

THE OLD QUART POT

by Benjamin Towndrow

with Preface by David Broughton

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PREFACE

by David Broughton

This story is a brief autobiography of my great-great uncle Benjamin Towndrow (1843-1904). He wrote this account of his life in an exercise book dedicated to his son, Alfred William Towndrow.

Benjamin Towndrow was the brother of Alice May Towndrow (1846-1899) who married John Charles Willshere (1849-1931). Among the many sons and daughters of John and Alice were William Arthur Willshere (1876-1953), my Mother's father, and Elizabeth Alice (1872-1969). Elizabeth Alice married her cousin Alfred William Towndrow, the son of Benjamin. So Alfred was my mother's uncle. After the death of Elizabeth in 1969, Alfred, now aged 77 and rather deaf, asked my mother, recently divorced, to care for him. They lived at the house known as PATMOS in Christchurch. Alfred died in 1976, but before departing asked my mother to take care of the book he so valued given to him by his father. That was how my mother came to have the book which contains this story.

The manuscript has been transcribed as accurately as possible. The writing, which is contained in one exercise book, is generally very neat but a little unusual in punctuation and a little adaptation has been done to this to make it easier to read. The spelling has been left unchanged. Square brackets are used to contain editorial notes and assumed words that seem to have been accidentally omitted. The transcription was done by my wife, Dina.

David Broughton, 16 March 1991

**My Fathers Mind
And
the Mistry of the old Quart Pot**

Introduction
March 1903

I Have set myself a task and i trust i shall be abel to accomplish it for I have bein asked so many times by my 'Only Son' that He would like to have something to look at when i shall be no more. And i think its only right and just that we should one and all leave foot prints behind us in some way or other so the only thing that i can do is to empty my mind into this book. Sir Isaac Newton said if a man Conveyed to paper a littil of his mind every day it would suprise him. Thair is one thing i am sory to say and that is i ought to have Commenced it Sooner for my memmory is very much ingured But never mind as my poor Old Dad used to say We never know what we Can do till we try. So i will Commence by writing a sketch of my Life But i would wish the reader to understand that i am not a educated man therefore it will Not be perfection and another thing i must tell you is i have bein an old Sailor and Jack generaly makes a mess of everything He handles. So if the reader should Come accoss any littil errors why i beg to be excaused And as Dr Watts said the mind is the Standerd of the man therefore by the time you have gorn through this book you will be abel to form some idea of the standard of your humbel servant B.T.[and here there are some shorthand symbols].

Put in the Quart Pot

And Now for my Story My Father was a fair man Hight about 5 feet 4 and of a mild temper and thorough good religous princabls Mother was much shorter than he was by 4 ins and bein very stout made Her appear Smaller still but i dont think they ever fell out about it for they allways seamed as happy as a pair of Doves And at the time i am writing about Father worked at Comptons a large pewter pot factory in Bouth Street Spitalfields and we lived in the street No 2; and to Celebrate a Certain event, Father made the Home a presant of a Set of Pewter Pots and the quart Pot had a very broad brim. And when i was Born which was on Wednesday November 22/1843/ 10 minuts past Seven in the morning and i believe it was very foggy and my Dear (Mr) as told me many times that i was put in that Quart Pot So if i was put in and they had kept me thir up to this very minute that i am writing i should Still be in this Building.

[date at the end of this page is 1843]

Mamas Pet

Thairs a Mistery Yes it tis but thir are greater to Come So i may as well go on with my Storey I cannot remember much the first 5 years But Mother calling me her prety littil curley headed boy and said that i was Dadys pet and Mammass - Darling And that i was her love child And that's why they called me Benjiman And my Brother Joseph followed after and on one Beautiful Bright summers morning i can remember it to this day Mother said if we would promis to be good Boys we should go for a ride in a carrage And live in a fine large House and a big Garding, where thir was lots of Apples & Pares & Grapes So of course we promised that we would not touch none of the fruit; and that we would be O so good, So she Bathed us in a tub of water and dressed us up so smart we hardly new where we was We

stood in the front of the Looking Glass till we made ourselves believe we was somebody of note. We had littil strap shoes and long Black silk Pleeses white sokes and we was smothered in white lace Pink ties and Garabaldy Topers. We had a half Fathing each give us and told to go and bid our littil mats Good by you would have thought we was going to Austrilia We bought sweets with the money and divided it with our littil mates and we kissed each other and when we said good by we all commenced to cry and we whent back crying for to leave our littil mates was something awful. Mother Yes Our Mother Who fed us from her gentel Breast and Hushed us un her arms to rest And on our cheeks sweet Kisses Our Mother. She soon wiped our tears away, Kissed us and put us up in the Brake that brought a smile when we got up in our Ge Ge and away we went O my Hi we did injoy the sights. the grate Monnument 202 feet we thought it was a Chimmny the prety Ships and the big Pauls Church 404 feet then we see some old wooden men outside the Clouths Shops selling all the things, And we see a Scotchman outside a Tobacco Shop selling Snuf and they realy looked alive And my sister had all her work to make us believe they where real Dummies because i see the Scotchman with his hand up as naturel as life He took a pinch of Snuf and he seemed as if he was laughing at us i think he had just took a pinch of snuf and did not want any one to see Him but he was behind. So away we whent for we had a fine G.G. she could go i dont think she cared how far she had to go as long as she could hear us laughing She would put her ears up look round and laugh at us so that proved she injoyed the trip.

