

‘Crawling through Life’: The Diaries of Rafe Neville Leycester, 1859–1865

In the ruthlessly competitive marriage market of 19th-century England, an ability to dance was one of the most important social graces that a young person could have. So if you were somehow disabled, you were at a huge disadvantage.

In the late 1850s and early 1860s, a young clerk named Rafe Neville Leycester knew this only too well – ‘For who would look on a wretch with a lame leg,’ he wrote in his diary, as he remembered a lost love, ‘when they might get plenty of others with good ones.’ For Leycester, parties were generally a trial. ‘There were some very nice looking girls who were dancing all the evening,’ he wrote of one soiree in 1864, ‘so I of course had not a chance of speaking to them. I spent a most miserable time of it.’

Given that Leycester’s social life was so often a disappointment to him, his diary is filled with a surprising number of remarkable encounters and events. There is a memorable description of Lord Palmerston’s funeral, and among the famous people who appear in the pages are Prince Albert, Garibaldi and the controversial bishop of Oxford, ‘Soapy Sam’ Wilberforce.

Leycester’s main obsession, however, was with the stream of alluring young women who crossed his path: the ‘jolly and well developed’ Miss Burns, the ‘scrumptious and larky’ Amy Abotson, the ‘stunning’ Green sisters, ‘a very rattling sort of girl’ named Miss Byrne, and in particular young Dally Fenton, with her ‘bright face & golden hair’.

Only two volumes of Leycester’s diaries are known to exist, spanning the years 1859 (when he turned 16) to 1865. If any reader knows of any further volumes, we would be fascinated to hear from you.

1859

Saturday Jany 1st. London 21 Cambridge St W. Staid at home all the morning, in the evening went with Thomas to the Colosseum where we saw a Mr Taylor perform a number of conjuring tricks, some of which were very good. We also saw a Mr Foster personify different characters; he also sang several songs & told some stories. He imitated Woodin & others. In conclusion we saw a Mad^{lle} Prudence mesmerized and she told (or pretended to tell) people’s thoughts &c. The panorama of Paris by night was very good though I did not admire it so much as London by night which I saw last year. There was a Galvanic battery and Thomas & I were galvanized.

Sunday 2nd. I did not go to church this morning as we were all very late and did not have breakfast till ½ past 12 but we read prayers & a sermon. In the afternoon I went to St John’s church the text being taken from Daniel. Capt Henderson dined here today. This evening there was a very thick fog.

Monday 3d. Staid at home all the morning in the afternoon went with Thomas to be measured for a pair of boots. Miss Deekins & Nantes spent the evening here, the former asked the following conundrum. What caused the potatoe disease? The rotatory motion of the earth (rot-tatory). How was it discovered? By consulting a commentator (a common tater).

Wednesday 12th. Mr Henderson had some people to dinner it being his birthday. I did not dine with them there being no room for me at the table but I came into dessert, we had the loving cup.

Thursday. This evening I went with Frank Lyne &c to the Colosseum and saw the same performances as I did before. There were great numbers of people and when they went up to see the Panorama of Paris by moonlight a woman fainted.

Friday 14th. In the evening I went with Thomas to the Alhambra formerly the Panopticon. It is now converted into a circus and is very different to what it was when last I saw it, but the organ is still there. I saw the two celebrated mules "Pete" & "Barney". A reward of a guinea was offered to anyone who would ride round the ring three times. Several boys attempted it but they were all thrown off. There was afterwards a Pantomime entitled the "Miser of Bagdad" but it was very stupid.

Wednesday 19th. In the morning went to Aunt Louisa's to say goodbye but she unfortunately was out. Girt walked home with me. In the evening it being his wedding day Mr Henderson had some friends to dinner and about ½ past 8 set off for Liverpool, he very kindly gave me a sovereign.

White-place Jany 21st. Uncle Henry went out this morning to try and shoot a few birds & I went with him. I fired a gun for the first time in my life altho' I am nearly 16. In the afternoon went out fishing with the nets and caught some Jack and other fish.

Saturday. Walked round the lawn with U.H. who shot a Black-bird. We then went out in the punt and fished for tench and Roach but caught only a few. We fished near a little point of land at Formosa Lady Young's place. Mr Norris came here this evening.

Tuesday. We fished in one of the ditches with a casting net and caught an immense number of Perch, Roach and Gudgeon, we also caught an immense number of Bleak also called Fresh water herrings from their resemblance to that fish.

Saturday. Had breakfast at 9 o'clock and the pony cart came for my trunk at ½ past 9 and took me to the Cookham station. On leaving White place Uncle Henry gave me 5 shillings. I left Cookham at 10 and reached Maidenhead at 20 to 11. At Maidenhead took a ticket for Plymouth which cost 1.12.6. Had a pleasant journey and at Bristol a warrant officer got in who was in the *Agamemnon* during the storm which she experienced while crossing the Atlantic to lay down the Telegraph cable. Arrived at Plymouth at ½ past 9 and was met by Uncle Walton who came up with me to Donegal Terrace. When I arrived I found Frank Lyne here who is appointed to the *Gannet*.

Saturday 2nd April. C. and F. Churchill spent the day with me; in the afternoon we took a walk towards Western Mills and after having picked some primroses and Perriwinkles came by the beach as far as "Camel's head bridge" and then came along the Saltash road. When we were near home we were overtaken by Mrs Cowlin who told me that poor Jasper had been killed by means of Prussic Acid. He was so eaten up by the mange and smelled so bad that Dr Dansey said it was quite unhealthy to keep him so this afternoon Mr Hamand sent up a man to kill [him] which was done in Cowlin's garden. After dinner Charlie played some pieces on the piano.

Saturday 9th. After school went to Devonport to be measured for a boot. In the afternoon went with H. Boy and GP to the Greenhouse in Cowlin's garden. I saw poor Jas's grave.

Good Friday. I went with Peter to Charles Church. All the rest went to Eldad to hear Mr Pimm preach. Eldad being a Puseyite one was hung on all sides with crape.

Monday. I today received my birthday presents consisting of a paint-box from UW some paints from AJ, a sketch block from H. Boy &c &c.

Wednesday 27th. In the morning I went to ask Ramsey to go with me to the Saltash bridge which he agreed to do. I waited for him until 2 PM and as he did not come went by myself. I crossed in the steam ferry to Saltash and walked up to the station where I presented the ticket Mr Carr gave me. I then went across the bridge which, when viewed from the end has the appearance of one of the walks at the Crystal palace. It was blowing very hard while I was there & nearly blew me off my legs especially as I am not very firm upon them. As I was coming back the man who took my ticket met me & in a hurried & excited manner informed me that "a injun was comin along in 5 or 10 minutes" so I waited for a good many "5 or 10 minutes" but not seeing any appearance of a train came home again. As I was crossing the Camel's head bridge an engine & 2 carriages passed me. This evening I went with GP to the village to hear Mr Ferrand the Conservative candidate for Devonport address the people. He made a very good speech in which he showed the necessity of union in this time of danger.

May 2nd Monday. We had a holiday today as Prince Albert came down to open the Saltash railway. After I came out of school I met Bickford who said he was going to Saltash to see the train cross the bridge. There were thousands of people and every description of cart & carriage going along the generally desolate Saltash road and on each side of the river at Saltash it was quite like a fair there being numerous Punch & Judies, nut shooting &c. The train containing P Albert crossed about ½ past one. The prince got out at Saltash where he had some lunch. He then [went] back across the bridge & embarked in the "Vivia" steamer.

June 1st. I received a note a few days ago from Mr Carr inviting me to dine with him today at 7 o'clock I staid at home all the afternoon to review my English history. I went to Plymouth by the 6.30 train. After dinner Mr Carr very kindly took me to see the Panorama of India at the Royal Hotel. He said that some of the views were good but that upon the whole he did not think much of it. When we saw the city of Benares he said it was no more like the real place than Plymouth was.

June 2nd. As I was coming from school this evening Bickford overtook who said that he was going to Portsmouth at 6 tomorrow morning in order to pass his examination for the marines.

Wednesday 15th June. We all came into school at 10 o'clock this morning as it is breaking up day. I received two prizes for English & Latin. One was Byron's Poems & the other "Stories of Waterloo." This afternoon Ramsey & I went for a bathe near "Western Mills." We return to school on the 26th of July.

Monday 20th. I again went to SD Place by the 8.25 train. Instead of going to the breakwater we went to Bovisand, where UW met Captn Cox and Mr Davis for the purpose of making arrangements & measurements for constructing a watering pier for the purpose of supplying water to the vessels in the sound. As there was a high wind which [was] against us Captn Cox brought us in his surveying cutter as far as the mount Batten where we got into the boat.

