in Colesburgh Mr Ensor on the death of his father in England, left South Africa to work with his younger brother at Church Gresley Derbyshire England. It was here that his gift for engineering came to the fore and he developed and patented several machines and processes for the pottery and brick making industry as mentioned in the diary.

When Mr. Ensor returned to England he brought with him my grandmother Sally, and a baby sister Jessie. The next children to be born were Lucy Harold Ernest Walter & Mabel.

Harold became an engineer and came to New Zealand about 1885 as an engineer in the new antimony mines in the Marlborough Sounds. This venture failed and he having had a careful Christian upbringing took Holy Orders in the Church of England and became Vicar of Havelock in Marlborough. His brother also ordained joined him in Marlborough and became Vicar of Spring Creek near Blenheim. Mr. Ensor snr. the writer of the diary together with his daughter Sally (now a widow) Mabel the youngest daughter, and Sally's two daughters Jessie and Ethel (my Mother) in 1889.

In 1893 Harold Ensor married and was appointed Vicar of Kaikoura. There being no successor for the vacancy at Havelock and for the same reasons that Harold had been ordained 8 years previously Mr. Ensor snr. was ordained and continued to live in the Havelock vicarage for the next 9 years. He died at 86 in 1907. Sally died in 1903. Mrs Ensor ~~snr.~~ had died in England in 1882.

Descendants of Harold 3 generations still live in N.Z. The same applies to Ethel. Mabel did not marry and the last of the 3 daughters died about 3 years ago.

The family tree attached gives further details

The original handwritten diary is in the possession of the writer and also old Photos.

  
Jan 1984

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