Our New Home

1848

At last we arived at our destination viz No 2 Shards Terrace High Stret Peckham. The Terrace runs at Right Angels with the Terminis of the Surry Cannal And nearly opersite the Rye Lane. It was a fine large House it Contained a large Shop with two bow windows two Kitchins Parlor Drawing Room Sittin Room and three Bed Rooms and a fine large garden about 120 feet by 45 beautyfully Cultervated and rich with all kinds of fruit. It was a perfect Paradice to what we had bein used to we was realy Delighted with our new home everything looked bran spank New thir was O such prety Carpets and joly grate big chairs

And thick rops each side of the fire place O such pretty ones all green and Gold Bell ropes we said they was for keeping Mam & Dada from falling in the fire And look at that tiney littil window thats for Mama to look through at Dada And so we whent all over house inspecting every thing that we see Then our Sister Harriet took us down the Garden and we was like two littil dogs just let out of thir Kennel we run up one path and down the other Hi Hi Hi O My look look Ben look at all them littil currants Black White & red and look at them large Appels ant they wackers look Graps thirs joly grate bunches and Strawberries and all Sorts of Earbs thir was a fine bed of Parclely And Harriet Said thats where the Babys Grow And thir was one in thir Now and the bell rung So Harriet whent to answer the door leaveing us two sitting in the Garding where the prety littil Butterfly reposes Yes we where two nice littil Butterflys If you Could have herd our Conversation we was as Big as any one Our own size and bigger.

We was going to buy a large Farm and keep a lot of servants Cows Horses & Carts Pigs Cocks & Hens Pignons White Mice rats Cats & Dogs And we would Catch Birds go fishing shutting wild ducks Send them up to Ledenhall Market in fact we was going to be Millonaires and Nothing should stop us as soon as we Could see our way Clear And thir we sit on Tom Tiddlers Ground picking up Gold & Silver. (The Happy Days) The bell rings again This time its a 'hand Bell' summonsing us to apear before the Royal Family. So we

dropped our high notions and in we went it was now Stand aside and let a Swell go passed Thair they where and Mama she was Dressed like 'Beor Sheba' when she came to see the Wisdom of Soloman I should say the Queen of Sheba She was all the Colours of the Rainbow Father O He looked lovely Smoking a fine Cigar and making a long story short when we where all together we formed a Nobel Tree. Thir was 11 of us Seven Boys & two Girls Mama & Dada.

Fathers Brothers and Sisters

Thir was also one in the Parcley Bed And a lot of them asleep I believe i herd Mother Say that if they where all alive thir would be 21 of us So that Father must have bein a energetic sort of a man. He had 3 brothers Viz George Towndrow, Joseph Towndrow & Benjamin Towndrow. George Kept a large Fruiterers and Greengrocers in the Whitechapel Road & let out vans and Horses. He retired in 1870. And Joseph Towndrow Kept a Coffee & Dining Room in Tabernacle Walk, Old Street in 1852 And a Public House the Corner of Bath Street in 1860 Had a Daughter named 'Faney' the name as the Wife. very tall. Benjamin went to Austrila and Died so thats all i Can say about Fathers Brothers. Then He had 3 sisters But i only know the Christian Name of one of them that was 'Jane' 'Towndrow' She lived at Denmark Hill Camberwell Viz the Rectory And was very fond of her dear Mr Powers. She tumbled into Honey But what become of her money i never new She used to come and learn us Boys to speak french She used to stay with us a weak at a time and i believe she would have give us Gold to eate it But we Could not Eat it so we did not get it. Now the next Sister No 2 Married a Mr Fricker of High St Batersea - a Solisiter of which i shall refer to later on All i Can say in this page is that he was our Dear Uncel Fricker. Now No 3 ore we will say Fathers last Sister married Mr Frederick Richard May Esq of Leicester He was a man well Known Now this sister becomes Mrs F. R. May and Died in 1847 Exclusivily worth £30,000 thir was a part of it was Devided amogst the three Brothers and 2 Sisters - and - the Residue was to Come at the Deth of the Houseband Viz F.R. May But it is not Come yet that is to say not up to my time of writing. If such a thing was to happen Just now i Can asure the reader i should Know who my Friends are But i have not the least doubt that my Only Son will not forget the treatment His Loveing Father as recived by is relations not friends while he as bein in Hackney Infirm Ward.

Mothers Sisters

My Loveing Mother never had any Brothers But she had 3 Sisters Sarrah Charlote & Emily Burling So of Corce Mars name was Ann - And the four of them was born in Averil But Dad was Born in Clare. Now Emily married a William Branham a Fish Sailsman & Charlate married a William Barlow But they left no money behind Baut Sarrah married a George Ince and they lived in Brushfield Street Bishopgate they had a fine large Unbreller Shop and large warehouse rond the Corner in Gun Street and i leave theme hear doing well. But i may as well tell you at once it will have to come out This large warehouse was well packed with some tons of Whalebone and all at once it went up to such a High price that my Uncle sold out And He made a rare lot of money by it.