Saturday 2 July. Today Ramsey & I went to the Whitsands. I got some seaweed & shells and then proceeded to the grotto which is a little cavern in the rocks about ... feet high & 9 long. It is written all over with verses, some in Latin some in English; one of them commenced thus

“Near to this place once Sharron Palace stood
Surrounded by the rocks & by the briny flood &c”

Tuesday 5th. Ramsey & I went at 12 o'clock to see Captn Price on board the *Caesar* in Keyham dock. He seemed quite well but was very busy and had scarcely time to speak to us as he had to examine the case of some men who had mutinied. We then went on board the Turkish ship the name of which in English is the “Unicorn”. We then saw a man, one of the sailors who was very fond of Ramsey whose name was Alifende. He showed us over the ship and then took us to a part of the ship where he kept his desk and writing materials. I thought that he was a letter writer, for he seemed to write very well & one of the men brought him a letter to read. Alifende had a very peculiar pen & ink holder made of brass. The pen was merely a hollow piece of wood cut to a point. He gave us some of his writing and showed us a letter that he had received from Constantinople. He understood a few words of English so that by signs we could make ourselves understood. We saw a good many of the men saying their prayers for the purpose of which they each have a piece of carpet. They first stood up, then kneeled down and kissed the deck, which process they repeated many times muttering prayers all the time.

Wednesday 6th. Isabel & I went into Plymouth by the 8.10 train. I took Isabel to Mrs Stewarts at Woodside to spend the day and then proceeded to Uncle Walton's house. As soon as he had finished breakfast we went to the office where I had a capital bathe, I can now swim tolerably well and all I want is constant practice in order to strengthen the swimming muscles of my arms & legs. We then went to the breakwater calling for Miss Billing and her “lover so brave” on our way. This same gent rejoiced in the name of Berwin.

Wednesday 5th Octr. We received a telegraphic message from Southampton to say that Papa and Mama had arrived there safely this morning. They come home tomorrow. It was GP's birthday today.

Thursday 6th Octr. This evening Isabel & I went to meet the 5.5 train in hopes Mama would be in it. Papa is not coming as he is obliged to go to London in order to be examined by the doctors. Mama did not come by the express so we went to Mr Carr's house where we waited till the 7 train came in when we went down, Cousin Emily and Berry included. Again we were disappointed but when the 9 train came in having again gone to the Station we were looking in the various carriages, when I saw

something looming in the distance from which issued a voice saying "O my dear Nevey" and I was immediately locked in the embrace of the aforesaid "something" which really proved to be my maternal relation but so concealed in huge shawl and hat with long veil that I did not immediately recognise her. She was looking very well and (though somewhat stouter) not at all altered.

Friday 7th. I had a holiday today and this evening Mama AJ Isabel and I went in to Plymouth to meet the 5 train in which I was most delighted to find Papa had arrived. He was looking rather careworn, excited and as if he scarcely knew what he was about but I hope in a few days he will feel the benefit of pure air.

Friday 28th Octr. I had a holiday today in order to go to the confirmation. Although the service did not commence until 11 o'clock the church was very full and Papa & Mama had the greatest difficulty in obtaining a seat and even then, they could see nothing that was going on. After the usual service the Bishop of Oxford gave an admirable charge and then commenced the confirmation. The Bishop of Exeter was so old & infirm that he was not able to come down and perform the ceremony. There were an immense number of sailors and also soldiers.

Saturday 5th. Papa went this morning to London.

Friday 11th Novr. Harriet and Mrs Neville dined here this evening when I heard the melancholy news that poor Mr Stoddart had died suddenly on Wednesday evening. On that evening the dispenser was walking between the two gates at the hospital when he saw a body lying on the ground near the dial, and on lifting it up, found it was Mr Stoddart. He was immediately taken up into the doctors' room but life was quite extinct altho' his eyes were still open and there was a smile upon his face. AJ is in great grief about it. We got a letter on Friday from Papa (Dated) Whiteplace saying that poor Capt Ralph Leycester had been murdered at Vizirampoia India. When I was in London last, Aunt Louisa, Harriet, Girt & I went to him, previous to his going out to India.

Wednesday 14th. This evening I went [to] Mr Jonas's breaking up party being invited by Pinwill. We passed a very pleasant evening especially when Mr John brought in a galvanic battery.

Thursday 15. Today being breaking-up day we went to school at 10 o'clock; for a long time before we went into school the boys amused themselves by sliding in the playground. I received two prizes and a certificate for Mathematics Classics and English Examinations. Papa came home by the 5 o'clock express train from London. I went to see G. Cuerton today.

Friday 23rd. Joll called for me at 10 o'clock and we went out for a walk with the gun. He shot 5 birds and I shot 2. On my return I was informed by Isabel of the death of poor Mr Cuerton. I understand he has been ill for some time but was pronounced by the doctors in no immediate danger. I am much grieved as he was truly kind and hospitable to me.

Saturday. We all went this morning to see the Christmas market. According to Mama's account she was frightened out of her wits by the waits.

Christmas day. It has rained all day today. Mama and Isabel went to St John's in a fly, Papa & I walked, & we read prayers at home this evening.

1860

March 23rd. I now write a few lines to say that Isabel was yesterday taken with the measles which today have "come out beautiful" to use a household expression for her face is one mass of red blotches and she is very sick, but Dr Dansey says she is progressing favourably. She is rather light headed and asked Mama why she did not take her to the Tournament. Unfortunately Papa is now in London, he went to the 1st Lords Levee yesterday. I continue at school till we leave the place. I was going to the Cuertons tomorrow, but have written to put George off.

Saturday 7th [April]. Went this morning to Plymouth by the 9.20 train in order to rouse up Mr Luke about my boots which he has been promising to send up for the last fortnight. He says I am to have them this evening but I do not expect them. When I was waiting at the station I heard a voice from the bridge saying "Nevy, Nevy". I immediately looked up and beheld Mama who cried out, "Nevy, Papa's coming home this evening" which of course delightfully attracted the attention of all the by-standers and spectators. I nodded my head in token that I understood her, but having misunderstood me she again repeated the same news, however fortunately the train came in at the moment, and drew off the people's attention. As soon as I had been to Luke's I hastened up the hill and out towards Mannamead on the road to which I appointed to meet George but missed him. I spent the day with the Cuertons, George and I passed the afternoon in firing the rifle and pistol. I returned home at ½ past three having concluded all the arrangements for going with him to the Whitsands on Monday, I hope it will be as fine as today. Papa returned home by the express minus his moustache.

Thursday June 28th. Called for Williams this morning at 10 o'clock in order to go with him to see the bugles presented to the Devonport rifle volunteers. This ceremony took place on Mt Wise in front of the general's house. A large space was first enclosed by the soldiers of the line and shortly before 11 o'clock the volunteers of Plymouth, Stonehouse and Devonport preceded by the band of the 10th marched upon the ground and took up their position in the form of a semicircle. At this time the rain which had been threatening for some time came down pretty smartly but shortly after cleared up. The silver bugles having been presented the buglers executed a flourish upon them, and then the v'trs went through a little manoeuvring under the superintendence of the general, whilst sergeants &c rushed about in a state of fearful excitement, and into each other's arms.

We then proceeded towards the Stone-house gate, an immense number of people being assembled on either side of the road to witness the procession of the order of foresters. In due time they arrived habited in true Robin Hood fashion, armed with bows and theatrical spears. There was also an open van full of shepherdesses looking very blue about the nose & arms, and none being remarkable for personal attractions. The procession wound up with all the members of the order arrayed in scarfs &c &c all armed with the insignia of forest life.

We then went on to Devonport where we saw an Italian who played 6 instruments at the same time, and his wife who played two, viz a fiddle and a brass box in which she made the coppers rattle.

Papa saw this very man playing in the village of Cookham about 2 months ago.

Thursday July 26th. Leycester Lyne has just come down here for a short time in order to make arrangements for being curate to a Mr Prynne a Puseyite clergyman of Plymouth. Leycester has brought with him a young Scotchman of the name of Buchan, an[d] who is dressed in Highland costume. The latter is rather a nice fellow and we have been to bathe &c several times. They have dined with us several times and the latter was one day sitting on one of our chairs which have horse-hair cushions, when he was obliged to get up and beg to have a softer cushion to sit upon.