They were bouth very religus and very Kind to the poor and they seamed to prosper in all thir undertakings Aunt and Mother where very loveing together But Aunt Ince never had no Children She was Born in 1807

Our Dear Aunt May

I find i have bein drifting away from my Story about the nobel tree we would make but you Can pictor seven fine Boys & 2 Girls and Mother & Father all bran new and we all felt so peculiar funey 'funey' some one Died – and left us lots of money 'O' what a lark Yes Our Dear Aunt May i dont how much nor i never did But i do know this That He tryd hard to get along with what He did have We sold a Verity of things in the shop From Umbrellas Fishing Tackel Oil Silks Walking Sticks and i dont know what all. We had a very large Dog his name was Branch he was like a littil Donkey he had allmost the Sence of a human Bein We used to ride on his back up and down the Terrace He would allmost talk to us But we lost Him all of a Sudden it appears Father Bet Him against £100 to kill 100 Rats in 8 minuts and Some man raked them over after the Dog had done and one of them moved is leg and we lost poor 'Branch' talk about morning over a Dog us Boys Cryd till further orders.

Another Baby, Freadrick

At that time Peckham and for miles round was something Splendid for Forrest venis and us boys used wander about sometimes for miles O them Suney ours of Childhood How sweet is the recolection picking buttercups and daises and nocking Down the Butterflies and Birds nesting and so forth we was as happy as two littil Cock Robins and me and Joe was allways togather where one whent the other was Oblige to follow We used to go to Harders Road College Schools in the day and Sundays we attended Moils Chapel in Rhy Lane Our minister was Such a littil man He used to Come Home sometimes on Sundays to Dinner And he used to sit up to the tabel in the Babys Chair we allways had plenty of friends and me and Joe got lots of money So we commenced to save up to buy a Farm. But it never Came off

1849

One morning my Sister Harriet told us that she had bein and got another Baby Out of the Parcely Bed and they was going to Call his name Fredy-ck We was so pleased me and Joe whent down the Garden to get some moor but they was all gorn but we did nock that old Parcely Bed out of shape but it was no use Then we set down on the parcely bed and began to talk about our Farm for we had got lots of money When we whent to bed it was all Farm O what big men we was wasnt i glad i was not in that Old Quart Pot for i shall never forget that

My Sister Harriet Marries

1850

One morning while we was haveing brakefast we was told Father had bought another shop in 27 Crown Street Finsbury and he was going to sell Coles or Coals Coke wood and all sorts of Fruit We was so Glad we wanted to go to London right away Only fancy two shops Our Brother William had just Died and Harriet was to be married She got such a kind man for a Husband

He give us lots of Money. And when the wedding came off you talk about friends where they all come from i dont know They was all dressed up like a lot of wax dolls All manners of Collours with large straw Hats about three feet in Diameter they Called them Bloomers and they sung 'Paddy will Now' 'Rou dou dou' 'Take me while im in the humer' And they kept it up till about 3 oclock in the morning Where they slept i dont now think they must have hung up on nails for they all looked prety stif next day and they all had sor heds It was such fun

me and Joe Got lots more money enough for 2 farms this time But we was very glad to see the back of all of them i think we had a sick house for about a week After.

Mother engaged a servant her name was Kitty Durham she was a fine young woman Belong to Ireland she was about 18 years of age she had fine long red hair and me and Joe we fell in love with her she was so kind to all of us and she used to tell us such nice stories and made us a Glanders Show and give us nice entertainments she was what you may call a proper sort and as the best part of the furniture was going up to London Kitty had to sleep with me & Joe at that time i would be 7 years old & Joe 5 ½ she used to bath us every night and when we got to bed and see the end of the fireworks which went up from Cremon Gardens We both would kneel down and say Our prayers The Lords Prayer first Then we would say i lay my Body down to rest i pray to God my sole to bless If i should Die before i wake i pray to God my sole to take Pray God Bless Mother & Father Sisters and Brothers and all kind friends Pray God make us good Boys and Give us new Harts For this night and for evermore Amen

These were my sunny hours of Childhood. O Golden day O day of God When sinless Soles The Garden trod In Bliss supreme Neath sunny skies In Eden fair in Paradise . [Here there are some shorthand signs] B.T.

We was now left entirely to Ourselves that is to say me & Joe Kitty & my elder Brother George He carried on the Business His sweetheart used to come and go just as she liked Sometimes she would stop a week at a time And it appears they were carrying on a fine old game They used to shut up shop early and go driving about to all the sights in town and sometimes we were shut up all day

A Man in the Moon

One day while they were out on a holiday me & Joe went up to London and told Father and He soon stopped their little game He shut the place up altogether and we all come to live in London We liked this much better than the country because all the Sheep Pigs Cows Horses went by twice a week to go to Smithfield Market And we could go to Newgate and see all the people hung and if there was nobody Why there ought to be because Mother said there was a lot wanted hanging and we always believed what she said: so i think Mothers ought to be very careful what they say to children I remember her telling us there was a man in the moon and we believed it We used to go to Chapel Street School Curtain Rd and we was very fond of playing the wag: of course we got a good whipping for that But we did not mind that But when our school master commenced on us it was alright he would frighten the life out of us he used to Give us a good thrashing then lock us in the class room till we could do our task But i am glad to say that i had i believe as fine a memory as ever a boy had