We one day went round the Keyham yard, where we saw at work one of Nasmyth's Steam Hammers. A huge & shapeless mass of iron was first placed in a furnace until it attained a white heat, being first welded in some method to a long pole which was held by 4 or 5 men and then placed beneath the hammer under whose powerful blows it soon began to take a more definite form. We also went all over HMS *Howe* which is at present the largest vessel in the British Navy.

Tuesday July 31st. This morning at 8 o'clock I called for Williams as we are invited to spend the day with Mrs Price. We walked round to Wiveliscombe and about ½ past 12 we were joined by the rest of the party from Mrs Dansey's. We shortly afterwards proceeded to dinner in the open air. It was a very "sumptuous" repast with numberless quart cans of cream into which huge spoons were recklessly plunged and then emerged with their rich loads leaving behind them cavernous holes. The dinner over, the poney was saddled and the girls rode upon it all the afternoon, I had one little canter and terrified by my "violent" riding the old ladies of the party who seemed to have an idea that poneys and horses were made only to be walked about with little girls on their backs.



Tuesday August 7th. The long talked of and anxiously expected scheme of retirement having come out and Papa not being able to benefit by it, he determined this morning to start off for London in order to ask for a ship. We, that is Papa Mama and myself went into the station this morning as Papa intended going by Express. The usual scene of activity bustle and amusement was going on, excited mothers snugly stowed away their numerous families, only to learn that, that train was not going to their intended destination. Young men in irreproachable suits of clothes and small moustaches were doing the military, up and down the platform with an apparent contempt for all sublunary affairs. The train off, we went into Plymouth where a shower coming on, we retreated into the porch of an eye infirmary, and were asked by a woman to sit down in a room, the walls of which were covered with tablets on which for the trifling consideration of a 5£ or 10£ note any one could have the distinguished felicity of seeing his name subscribed in golden characters.

Thursday 20th Septr. This afternoon Danvers who is in the E. Bengal, Ry Cy called for me and we proceeded for a short walk. I have above mentioned that the marriage of Harriet and Mr Bate was fixed for today, but last night and this morning great doubts existed as to whether it would take place in consequence of Mr B. having made some demur at signing some settlement; but that was smoothed over and they are now knotted. The following are some notes I took at different hours of the day. –

9.10 a.m. Great confusion at the other house. Mr Bate and Uncle went up there at 7 o'clock this morning to break off the wedding in consequence of sundry unpleasant revelations on part of Mr Besley *de rebus amantium*. I been up there this morning and told part of this by Ramona.

10 a.m. Just been up to the other house. Marriage to take place. "Carriages to leave the house at 10.30." Mama and Isabel now gone up.

12.40. Harriet and Mr Bate now set off for the train, great display of emotion on all sides, attempt at a speech on the part of G. Papa, but failure.

The married couple having returned from St George's Church having been united by a Mr Nantes, we all adjourned to the drawing room, where the cake was cut with all ceremony, in which Isabel, Ramona, and Aunt Jane officiated. Wine of two kinds was handed round and various healths and toasts drunk, and thanks returned, the bride alternating between "Tears and Smiles" a story to be seen in "Cassel's family Paper". The bride then went up to change her dress and having returned she and Mr Bate went off to the train. They are to stay a week at Ivy-bridge and then proceed on their way to London.

Friday. Every-body is very much surprised at the wedding having taken place so quietly and speedily.

Friday Octr 12th. A short time after lunch we all started off for a walk, going by a roundabout lane towards Ugboro' Beacon, another Tor about 4 miles from here. In passing thro' the village I called at the constabulary station to ask for the earthly abode of Mr Maxwell. I was recommended to the notice of a particular suspicious looking gentleman in the garb of a policeman, who accompanied me back for some distance in order to show me the way. I soon entered into conversation with him by which I learnt the interesting fact that he had [been] in the Crimea in the artillery which he did not like &c &c &c. On our road Isabel and I picked a large quantity of nuts to the terror of Mama who has prophesied an illness to both of us.

Tuesday Novr 6th. We all went today to the Carew Arms an Inn about a mile $\frac{1}{2}$ from Brent to see the meeting of Mr Tralawney's Fox hounds. The meet was advertised for 11.15 but they were not all assembled till near 12. When we reached the ground there was a small sprinkling of Red Coats and others imbibing Bitter Beer and blowing clouds, among whom was Capt'n Woodleigh an old ship mate of Papa's who came up and talked to us until the arrival of Mr Tralawney. It was curious to observe the various habiliments of the men, the polished boots and variety of hats, the hounds are entirely the property of Mr Tralawney. I was much disappointed as I had a sort of vague idea that it was a very brilliant sort of scene and that we should see all the hounds start off in full cry with the horses at their heels &c &c.



Cowyard, Underhill Farm

Wednesday Novr 7th. Proceeded to Devonport, did various commissions and having plenty of time to spare went on to Plymouth to see G. Cuerton; we went to Devil's Point and loitered about. As I was coming from the train I met Mr Edwin Jonas and Pinwill, the latter of whom gave me a ticket to see the fireworks at the Block house. They were pretty good and were accompanied at very long intervals by the dulcet strains of a few men from the Marine Band. There were a good many people, but I met no one that I knew. After the conclusion of the proceedings George and I returned to his house, where I slept the night, in the morning I went to the market to try and get some fish, none to [be] had. I lost the 1.45 train in consequence of a hamper from Hawkins not being there at the right time. While I was waiting at the door on the lookout, I was much amused at the people who came in for their tickets. A huge Guard with a voice to match stood at the door to keep out those who were not going by the train. First came an old woman evidently unaccustomed to travelling "going by the train" shouted the Guard. "Yes? Come in then my dear woman" bundled her into the ticket office, allowing her under no inducement to return to say goodbye to her friends. Next came a potatoe faced, nervous young man, perhaps a draper's assistant. Guard. "Going by the train Sir". Young gent startled out of his wits. "Up the Rhine. – Er – Ivybridge." Pushed in, and summarily disposed of.

Saturday Novr 10th. TOTNESS. At 1.30 today Papa and I set out to walk to Totness, distant from here about 8 miles. After the first two miles I began to feel hot and weary but gradually freshened up again. I was greatly tempted to go and steal some of the apples from the yellow heaps in the numerous orchards by the way side. Papa endeavoured to lighten the journey by telling various stories of his youthful exploits in the way of catching rabbits &c &c. Here and there you get some beautiful bits of scenery.

Wednesday. Decr 26th. We today dined with Captn and Mrs Price, and spent a very pleasant evening in inspecting the various things, brought by Captn Price from abroad. While talking about our last day at "the Cottage" Wiveliscombe, Captn P said he understood I showed great attention to one or two of the female portion of the party, I am afraid my conscience tells me who one of them was, a passing fancy.

Decr 28th Friday. Papa has today recd. the offer of an appointment to the Superintendence of the Transport and Mail Agency department at Liverpool, he first told me of it when I was in the orchard looking out for some Lapwing Plovers, by asking me if I was ready to go to Liverpool, to which I immediately returned an affirmative.



1861

Jany 1st. Shortly before dinner G. Cuerton called for me to go to tea with him and the Maxwells. Spent a pleasant evening and returned at 11.30 when I found Mama in tears. It being an intensely dark night she thought that by some means I had walked into the river & should not have been again heard of till my swollen body was fished out some miles down the stream.

The new year was ushered in with a gale of wind and much rain, much damage done of rooves and chimneypots.

Jany 11th Friday. Mama & I came down here this day last week. We are now in Lodgings, and during the past week have had a great deal to do, such as packing, &c &c. Papa has arrived safely at Liverpool, and finds every thing much better than we had been led to expect. On Wednesday last, I went with Captn Price and Mr Billing to “the Cottage” at Wiveliscombe and spent a pleasant day, I looked with feelings of regret upon the place (where I have spent so many pleasant days, and had so many good dinners,) when I thought I should never again see it. I recollect every thing we did on the 31st of July last, as well as if it had occurred yesterday. I can almost imagine that I am now seated at dinner, with Miss Harrison opposite me, Williams on my left, the Layards &c behind me. I am afraid many years will elapse before I again see them, if ever. And how altered may be our circumstances, some married, others dead, perhaps myself among the number. God knows. I fear but few would regret me or “shed a tear o’er my grave”. I believe I was born to crawl miserably thro’ life, an unhappy wretch, laughed at, & disliked by all. However I hope the time will come when I shall be amused at the above.