Wash the Stockings

Phillip & George and Father carried on the Business And we seem to do a good trade But it appears Father had not very good health and Mother was always heaving the tooth Ache and there seemed to be something wrong – 1851 The Exhibition opened in Hyde Park i was 8 years Old and begin to get a big Boy i could say my Alphabet Both backwards and forward and i could do small sums Father used to set us small tasks to learn and i used to help Kitty to wash the Stockings and i Got on very well with washing me and Kitty was a useful good palls She had to take us to Chapel on Sundays But she would take us to see her 'young man'

instead and told us to tell father the text was God is Love i rember asking her what a lie was and when she learnt me i was so pleased i began to tell some We come home from chapel one Sunday Father asked what Chapel we had bein to and i told Him to ask ketty and she cryd and told Father the truth She thought we had told him And Father let us all off with a caution we promised not to do it any more
[Date at end of page 1851]

Aunt Ince Retired

I believe it was in 1852 the year that the old Duke of Wellington Died and my Aunt Ince Retired and whent to live at Tyne Cotage Ilford having made a Considerabel amount of money and bein mothers only sister alive left us hopes of moor money which i shall say littil more about by and by In them days we used to blow the fire up with a pair of Bellows and warm the Beds with a Warmingpan with red Hot cinders in it and men used to light thir pipe with the Old Fusees that was sticks of Brown paper dipped in some combustibile it used to make a rare smell. I was very fone of my brother Phillip He used to take me to the Baths and give me lessons on swimming and before mony months past i could swim like a duck Everythink whent on all right as far as Buiseness was concerned But Fathers Health begin to fail - the fack of the matter was He worked to hard Himself by what i could see of it it was let Father work and Mother i rember one winter we had snow outside the Door about 4 feet thick and it was cold Our old water But had about a foot of ice on it. We had to dip the water out with that Quart Pot i was glad i was not in it for it got shamefully nocked about with one thing and the other I began to think i was somebody now

Come Home Black and Blue

1853

i was 10 years old i used to help in the shop to sell the Appels and if any one grumbeled i would give them some moore i generally done a good trade Saturday nights sold all out Father But the money was never right and he soon found out i was what he called giveing away. But i was doing trad all that for a Brown - But i realy did not think that we should be so soon leaving. One morning my poor Sister Harriet came Home All black and Blue that nice man that give us all the money had Knocked Her about so we could hardly reconize her I told her that when i got a man i would thrash Him But i forgot all about it His name was Frederick Rowe and if ever thir was a living Devil it was Him But he had is disserts for he Died Coneyhatch in 1876 And Harriet Died 1880 And was Burried at Manor Park Ilford

In 1854 At the time of the Russian War We left the Old shop Father could not stand it any longer And George was Married so Father left Him to manage and he managed it very nicely For very soon they begin to talk about makeing a Railway from Broad Street and they wanted all the property alonge thir so they Bought Him out But i dont think my Father ever got a penny peice so we had to live on the remains of old ancient granger that is to say we was liveing on our means and they was means to for everything was such a price Coals 2/4 per hundred and Bread 1/1 loaf Tea 4/- lb Moist sugar 4d candels 10lb thir was no lamps then it was the old flat candelstick with a littil middleing candel stuck in it with just about enough light to find your way to your mouth. There was thousands starving and the riots was runing about with a Loaf of Bread dipped in Blood it was Bread ore Blood i was amongst them O What Fun to see them smash open the Baker shops and out come all the Bread then thir was a strugel to get it thir was more wasted then Eat. Away we run through Brick Lane Spitalfields along Bethenal Green Road down the Dog Row along Whitechapel Road and we cleared all

the baker shops out Over whent the Old Bread Van standing outside the Old Whitechapel Workhouse And the Police was flying about in all directions i dont think they cared about tackling us but they did now and then.

Grandmother Died 1854

We was liveing then at No 26 Queen Street Brick Lane close to Truman Hambury & Buxtons Brewery and my Brother Phill was working at Bow cleaning the Engins i believe He had 18/- a weak and we had to make that keep the lot of us we was allmost like the littel Pigs for we lived on Gray Peas and Beanes and they was fine we youngsters got quite fat on them i used to like to see my poor old Grandmother come for thir was allways something extry She was a good old sole was Grane Burling She Died at the age of 92 - i dont know where she was Buried But i believe it was Ilford and i am sure i shall see her some of these days After my skin worms hath distroyed this body yet in my Flesh shall i see God These where about the worst times of my young days what with the Bread Rioting Schools fighten Carts going about with Bands of music with £5 Bounty for Soldiers Street singin Mother Dear is the Battle Over and Cats and Dogs Meat and Chump Wood and Salt 5 lbs penny Police runing hear and thir Public Houses full of old women spending as much money in Gin as would get a good dinner for the family, And so it whent on Mouse traps who will by And so it whent on Where the peopel got the money from to get Drunk i dont Know However it made no differance to us we seam to go on somehow we attended school regular in Spices Street Brick Lane and Church on Sundays but sometimes we whent to Chapel i think we liked Church Because of the Organ Our next door neighbour Mr Cavel came home so Drunk that it killed Him and thir was a opening He Drove one of Hamburgys Engins in the Brewery And my Father took the job which soon put us on our feet again O my Hi Baked Dinners Sundays and we bought a Pig put him in the sty - [1855]

Played the Wag

Me and my Brother Joe was very Good Boys to go to School and we got on first class we was palls with everybody and everybody was palls with us one day a lot of us made it up to play the wag so we rote a note and sent it to the schoolmaster - something after this stile. Sir Please to excause my Boys from attending school as i have sundry small jobs for them to do and Oblige yours - Mrs Ann Towndrow. And away we goes over Tempel Mills catching tidlers And when we came home at night we brought a Bottel half full of littil tiney Tidlers and when mother see them she give bouth a good Tiddeling with the cane and when we whent to school the next day we had to stand up on the form with a johly grate three corner hat on our Heads They called it a Fools Cap O my how the Boys did laugh So me and Joe made up our minds to have our revenge when we got outside And when we came out we commenced and we did give some of them a slugging we sent some of them home with sore Heads - And after that we had someone to fight allways when we came out of school. I was not Mamas pet now nor Dadas darling but i was a young skamp Allways in wars it did not matter what skrape it was i was shure to be in it We kept our water in Tanks now They done away with the old waterbutts and this was a very hard Winter we had to climbe up to get to the tank then brake the ice and dip it out with the Old Quart Pot and this old pot got such a battering about it was brused all over and so was i I allmost wished they "had" left me in the Pot Just because i was a littil frighten man i got the blame of everything canes was no good to me They used to give me the copperstick i was a hard as a littil door nail.

Lost the Old Quart Pot

One day i was brakeing the ice [with the Quart Pot] and i noked a littil hole in it but it was quite accidently done and when Mother see it she commenced and away i run away come Mother with the Poker this time up stairs i flew under the Bed down again into the watercloset and put my two feet against the door and sung out Murder She put the poker through the hole in the top of the door and says come out ill murder you But i could not se my way clear and it was not long after we lost it All together And i realy new nothing of its Whereabouts But i was court Marshaled and condemed I dont know what they wasent going to do with me But it was like Transportation they frightened the life out [of] me so i run away from Home. I wandered about all day without food till late at night then i stood at the top of the street and my Brother John came and took me in they said very littil Father said O you robber of my comfort And i whent straight to Bed in the morning they gave me the prevelidge either to get a place and be a good Boy or be Transported so i choose the Place.

I wore long Pinafores and cordroy Trousers and i was going on for 13 years of age And i whent to work at Mr Merrills Oil Shop in Brick Lane 2/6 and food and lodgens i was a man now it was stand aside thir you i am coming Mar Bought me a fine suet of cloths and off came the Pinafore and i whent to work with a wil i done anything Master let me serve out the Treacle and weigh up tobaco in the afternoon while he whent to sleep.

My first Smoke

I bought a penny tobaco Box and filled it up with tobacco - i thought i would try a smoke for i felt quite the man now, so the first chance i got i filled my littil Fathing 'tom thumbs pipe' and away i go puffing away puff, puff, puff, puff and when i took the pipe out of my mouth it was O my, O my everything seam to be going round and round, And O my poor Belly i thought the inside was coming outside and all at once it was pew, pew, pew and my inside did all come outside O thir was such such a mess all over my nice trowsers & boots and i was as wite as a littil Ghost.

When i got home i felt much better and it passed aff allwright nobody noticest it But i was a long time before i had another smoke.

The next time i think it was about 6 monthe after when we shut up shop one night i whent up to Bed i slept nearly at the top of the House and i had 2 or 3 puffs at the window i was in the Dark i never had any light – And someone Opersite see me, and told my master and i got the Sack. It appeared thair was a lot of Gunpowder Over head But i did not know it.

Burnt out

1856

The next place i got was at a cabnet makers in Curtain Road ShoreDitch i think i had 7/- a weak it was a very hard place i never liked it But i managed to stop thir 9 months i was allways bein blamed for the childrens faults so i left on my Own account the Master tryed to get me back but it was no use and the very next day the House was Burnt Down That was the time Pease was proclaimed - 'the Russian War' England was a Blaize with Fireworks - if ever old England had a day of rejoiceings it was then thir was scarcely a House but what had something if it was only candels in the windows We killed our Pig and Mother made some Black Puddings with the Blood but we Boys never liked them But Mother & Father made a

mess of them for they seemed awfully fond of them so we let them eat the lot. The next place i had was in Wilson Street Finsbury at a Upholsterers i think i had 7/6 a week - the Master & Misses was very Kind to me and offered to learn me the Trade.