Thursday Jany 17. Got up this morning at ½ past 6 and left Bristol by the 8 o’clock train, due at Liverpool at 2.30. Had a comfortable journey. Saw Dudley Castle, or rather the top of it, upon a hill, partly hidden by trees, also Stafford Castle. Between Dudley & W’hampton lie the mining districts, where the whole face of nature is perfectly black.

Numbers of huge chimnies & furnaces, belching out volumes of smoke, and flames, which I should imagine on a dark night would have a very good effect. Arrived at the Lime St Station Liverpool at 3.15 and were met by Papa & Dr Gruggen, our old Malta friend: took a cab, and drove to 116 Duke St, where we are now, in lodgings until we get a house of our own.

Friday February 1st. Went to tea last night with the Lambs, the Hendersons relatives & great friends, they live at 137 Grove St but we were driving about Papa “a cussin & a swearin like anythink” in every direction for some time in consequence of Mama having given the cabby the wrong number viz 37, but at length arrived at the right place, and were ushered into a room about 16 feet square, filled with furniture, and containing about 9 chairs to be divided among 15 people. Saw Miss Jessie Lamb the great painter, of whom I have heard so much from Cousin Emily, likewise David Lamb whose letters from India I have read. He looks much older than I expected having a bald head. During supper time he entertained me with an account of his experiences as a volunteer in India during the time of the rebellion, when he recd 5 wounds. Miss Jessie devoted herself to me all the evening showing me all her drawings and paintings, many of those done before her right side was paralyzed & rendered useless, being very well executed. Among those present were, a Mr & Mrs Worthington, Spence, Macauley, & Miss Spence a simpering young damsel about 17 who was asked to meet Isabel.

Tuesday Feby 5. Went last night to “Clayton Hall” to hear the Christy Minstrels. Don’t know when I have laughed so heartily; their performances at Devonport were comparatively slow. They wound up with an exceedingly comic burlesque on “La Sonnambula”. Sat next to a pretty girl, who would pass for ——’s sister, so exactly like her was she. Thus is it, that I am constantly reminded of one I try in vain to forget. I saw her last at Mr Greenwood’s door, our farewell consisted of a nod & goodbye, she thus showing that she did not care a “hang” for me, tho’ I never for a

moment entertained a hope that she did, for who would look upon a wretch with a lame leg, when they might get plenty of others with good ones.

Wednesday Feby 20. Papa having recd a couple of tickets for the Oratorio of Elijah from a Mr McIver (whose father owns some ships here), we (Papa & I) went last night at 8 P.M. to the Philharmonic hall. There was a great number of people in full dress, white chokers, diadems, wreaths, nets covered with stars, moons, crescents &c, and white kids. In our box were Captn & Mrs Goldfinch, MacRiver, and another individual with an eyeglass, and slight black moustache.

The four principal singers were, a Miss Parepa, Miss Palmer, & Messrs Wilbye Cooper and Lawler. There were besides "an orchestra & chorus of 250 performers." Miss Parepa is a very "great singer" that is she is very stout or rather – embonpoint. She was attired in a black velvet dress and during the intervals of singing talked to her next door neighbour Miss Palmer a good looking young woman, whose singing was I think generally preferred to that of Miss P.

I was much delighted with the whole affair. I wish I could hear it again.

The Hall is a very fine and handsome one and well lighted.

Friday Feby 22nd. Went last night with Papa to see the ceremony of swearing in the Press guard or 80 Lancashire volunteers. The ceremony took place at St George's Hall which is a most splendid building and far exceeded any opinion I had made of it. It contained a very handsome organ which cost 600 guineas. It is supported by highly polished pillars of Scotch granite.

The affair wound up with a vast amount of cheering, for the Queen, and then for the important personages then present.

1863

Saturday August 1st. Went this evening to Cremorne gardens, not a bad place for fun, but expensive. Plenty of women, and bad drink. Saw "Grand Tournament" whipping the real ones to fits as regards the chivalric bearing of the knights, but lamentably deficient in the fighting business which was absurd. Walked home all the way, rather tired.

Sunday 9th. Dined today with the Harrisons, who seem a very pleasant family. There are two daughters one of whom is rather good looking. The son whose name [is] English appears a very nice sort of fellow. The old gentleman however appears to me a sententious little humbug.

On the *18th* I received a long letter from Papa in reply to mine saying that I found it very hard work to live on £90, and asking if there was any chance of my getting an allowance. He gives me an acct. of the money he has been obliged to spend, & the various causes of his present poverty.

Tuesday Sept 8. This afternoon went to see Bone, and got my cloak. Dined with the Mends' and went with Bessie and some young woman to Mellon's concert. Heard some capital music, among the rest some selections from the opera of "Faust". The chief attraction was Carlotta Patti sister to Adelina of theatrical celebrity. She sings in a most charming manner and is very lame. Her voice, especially in the high shakes resembles that of a bird.

Wednesday 9th. This evening I went to the Polytechnic to see the "Ghost" which is now all the rage. Pepper read part of the story of Dickens' "Haunted man", the scene being represented on the stage. The way in which the illusion is done is very wonderful, and utterly baffles the comprehension of the unscientific certainly.

Wednesday Oct. 7. In today's papers appear letters & accts of an earthquake which has been felt throughout the Kingdom, but principally in the western districts. It took place yesterday morning at 3.20 a.m., but was not of any violence merely causing bells to ring, and furniture to fall about.

Saturday Oct. 10. Went to Canterbury Hall with Lewis. Ghost very good.

Friday Dec. 11. Yesterday took place near Tunbridge the great fight between Tom King and J. Heenan the American in which the latter was defeated after fighting 25 rounds lasting 35 mins. £1000 a side.



Friday Dec. 18. After much persuasion on Aitken's part my leave for eleven days was granted, so I left Town yesterday in the 7.45 train, and arrived at L'pool at 6.30 coming 3 class. Very cold all the way. A pleasant young woman whose only drawback was her name (Nelly Timmins) being in the same carriage. Found all well at home except Papa who I find is rather weak in consequence of one of his infernal attacks which he had a short time ago. The neighbourhood is being changed rapidly, houses springing up in all quarters on every available spot of ground. I today went into town with Isabel, and sent P.O. (10/-) to Deedes who had lent me that sum. This evening G. Holcombe came over to see me.

Saturday Dec. 26. Thackeray suddenly died, aged 53.

Monday Dec. 28. This afternoon went to see old Toby who is now in a Bricklayer's yard in Brownlow St. He appears to be quite reconciled to his lot & now answers to the name of "Jack". He seemed glad to see me & has as yet shown no signs of madness.

Tuesday 29. Went this evening to the Olivers, & had a pleasant evening, played at various round games. At parting kissed Alice Robinson of course before leaving.

1864

Friday Jany 1. Last night sat up with Lewis & witnessed the exit of the old year drinking in the new with some sherry I had. In the evening I went to see Cousin E. Found Mr H. suffering from attack of asthma.

Sunday Jan 3rd. This afternoon went to the Fentons where I saw Leicester Lyne who is got up as a monk gown, cowl cope sandals &c &c &c is looking very ill & no wonder. He has just succeeded in getting subscriptions & endowing £300 per ann on a monastery which is to be taken & filled with these monks.

Wednesday 27. Went to a dancing party at the Mendses, where there were some very nice looking girls who were dancing all the evening so I of course had not a chance of speaking to them. I spent a most miserable time of it.

Monday Mar 7. On Saturday I recd a note from Mrs Box asking me down there so I went by 8.10 train, and when I arrived at Cookham it was raining hard with a cold E. wind. I walked over to W. Place the darkness being so great that I got my feet very wet. On arrival I found there Mrs Downs & Mr Innis. Mrs D. is now staying there she is I think a kind hearted, but exceedingly silly woman. There was also a man named Wilson who has invented a new system of fire place, the coals being placed at the bottom, then the wood & the paper at the top, the object being that the smoke should pass downward through the fire and thus consume all the gas that otherwise would be wasted.

This morning I had a letter from Mama, telling me that G. Papa had had a severe attack of Influenza & Bronchitis which had confined him to his bed for more than a week. He was almost in the last stage of weakness and was only just kept alive by constant stimulants; I had had a note from Papa this morning who tells me that the news is rather more cheerful.

Friday 11th Mar. This morning had a note from Ramona announcing the death of poor G. Papa who expired on Wednesday night at 10 o'clock. He went off so quietly that those in the room were scarcely aware that the last moment had arrived. G. Mama I believe bears her loss very quietly as does Aunt Jane though I believe they feel it much.