[Four pages of religious thoughts omitted at this point, concerning Good Friday, 1903]

We were going allright Brother Phill was out Driveing on the North London, John worked in Fore St City so thir was 3 of us at work and we wher very comfortabel for poor peopel as far as i can remember we had nothing to complain of Father whent to Chapel twice on Sunday & Mother whent in the evenings and us boys was supposed to go to but i am sory to say we was more fond of going fishing or catching the poor littil Robins But we Generaly whent in the Evening so they never said much to us But was allways adviseing us and telling us something to our interest - But it was 'Boys will be Boys'. I Believe i was 18 months in Willson St and i could not think of learning a trade for i begin to think i should like to be a 'Sailor' look what fine rides i could have in the Big 'Ships' But Father would not hear of it - He tryed all He new to frighten me But it was no good i was of to good iorn to be frightened and i intended to go the first chance. thir was 6 of us Boys and one Girl thir was Phillip (23) John(17) Benjamin (13 1/2) Joseph (12) Thomas (10 1/2) Frederick (7) & Alice She was the only sister liveing and O how i loved Her She died Feb 7/1899 - Interred - Chinford Mount Cemetry 53 years.

My First Love

1857

The next plase [I worked] and the Last was at Brick Lane No 112 a few doors from where i worked before it was a 'linin drapers shop' they where all Scotch i think i had 6/6 per week thir was 4 shop Girls a Maid of all work Mr & Mrs Ware and 2 children My work was to open and shut up shop, sweep out, sort out all the coloured peices clean windows and look after the Poney & cart which i could manage very well, But, Satuday nights i had to stand out side the shop and se nothing run away But the old women new more then i did for we was allways looseing something so i did not care for that job the Pony was more my mark i often had a ride on 'Him' and when master whent out he allways took me At that time i fell in Love with a Girl Namend Sarrah Gibson She lived 2 doors of us She was a very quirt Girl i use to take her out every Sunday for a long time and treat Her with ice crea^{1/2}m fancy me and Her settin eateing ^{1/2} Penyworth all raspberry ^{1/2} peny Glass sometimes i use to spend as much as two pence sometimes and only sumetimes for it was oftener only a penny

My Wish

Father often took us Boys into the Brewery and tell us the name of Differant parts of the Engin. this was the 'Fly Weel' thats the 'Steame Chest' thats the 'Sellender' this is the 'Peston Rod' And thats the 'Connecting' this is the 'Crank' thir the 'Goveners' this is the 'Fire' thir the 'Coals' And this is the man that puts them on so think i better put a few on He was very interesting he used to explain everything to me and tell me not to go to sea. He was a man with a mind i never see Him the wors for Drink in my time and i will meet Him again in 'Heaven' And i pray that the Almighty will send 'His' Holy Spirit into the Hart of my Only 'Son' that He will go along the straight parth that will Bring Him into our mansion 'where me and my Father will be' And teach his children to do the same, and He will never be Happy if He dont fulfill my wish. I never see much of Fathers sufferings but i believe He was

something like myself treats it all glory and feel i deserve all i get i shood have remembered my Creator in the days of my youth.

My Father Died

1858

January 16th

Going up stairs to Bed one Satuday night Father Kept looking back Mother said "What are you looking back for" He said "O i was just having a look round for i dont think i shall ever come down alive (again)" Nor did He He wished to lay one weak and God gave it Him He called us all one at a time and told us to be good Boys to our Mother and God would Bless us for it And to hear him talking about things He could see it was Beautiful to hear Him and every day he wanted to know what day it was for He long to be gorn And if ever i new a good Christian to Die it was my Dear Father - He had his wish for He fell Asleep in Jesus to one hour of his wish.

Should pineing Sickness wast away
My life, in premature decay;
My Father, still i strive to say!
Thy will be done!

In Loveing Memory

Age 48

In them days they Buried in all Churchyards But Father was Buried at Bow Cemertary all the male Followers had high Hats and long Cloks and the ladys had thir Heads covered with Black Crape and long streemers hang down behind And He was carryed all the way to Bow That was the first and last time i see us five Brothers with High Hats on. Father and Mother was Married at Spitalfields Church And i have heard her say a good many times that she would not have the best man in England "No, not if his Hair hung in dimonds".

W. Towndrow

Age 48

THE END OF CHAPTER ONE

1858

The Death of Father was a grate Blow to us for a time - But Brother Phill took His place and He made a very good one - he was out Driveing now and was earning i think 22/- weak so that helped to smooth our trubbel over & Joe whent to work so thir was four of us bringing in money and the weel whent round allwright.

But thirs generally something to upset the show and that was me i had got a touch of water on the Brain i wanted to go to SEA i wanted to see what "Whales" was like and my Girl said she was very fond of Sailors because they where such bold men and they had such fine cloths and they could bouth sing and dance in fact they could do anything i have often thought she was pluming me up Because i used to treat Her But i was fond of Her i could not sleep till i had seen her fetch the Supper Bear then i could retire peacefully for the night. 'Happy Dreams' Sea Sea it was all Sea wherever i whent Sea I Drove Mother mad with Sea i wood go i would not go to work any more so at last Mother took me to the Marine Society.