Sunday Mar 20. Went to Ealing; Alexander Mamskoff (a vulgar conceited brute, about 6ft 3 high) there; went for a walk the usual way. At dinner Mamskoff got screwed & made a fool of himself in the Drawingroom. At the station met Dick (Adolphus) Fenton, who came to Town with us. He has returned from Boulogne, and expects to get an appointment at Hanwell as organist &c, went to his lodgings, and stood some beer, then home.

Wednesday Mar 23. This afternoon left office early and went to Ealing where I found the Fentons on their Lawn, so called by courtesy, playing at Croquet in which I joined. We subsequently went into tea, and in the evening played at Cards. Altogether I had a very jolly evening. Dally was looking very nice.

Good Friday. Mar. 25. This afternoon went for a miserable & solitary walk to Wormwood Scrubbs, across a number of muddy slippery fields. This morning we have had a thick smoky fog. Dined at 4 o'clock to please the servant, and having finished "Tom Brown at Oxford" and read "Saturday Review" till I was sick I determined to go to Carter's, a Coffee Room. I am awfully hard up this month, in fact stumped up, or I would have gone to the Crystal Palace or somewhere.

At Carter's I met a gentlemanly sort of man named Maitland, about 45 years of age, whom about a year ago, I used to see at the "Warwick". I entered into conversation with him, and in the course of the evening he asked Spratt & myself to dine with him on Sunday. Not liking these invitations from men who neither know me or my name, I excused myself on the plea of an engagement intending to dine with Cousin E, but it was no go as he asked us to dinner again for Sunday week, and

having no excuse I consented. I don't know what he wants, for I suppose he has an object. However *nous verrons*.

Sunday Mar 27. This afternoon strolled about Hyde Park then to Cousin E. where I dined. After dinner we spent the evening with a Roman Catholic family of the name of Burns for the purpose of hearing a French tenor singer whose name I don't know; there was also a Mrs Waterton, daughter in law of the author of "Waterton Wanderings". There was also a Roman Cath. Priest. I passed a very pleasant evening, having the daughter, Miss Burns, to talk to. She was a very jolly sort of girl and rather pretty, also well developed.

Thursday Mar 31st. Today ends our Financial Year, and consequently we have deluged with bills in all 256, amounting to above £220,000. In the early part of the day poor old Stacey said he wasn't worth a pin and threatened to knock up however having been propped up with some grub & cooper somewhat recovered his equanimity. After 4 o'clock we lighted our pipes &c which made things pleasant.

Sunday April 3rd. Dined with Maitland at Simpsons, had a very comfortable dinner and finished the evening at Carters. My entertainer appears a very decent sort of man has travelled about, and seen much of, the world, and professes to be acquainted with many good families. From what he said he appears to be a grain merchant.

Monday April 11th. This day Garibaldi arrived in Town from Southampton, a procession in his honor was formed and proceeded ahead of him.

Thursday April 26. This evening I went to the Fentons, and had a game at Croquet and tea &c in the evening. Present was a very scrumptious sort of girl called Amy Abotson, about 5.11 high, very well made and pretty, also larky.

Sunday May 29th. This afternoon came to Town, walked through the Park, and then called on the Burns whom I found at home, Mrs B asked me to come & spend the evening. I then called at the Hendersons & learnt that they had gone to the Botanical, so walked that way, & met them coming away in a cab, Mr H. then got me admission to the gardens in order that I might see the American Rhododendrons which were really splendid & reminded one much of the enchanted grottos & caves described in the Arabian nights. I returned to dinner at Gloster place, and then went to the Burns' where I passed a very pleasant evening there being plenty of tolerable music and several very jolly sort of girls, Miss B. not excepted. Being too late to return home, I slept at Blomfield St.

Wednesday June 8. This morning was up at 6.30 took a boat, I pulled up towards Hammersmith, and had a swim, but did not stay in the water long, as it was very dirty, not usually the case, however I enjoyed it, it being my first bathe this year.

Friday. This afternoon I went with Papa on board the "Africa", commanded by Capt Stone, who has been suspended for 6 mos for running his ship ashore. Introduced to Mrs S., who introduced me to two very nice girls, one a very pretty one whom I should like to meet again but suppose I wont. After landing walked home; called on Gruggens on the way.

Tuesday June 14th. This evening I dined with the Gruggens. Present were Dr Rayner of the Eagle, Mrs Adolphe Parkes, two Miss Dukes, of Chichester very nice looking girls, especially the elder one. After dinner we were to have had some archery, but rain set in. We had some singing & music, and played at “squails”, a not very intellectual game.

Friday July 1st. Today being very fine Mama Isabel M. Ann & I went down to the landing stage by the 11 'bus, and crossing over to Birkenhd proceeded by rail to Chester per 2nd class much to Mama's disgust who expected a much more comfortable carriage, however we reached our destination without loss of life or limb, and proceeded along Foregate St to “Bollands” the swell confectioner, and had our lunch in the back room. There were a couple of jolly looking girls in the shop with whom I should like to have conversed but circumstances would not admit of it. We then went to the cathedral & were shown over it by a girl of “prepossessing exterior”.

Tuesday Jul. 12. This evening took train to Richmond, and called on Miss Emmett. Introduced to two stunning girls called Green; played croquet & had tea, after which more croquet with some more people.

Wednesday 13th. Went this evening to Ealing and was introduced to Geraldine Ibetson a handsome girl. Mrs Fenton talked to me a long time about Dick & his affairs, saying that he was naturally of a most sweet & angelic disposition, but that his “father's persecution” had ruined him, that all his prospects had been blighted by him &c &c to which of course I did not know what to say. From what I have seen of Dick he does not appear a bad sort of fellow, but considering the position of his affairs lives most extravagantly, travelling always first class, running up bills at Hotels &c &c &c.

Saturday July 24th. On Saturday last G. Cuerton came down to Putney, & I intended having a pull with him but on that day I was seized with a swelling & severe pain in the left testicle which prevented me from doing anything. On the following day I was so much worse that I went to Dr White and to my disgust learned that he would not be at home till nine or ten at night. I had my invitation to dine with the Hammers so there I went but it was very unpleasant work to talk & appear at ease when every movement was very painful. However I got through it all right & then went to the doctor who told me I had strained myself in some way. He recommended me to take lodgings somewhere in Town and remain quiet for a few days. So I went to 25 Blomfield St, & was there five days undergoing a course of medicine & lotions.

Sunday Aug: 8. I went in the steamer to Kew, & went over the Gardens, which I had not seen before. They are very pretty and well laid out, but after the last month's hot weather the grass is completely scorched up. The Green and hot houses are very well stocked, and well worth seeing. The place was crowded with a Sunday rabble redolent of scent, & sweat & hair-oil. Faugh –

Wednesday Aug: 10. Yesterday I had a note from V. Fenton asking me to join them in a Boat excursion up the River, & to be at Kew at 4 P.M., so I made all haste to Sloane St & took a Kew bus and after many delays got to the bridge at 4.35 passing on the way the P. of Wales who was driving the Princess. I thought I was too late but wasn't so we took a boat (the *P. of Wales*) and quietly pulled up to Richmond. The Party consisted of Clara Dally & Viv Fenton, Agnes Brooks, Tupholme the Parson &

myself. We landed at Richmond & went to Riverdale where some of us played at Croquet. At 6 o'clock we were joined by Mr Fenton & a Miss Emmett, and we then pulled up to Teddington thro' the lock, to Kingston Br and returned to R.mond at 10 PM some of the girls having taken part in rowing. Miss Brooks is a very jolly sort of girl, and as she pulled bow oar I sat behind her, & instructed her in the novel art and talked & chaffed with her to my satisfaction. When landed we went round to Riverdale leaving Viv in the boat to take her round to some steps, we were in hopes of getting something to eat having dined at 6 o'clock, but there was none to be had, so we returned to the bank and found both Viv & his boat gone in a most mysterious manner, we shouted & hunted about for him without result, and Mr Fenton began to get nervous, however the boat soon turned up in charge of a waterman who said Viv had gone up to the house – and at last he returned. We then pulled back to Kew, & after a slight altercation with the Waterman, tried to get a cab without success, so walked over to Ealing, where Mr Fenton offered me a sofa & some supper to my great joy. I went into the Beer & Bread & cheese with great effect, and then apples & pears, and as I had a slight touch of Diarrhoea was completely upset thereby.