MARINE SOCITY

1858

Mother had to answer a bushel and half questions, then i whent befor the Doctor next i thought they was goin to drownd me for they tumbled me into a large Bath and slewsed me about as if they was handeling a mackrel i was not sorry when that job was over for if they had kept on much longer I should have been drownded - the man told me thats what they called a sousing - The nex cam the Barber He took all my Hair off clean shave then come the Beautiful cloths - Blue cloth Pants, 2 Shirts Gurnsey, tye low shoes and Sailors Hat Stockings Knife & etc: And now i am a Sailor but thir was Know pockets and if thir had bein i had nothing to put in them Mother had gorn Home and they took me Down to the 'Marine Society' Ship laying off 'Chalton Pier' She was about 1500 tons Square Rigid She contained about 14 officers and they looked such a fine lot of men we whent to bed every night at 8 and up in the morning at 1/2 past five. We all slept in Hammocks.

Cold Bitter Mornings

thir was about 500 Boys and a fine lot we where At 1/2 past five in the morning the Cane whent Bang One two three up we got out on to the Deck After bein slung up like a leg of mutton all night away we run up on the next Deck trowsers in our Hand and it was off Duds and into a large tub of cold water it held 6 of us the first thing was to fight for the soap and when you got it you must not let it go ore you would loose it then you would have to fight again for a peice moor each man had to pass the Oficer or Each Boy rather if we where clean we only had 1 stroke with the cane, But if thir was only one littil spot of anything to be seen why it was look out for squalls He would come down on our stern sheets with till he made us dance Gim Cro At 6 A.M. All hands skrub the upper Deck with no shoes or Stockings cold bitter mornings in the month of March it made us dance about like Christy Minstrels you should see us dance thats the stile for me yes with tears in our eyes At 7 Bells 1/2 past 7 Breakfast - Basin of Berque & tack Biscuits One Boy sung "Awake my soul and with the sun, Thy daily stage of duty run, Shake off dul sloth and joyful rise, To pay thy morning sakrifice Armen

Then we commenced and no talking any Boy cought talking he got a good banging i got on very well with the 'Barque' or porrage But the 'Tack' O My i thought i should have broke

every tooth in my head it was as hard as Flint stones. 8 Bells or 8 o'clock one Hours recreation till 2 Bells 9 o'clock then down into school till 5 Bells 1/2 past 10 Our master was very strict with us it had to be learnt by hook or by crook The Compass was the most Difficult to learn but he was the man to learn us We had to learn it and explain it to him in Points Halves Quarters Degrees & Time and when anyone learns it like that i reckon he can box the compass from 1/2 past 10 till 8 Bells 12 o'clock on the upper deck learning the lead line Singel stick large and small Arms Knotting & Splicing reefing and furling sails in fact everything necessary for the Navy 12 till 1 Dinner we were divisioned off and the two Boys at the ends of the Tables were called Quater Masters they served out the Mess Any Boy felt aggrieved He took his dinner up to the Officer and if the Quatermaster had more than him he had to change

Frightened the Birds

From One till two recreation on the upper Deck Then we could talk about our Mars and our Pars Sweethearts & etc I was Dieing to see my Girl My Dear Sarrah how i wished i could be in the old ice cream shop for i was tyred of bein a Sailor But never mind i shall see them next week it was once a month Visiting But O it was like twelve the time seemed so long and the tears trickling down all the time - 4 Bells or 2 PM fall in for Big gun drill Now for War it was Prime, Point, Elevate, ready, Fire, Stop vent, Run in, Train & Span the Bricking it was 3 rounds in Quick time and after we ceased Firing we found we had only frightened a few poor Birds But to hear the noise you would have thought we were Beseiging Lady Smith which was Relieved 28th Feb 1900

Visiting Day

7 Bells loose all sails 'take in two reefs' lye down from aloft ' 8 Bells lie aloft shake out reefs ' furl sail then man the Boats and O My if we caught a 'Crab' that is made a splash we would get the tiller on our 'figure head' it was a good job we had pretty hard nuts or else we should have had them cracked the Officers were a lot of Bruts And so things went on and we had to make the best of a bad job At last the Day came We called it 'Mamas Day' Our friends all come Down in the London Steam Boat we might do what we like then And O My you would have thought we had been away from home 20 years - O the Kissing & Cuddeling and Crying and shouting it was Mother Dear and Sarrah Dear i got old of my Girl and i thought i should have squesed her into a jelly Fish my Sarrah Cryd and i cryd and Mother cryd and it was such a set out as i shall never forget Mother asked me how i liked to be a sailor and i cryd again then my Sarrah she asked me But i told it was fine and so it was rather to fine for me It would have done any one good to see the tea table they were smothered with Apples Oranges nuts sweets and Cakes of all Discriptions and the parting with our Friends was Aful - i had three such days as that while i was in the Marine 'Society Ship' -

Apprentice to the Sea

I volunteered to go in the Navy But as luck would have it i was not big enough: They Suplyed Costers as well the Captains used to come on board and pick us out and after i had been 13 weeks i went with another Boy up to London Bridge and was Apprenticed to a 'Coal Brig' called The Palladium of South Shields Capt John Gray, Owners name James Young I was to have £35 For 5 years 5, 6, 7, 8 & £9 year She was laying in the Pool off Wapping The Captain let me go home to see my friends i had a full rig out from the Society 3 suets one