Monday Aug: 22. On Saturday I recd a note from Mrs Fenton asking me to be at Kew at 2 or Richmond at 3 in order to join another boat excursion up the river. Same party as last time except Agnes Brooks whom I rather hoped to see. Walked over to Ealing where I passed the night on the sofa as before. But this time we had a more extensive supper, and after everyone had gone to bed I sat out on the lawn a[nd] smoked for ½ an hour, under a beautiful moon, & indulged in thinking. Though not in the least spooney on Dally I can't rid my mind's eye, of her bright face & golden hair but it's a pleasant vision so I am not over anxious about it.

October, Sat: 1. At the beginning of the week Gus: Lyne called at the office with a note from Mrs L. asking me to go & spend a few days with them at Brighton. When I arrived there found the Lynes giving a "ball" as they called it. In other words there were a few people spending the evening, among whom were Willis of the Vicky & his sister, a Mr & Mrs Tucker who knew us in Malta, & Mrs Hare an elderly young lady to whom F. Lane is engaged & supposed to be spooney on, a silly looking individual without conversation. She has two children, one a very pretty little girl of about 11, so she is no chicken – Not having had anything to eat since one, did some grub, & then returned to the drawing room.

All the Lynes are I think looking very well and not at all altered in appearance or manners. They are of course full of their foreign adventures and have a good deal to say about the manner in which they were worship[p]ed, admired & fought over by the girls in forrin parts –

Sunday. This morning went to church. Fashionable edifice, crowds of people, jolly looking girls, wonderful bonnets &c &c. Made Girt laugh during the service I am sorry to say – Met H. Ward coming out of church, with his "charge" an ugly common looking juvenile. After lunch Gus & I went to see Mary Anne Richardson who is staying with some Miss Oakes. Then on the parade where we picked up two girls, mine an awfully jolly one, with fair ruddy complexion, blue eyes & light hair. Walked with them. Gus had to abandon his precipitately, having met the Tuckers with Louey & Harriet. Promised to write to my girl, who said her name was Davis, 59 The Parade, & promised faithfully to answer it & say when she would return to Town. I shall write but wont get a reply, too good luck for me. When I returned to the house there was a

little scene, the girls having rushed upstairs & told Mr Lyne that they had met Gus walking with a common girl, &c &c.

Monday. Retd to Town having had I think, a real welcome –

Sunday. Went to church this mornng with Mr F. & Dally, & In the afternoon went for a very pleasant walk, but Dally wouldn't go, so I didn't care so much about it as I might have. In the afternoon "little" Jex paid a visit. J. is no friend of mine I fancy, as he is sweet on Dal, & I get in his way. Dick dined with us, & while Mr F. was talking to him about his getting a berth & so on, he made a rather curious remark, which will account for much of his apparent misfortunes – "What! do you think I would take anything that would only enable me to live upon? if you do you are much mistaken". A nice argument for a man of 24 with nothing to do, & no income but what he gets from his Governor who can't spare it I'm sure –

Wednesday 2 Nov. The Mends & three or four other families have made arrangements to have a soiree every week throughout the winter. The first of them came off tonight by the Byrnes, an Irish & Scotch family next door but one to the Mends. Having made the acquaintance of the daughters I recd an invitation, chiefly I believe because Dally Fenton was to be there. I enjoyed it very well for though I could not dance I had several people to talk to, especially Dally who danced only Quadrilles & Lancers. The affair broke up about 12.30.

Monday 19th [December]. This evening Isabel & I went to a small party at the Turnbolls'. I did not care much about it as there was scarcely anything but dancing. I was introduced to one rather jolly girl, a Miss Geddis, something on the Girt Lyne principle but much prettier a singer of comic songs – I made a great mistake in being introduced to a Miss Twynem, an awful muff, tho' not bad looking. She was horribly shy, & when spoken to blushed & looked all manner of ways. I had the misfortune to take her down to supper & could not get her to eat or drink anything. Dr Gruggen was there and was as jolly as usual. Dr Turnbull, a rum old stick like Mephistopheles, barring the moustache, after supper proposed that the gentlemen should remain below & have a glass of wine in order to enable the "ladies to settle themselves" whatever that may mean.

1865

Tuesday Feb. 21. Yesterday was Cousin Emily's birthday, & this evening was a party to which I was invited. It was altogether a very jolly sort of party & went off very well. I enjoyed it very much considering I could not join in the dancing, but perhaps that was owing to the presence of Dal for whom I have a weak sort of affection, somewhat exceeding that of friendship. Clara looked very well indeed, & was one of the swells of the room. Miss Byrne was also there, she is a very rattling sort of girl whom I took down to refreshments about a dozen times, & "bubbled" with all the evening. She brought with her a very pretty damsel a Miss Wilson, whom I should like to know more of. Mrs Wheler & Theresa were also there, the former painted to death as usual – The dancing went on with great vigour until the dancing cloth was ripped up, & there ensued a question of Tin Tacks & carpet thread, which [were] of no avail & so every one proceeded to take up the cloth altogether. Cousin E. amused

herself during the evening by accompanying the music with a pair of castanets. The affair broke up about 2 A.M.

Tuesday May 2. I today took a day's leave as Papa & I are to go to see the Jarmins who are now living at Surbiton. Mr J is a healthy active old gentn. of about 80, though not looking more than 65. We had lunch, & a very nice one it was. We were then shewn over the house and saw the very interesting collection of antiquities, & old pictures the former including several things belonging to O. Cromwell & his son.

Friday May 26. This eveg. went to a pleasant musical party at Cousin Emily's, about 60 people including Hebelers, Whelers, Crofts, Miss Horden who is a very pretty girl, Wickhams, &c. There were but few men, so it was rather pleasant for me as I could talk to whom I liked, which I did to Miss Wickham also a pretty girl, but poor thing blind in one eye. Saw the Whelers home, asked there to a "Soiree Dansante" on 20 June next.

Sunday June 4th. By train to Blackwall, where having ordered our dinner at the Hotel we strolled about going over one of the Docks in which were many fine vessels – & so to dinner which comprised the usual fish, winding up with chicken & cheese, we had two bottles of capital champagne, & one of sherry, & then sat a long time looking over the river (which was lighted by a jolly moon) until nearly 11 o'clock. Talked to many things, Norris telling me that the other day he went to a private "spiritual séance" where he saw the most extraordinary things which he would not have believed had he not seen them; table rapping musical instruments floating about in the air, tables rising & falling & so on. All this is wonderful no doubt but I should certainly require the evidence of my own senses before I put my faith [in] anything of that sort.

Monday June 5th. This evening at the Mends's we all sat out in the balcony, the males doing weeds: then to singing. I was pleased with a Miss Grace Peel, who has a nice voice, a pretty face, & is a very pleasant girl. Capt Mends has been Aide de Camp to the Queen – so I drank his health & congratulated him thereon – then to the "Stafford" where I had some beer, and lost a bob in backing Barnett at billiards.

Friday July 7. Today Reid whom I met at the Fry's at L'pool called at the office, to ask me to go about with him this eveg. We went for a short time to the Alhambra, & then to the Argyll, a very slow place, (to me), where Reid picked up a woman with whom he went to Cremorne. Reid I believe goes to the River Plate shortly & so is having a slight shine before his departure.

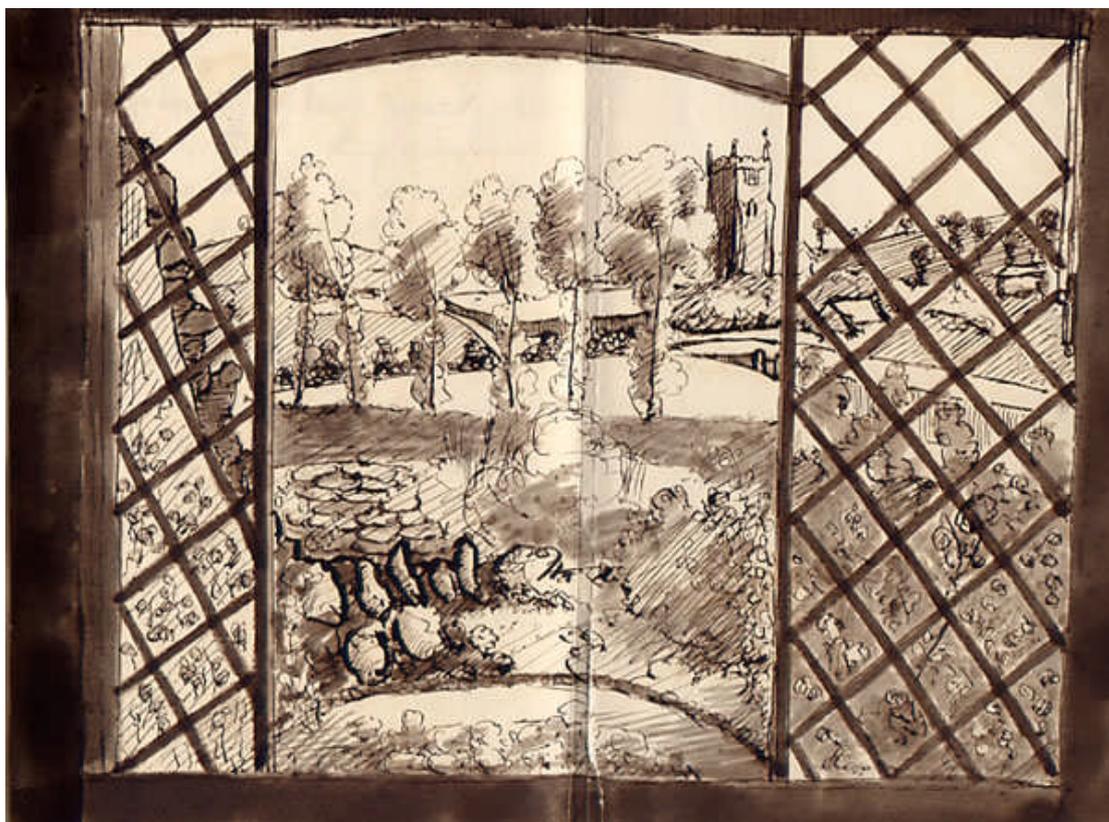
I have had some letters from Aunt Jane who with G. Mama & Ramona, is staying now at Paignton, asking me to take advantage of an excursion train, & go down to stay with them, however I am told that Paignton is a wretched place, with no means of bathing.

Wednesday 12 July – Went to "Riverdale", & there I spent the evening renewing my acquaintance with the Miss Greens, Clara Fenton is also staying there. She does not look well, & seems down in the mouth. Jane Green is a very pretty girl, & I took a sort of fancy to her, but she is one of those damsels whose mouth wears a sort of contemptuous expression, which gives one a sort of feeling that one is despised by the aforesaid damsel, which does not conduce to friendship. At 11 o'clock Viv & I said

goodbye, being too late for train or bus, I had a long walk to Ealing, & slept in Viv's sitting room, on a mattress with a shawl over me, & devilish glad I was to lie down after my day's work.

Sunday 16 July. I did not know what to do with myself this afternoon so after thinking a little of Ealing, I determined to go to Richmond where Viv: & Clara Fenton are staying, so took a 'bus at Piccadilly, & proceeded to the latter place arriving at Riverdale at about 4 P.M. & asked to go for a walk, & Miss Emmett & Miss Green said they would go too but Clara & (to my vexation) Jane would not go, vowing it was too hot – So we started off, & it being nice & fine, we had a pleasant walk, passing on our way Hamm House, a not imposing red brick building (on the River Bank) there being in front what was originally a paved court yard, with an old stone figure of Father Thames in the centre, the house formerly belonging to the Dysart family was built in 1610. Miss Emmett I think is a nice person, & has any amount of conversation. She discoursed eloquently to me of love, types of beauty &c. Had she been young & pretty I might have made something of it. Returned to the house & sat a long time in the garden, the river looking very jolly & lively. Jane Green looked very pretty but morose, which elicited from me sundry mental oaths. Home by train.

Saturday August 5th. Started this morning by the 10 a.m. train arriving at Paignton at about 8 without anything worthy of note. A woman in the carriage left her Baby behind at one of the stations, and fainted; & in the carriage with me was one of the Tempy. Writers in the Audit Br who got screwed & made a fool of himself.



View from front window, Polsham Cottage, Paignton 9 Aug: '65

Saturday Aug: 12. I have now been here a week. The weather has not however been very nice, there having been a good deal of wind, & during the last day or two but

little sun for which I am sorry as I want something to cheer me, being very down in the mouth as I fear I shall always be till I die, I cannot here put down the reason for it, but my life is a misery to me.

We have had a couple of shrimping expeditions down among the rocks. The last one was rather amusing, it consisting of Papa (in Capt: Price's old clothes) Ramona & Isabel (without crinolines) young Halloran & myself.

Monday Aug: 14. This morning went with young Halloran to the rocks where we bathed very pleasantly, it being a nice warm day & nearly high water. I always enjoy bathing in company with some one who can swim as, tho' I have no reason to anticipate it, I always fancy that some day I may be seized with cramp or something that would prevent me from getting on shore. Halloran, who is a Master's asst: R.N. is a very nice sort of young fellow, very openhearted & muscular. He is a good swimmer, & has saved his brother's life, for which he received the medal.

Thursday Aug: 17. Today it being tolerably fine, a fly was chartered & we (including Ramona) started about 12 o'clock to Babbacombe Bay, which is very fine, & has a view of Teignmouth & Dawlish. The scenery here consists of green hills & dales which terminate in precipitous cliffs of red sandstone which stand on a beach of perfectly white pebbles. To this beach we went down by a winding steep road, & there sat down & had something to eat, Ramona Isabel & I afterwards walking about; Isabel disporting herself in the water without her shoes & stockings. Down here was a sort of Public house styling itself the "Cary Arms". I much frightened poor Mama by climbing up to the top of some steep rocks [w]here were a couple of bathing machines & we were much amused by seeing a fellow combing a woman's hair, she having apparently had a bath.

Sunday Aug: 20th. Papa Isabel Ramona & I to church where we remained after the service to see the old carvings &c. There is a very fine old pulpit made of stone, colored, & having on it much ornamentation with figures &c, which have been shamefully mutilated; as is also the freestone screen of the Kirkham Chantry, on the right hand side. This is beautifully carved with various devices & designs & on them two knights in armour with their wives; I had heard that the ravages were committed by time & soldiers of Cromwell, but Mrs Price tells me that is not the case, the damage having been done some years ago by a sexton who had been in the habit of knocking off pieces of the whitestone, & selling them to the villagers to clean their doorsteps with, the ruffian.

Monday afternoon. Papa, Mama G. Mama & Jenny Price went in a fly to Torquay (calling on our way on the Hamlyns) today being the Regatta, the best part of which I saw this morning from the beach & rocks. However we drove up towards the baths where was a great crush caused by the presence of a sort of fair, Booths, Theatres, Roundabouts, swings, &c, so the females took fright & turned back, while Papa & I went up "Frying Pan" Row to the Coast Gd Flag staff, from which we did not see much the Regatta being nearly over, so leaving the vulgar crowd, went down again.

Friday Aug 25. This morning I was to have met Capt: Selby, & bathed with him at the rocks, & while on the way there my nose began bleeding violently, & continued to do so for some time much to my disgust; I went to the Rocks where the sea was pretty rough, & Capt: S. was not, (present) & bathed my head & face a good deal & at

length stopped the bleeding, leaving outside my nose a long fleshy looking bit of stuff, which Capt S. (whom I met afterwards with Papa) suggested might be a portion of the Mucous Membrane of my nose, which idea did not please me, however things righted themselves eventually. In the forenoon Capt. S brought to show Papa a number of antiquities which he had collected when surveying the site of ancient Babylon. They consisted of numerous cylindrical seals of the early kings, the engraving on which was beautifully preserved; also a number of finely engraved stones of various sizes, but the great curiosity of all was a part of a glass bottle, most beautifully colored, not merely upon the surface, but right through the glass. The only things to which this coloring can be compared are the backs of the small emerald beetles from S. America, & the most beautiful hues on a humming bird.

Saturday Aug 26. Isabel Ramona & I set off to go to Anstey's cove today but by the time I arrived at the station I felt a queer feeling of faintness come over me, & as if I walked on undulating moving ground, however I hoped it would pass off, & so I went on to Torquay, & there feeling worse I had some brandy & water & determined to return home which I did by the next train, & laid on the sofa at Willow bank all the afternoon.

Thursday Aug: 31. This morning I started on a forlorn sort of expedition (by the train to Torre) to see old Mr Carr, not that I cared a pin about it, only I thought that Cousin Emily would be pleased if I went. I had a long walk on a very hot morning in trying to find the "Quinta" as the damned place is called. It is at Mary church, and, as I imagined, near the church towards which I toiled up hill & down dale, until coming to a "Pub": I went in, had a glass of cider, and asked the way; a rusty looking laborer offered to show it me, so I went back a part of the way I had before come, & having given the man the wherewithal to drink my health, mounted a long steep hill, & after much interrogation found the place I was in search of. It is a pretty house, prettily situated, with a good view of the back of Torquay & country, with Paignton in the distance, when Mr Carr came out I had to explain who I was as he had forgotten me. He is the same cold uncomfortable sort of man he always was & I was devilish glad to say goodbye, which I soon did, continuing my way to Torquay.

Friday Septr: 1. This morning Papa & I had our last morning's bathe at Paignton. Arrived at Plymo' about 4 & were glad to see the old place once more, every thing looking unaltered except a fine Hotel built opposite the station. While going up the hill to Eldad we had a little excitement owing to the escape & capture of the mouse which Isabel had brought down in a matchbox (poor little Devil) & on arriving at the Bridge we overtook Ramona talking to some one, so took her up with us. Everything looked much the same as before. What I missed most was poor Grand Papa, especially at dinner, the garden also showed evidence of his absence, for it was like a wilderness. After dinner Isabel Ramona & I went down to the Danseys all of whom we saw, as well as Browning who I think is about the ugliest fellow I have seen.

Saturday Septr: 2. Went to old Craigs, whose gin & water we drank, I like an ass taking too much, for when I got home I was screwed & made myself ridiculous before Ramona & Isabel, knocking over the Dining Room Table & smashing a candlestick.

Sunday Sept. 3rd. Woke this morning with a beastly cold hav[ing] slept on the floor the greater part of last night. To old S. Michael's in the morning, with a long dry sermon from Mr Gardner.

Tuesday 5th. After dinner the evening was lovely, so Isabel Ramona & I went out in the garden, & sat on the Tank where we jawed & looked at the moon – I smoked my pipe, while Isabel leant back with her head on my chest, when suddenly everyone was disturbed by some of the fire dropping from my pipe into her face one bit nearly going into her eye, however with the help of the parish engine the conflagration was soon put out.

Wednesday Oct: 18. This morning at 10.45 died poor Lord Palmerston in his 82 year, one [of] our greatest & most popular statesmen. His loss will be much felt as he was most powerful in keeping the peace between parties & with foreign nations. He has been failing for some time but his final illness has been short. I first heard the news when walking along the Strand with little Todd.

Friday October 27 1865. Today poor old "Pam" was placed in his last resting place. He expressed a wish to be buried privately at Romsey, but this was overruled by the Queen, & he has had a public funeral of great extent, including several hundred carriages, accompanied by the swells of the period, Prince of Wales &c &c – The body has been buried in Westminster Abbey. At about 12.30 I got away from the office and went down to see what I could; having struggled as far as Whitehall opposite the "Ship" Tavern, I became jammed in the crowd, where I remained for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour in a most unpleasant situation, for the crush was so great that it was one constant exertion to prevent ones ribs from being compressed in addition to which just behind me was a shop with Plate Glass front, & the proprietors had not put down the shutters, consequently I & others about every moment expected to be forced through the glass, a decidedly unpleasant alternative. Perhaps the most unpleasant part of the whole affair was having to be for so long in immediate contact with a hot & sweaty mob, which was very offensive. I saw nothing of the procession except the tops of some of the carriages & magnificent flunkies.

8 Nov. This evening little Todd & I went to see Anderson, who does much the same tricks as usual with the addition of the basket trick now in vogue which I think better done than by Stodart. After that we had some Ventriloquism &c by a fellow calling himself Frederic (the Great Maccaby) but the lion of the evening was a French Giant, called in the bills "Anak the Anakim". He was certainly an immense fellow, being 8 ft high & large in proportion. Several tall men went on the stage to compare themselves with him, one, 6 ft: 4 in height looked nothing to him; when standing in front if they placed their arms at right angles to the body the tips of the shorter man's fingers of one hand being on a level with those of the Giant. In the hand the former held his umbrella in the ordinary manner, & the end of it, came on a level with the Anak's other hand. The Giant has a stupid heavy look, & a very ordinary French cast of countenance; Florid dark, & black hair –

Nov. 9th. This morning had a lr: from Papa saying that his request had been granted, & his time at Liverpool extended to another year, viz to 1 Jan: 67 – This is very nice as regards pecuniary reasons but for all others I am sorry – For myself I was in hopes that they would come to live near Town, & that I could live at home. I am thoroughly

sick of lodgings as I have [to] live in such a miserable manner, I owe some £20 or so & how the devil I am to pay it I don't know, I have given up the sitting room at Blomfield St, I have kept the bedroom at 8/- a week as the first economic step; in spite of being so often told at home that my pay &c ought to keep me well I don't find it any such case, as tho' I have not been at all extravagant, I am so hard up that I have no money, not a sound boot to my foot, & clothes becoming very shabby – I suppose things will right themselves eventually, but, it is beastly unpleasant now –

Nov: 25. Since writing the above I have been in correspondence with Papa about my monetary affairs, & he replied by sending me money for a pair of boots, expressing his extreme regret that I have so “mismanaged” my money, & calling upon me for an exact statement of what I owe, with the means I propose for paying off the same

Sunday 10 Dec. – Today I went down to Ealing where I dined & was asked to spend Xmas Day – Poor May Fenton I am sorry to say is very ill, & with every sign of consumption, being weak to a degree, without the ability of eating anything – Mr F. & I had much talk about Mr Henderson's affairs. He seems to think the latter must have had money from Leycester Adolphus. Dally being in mourning which becomes her very much, looked very pretty; I think I admire her face more & more every time I see it.

Christmas Day – 1865 – Having had some lunch I went by the 2.30 train to Ealing & thence to the Fentons, where we exchanged the usual Xmas amenities. Dinner passed off very quietly – Present, Mr & Mrs Fenton, Clara Dall, Viv: Mrs & Miss Crawford, a heavy sort of German named Schimmellman, & myself, perhaps equally heavy. Miss Crawford chiefly distinguished herself by not eating any dinner with the exception of half a slice of tongue, & a plum at dessert – She I believe affects loss of appetite, but looks well on the same – The evening too passed away very quietly – there was a little singing by way of change.

N. Brighton December 29th – 5 Montpelier Terr. Having obtained a fortnight's leave I this morning left Euston Square by the 11.20 train – next to me sat a modest sort of young woman with whom I talked – I was rather amused during the latter portion of the journey by a small child, which had been too plentifully supplied by its parents with alternate doses of milk & beer, incessantly screaming out that she wanted to “Pe” to the great delectation of the other passengers – Having arrived at Lime St, I left my portmanteau at the Station & hurried off to the landing stage, where I took the boat for N. Brighton, reaching home at 7.30 and glad I was to see all the home faces once more, all looking well – Mama I am pleased to say is so much better this year than she was last, having got rid of her neuralgia & accompanying low spirits – Isabel looks very pretty – and is as jolly & unaffected as ever – After being some months in lodgings & having nothing & doing nothing without thinking how much it is to cost, it is certainly very enjoyable to be at home in comfort and ease, with people that I know take an interest in me, & where I have no thought for the morrow.

Dec: 31st. This morning fine, but high wind. Mama & Isabel went to church – Papa & I having read Prayers, about 11 started for a walk to Leasowe, but did not reach it, as we were constantly delayed by heavy showers. We passed through Wallasey, leaving on our right the modern church, and a single tower of the old one which some years ago was destroyed by fire. I believe one John Leycester was Vicar here somewhere

about the 11th century. Having come in sight of Leasowe Lighthouse & Castle (the latter the Property of Sir Ed: Cust) we were obliged to take shelter in a cottage, which was filled with a delicious aroma of a prospective dinner – we waited here about ¼ of an hour, and then started for home, having however to take shelter once more in a Farm yard – we got home to dinner at about 2.30, and the afternoon was profitably spent by everyone but myself going to sleep until church time – went to N. Brighton church, where we had a very good sermon from a Mr Fowell.

And thus ends the year 1865 – As regards us I think we have every reason to be satisfied. Thank God we are all well and Papa's prospects are brightening considerably. His appointment here has been extended to 1 Jan: 1867, by which time he hopes to be well set up on his legs as regards his pecuniary matters.

I fear that by this time next year things will look very differently as regards Mr Henderson, & poor Cousin Emily – I am afraid his last stay is almost gone – Cousin E. is talking about leaving their house, and has asked Papa to buy some articles of Hammer Plate. I also fear that another year may make a difference in the Fenton family. Poor May is very ill I think –

The diary ends at this point, and no further volumes are known to exist. So we do not know whether Rafe Neville Leycester continued to 'crawl miserably thro' life, an unhappy wretch', or whether he eventually found happiness and possible even love. If anyone can shed any further light on Leycester and his subsequent life, www.day-books.com would be most interested to know.