Black Cloth on Blue and one White i looked all a Sailor When i come home i had all the Girls and Boys shakeing & Bowing and Scraping it was 'Come and look at Ben Towndrow he is a Sailor' Come and look Come and look Go and tell Sarrah away comes my Sarrah runing down the street with out strected armes and i lifted her off her feet i thought i should have eat Her it was Jack ashore But the worst of it was i had not got a halfpeny in my pocket But never mind as long as i was a Sailor if i had not got any money i should have by and by for i should soon be going to Austrila and thir was plenty of Gold thir and if thir wasent i would go somewhere wher thir was besids as i said i had no Pockets to put money in. I was like the fox and the Grapes i could not get any it was good luck to the old 'Quart Pot' for we never herd what become of it. And many a Hideing i got through it as well as other things which i was inosent of But it dont matter it all come out in the washing.

The Death of Uncel Ince

My Uncel Ince Died this year Viz 1858 - and part of his money whent to his Brothers and the Residue left to His Wife Mrs G.I Mothers Only Sister then alive and we shall see what becomes of it later on When i shall mention my Dear Uncle 'Fricker'

Good by Sailor Ben

When the youth ventures forth into the wide world to live and to be set apart from thoes He loves the last word He says as he tares Himself away from his loveing Parents the last word as He goes through the Friendly Door is Good by Yes it was good by Sarrah Good by Mother Dear and when she said Good By my Darling Boy that done me i thought i should have broke my Hart outside the door you would have thought the Lord Mayor was comeing along thir was all the Boys and Girls 'O' hear He is 'O' dont he look nice Yes He looks as if He as been Crying And all in Wite ' and letters on my cap M.S. it was good by good by Sailor Ben and i promised to let them know how i was going on and away i whent Down to Wappin Old Stairs she what they called belong to the Fryingpan Company - because all our Vessels had a large Plate at the Foretopgallent Mast Head and i soon picked Her out from the others i had a Beautyful pair of Lungs then so i hailed Her the Palladium Ahoy Holo thir roared some Loon i want to come on Bord All right They did not seam to be in no grate hurry for they kept me waiteing a long time at last the Boat came it was the Mate Bill Johnson Well Shaver What can i do for you Well i want to come aboard with you: Allright jump in and be smart about it so i tumbeled into the Boat and was near coming to grief for it was a bit choppy a steamer had just past and she did role and the way He skuled her off made her role more i felt a bit sick allready and i was not sory when we got on Bord.

After eyeing me from Skysale Pole to Scupper Hole He said go and get your rigen off and put on the oldest one you have got: i said Yes Sir He says Yes what Come lets have none of your soup aboard this craft or els you will soon find your self on your Beam Ends or els botton up Call me Bill and go and take off them dolls cloths i said my cloths is all new Bill Yes you are a bran new Sailor and ill soon alter the colour of you you want your wings clipping -

O What a Mess

1858

And you have just come aboard the right craft to get it done jump down in the chain locker and look out for this cabel chain Down i goes into the Locker with my Beautiful whit cloths O My you ought have seen me when i come up i was like a clown for i did swet and i had no Handkerchief I had to wipe my face with my Hands and O dear me i was Black with coal Dust and red with rust i was marked from clue to Eareing My nice wite cloths was all spoiled and if my Dear Sarrah could have only seen me she would have brak her Hart or i thought she would While i am vewing myself the other Boy came - George Reid - about the same age as me How he stared at me we shook hands and had a good laugh over it i told him what to expect. We where eight Hands all told Capt, Mate, Four Men & 2 Boys We had plenty of Good food bouth Fresh and corned meat it was eat as much as we like, Plum Duff when we like that is to say when we asked the cook and Sea Pie O My eye.

The next morning the Pilot came and we cast her off from the Bouys and dropped down the River as far as Long Reach and let go the Anchor for the night.

We thought we was allwright for the night But we was mistaken for we was no sooner in bed then Bang Bang Bang Over our heads and some one calling out All Hands on Deck, Man the Winderless Now look alive thair Lads and get Her down to the Ballast Warf Out of my Hammick i sliped and on Deck i came i was half asleep Eyes full of gravy i could not make out what was the matter lor how i did trembel O how i wished i had bein left in the Old Quart Pot or beside my mothers Fire Place But it was to late man will we musterd All Hands and it was Heave O Heave O Now then down your side Well done my Bonies thir she cracks Pull that chain back Boy pull you you are a pretty Sailor go and fetch your mother she will soon show you how to coil away cabel chain Pull - Pull if i come to you At last up she comes awash And we dropped down to the Hit or Miss Balast Warf about ½ mile from the town of Gravesend And thir we took in about 50 tons of chalk, the men got a lot of Beer and Bacee but the Boys had to look and see them drink it they where all North Country men and me and Poor littil gorgey where regular slaveys for them make thir tea light thir pipe it run hear and go thir and the least thing it was a touch up with a ropes end, i thought i was hard But after coming out of the Marine Society they made flint of me.

Our Dog

It tis or it was a rule for Boys allways to go up the highest so me and gorge had to stow all the small sales or sails Greese the masts look after the dog and we had one aboard that new as much as we did and a littil more i belive our Dog Gin we called him new and could tell how far off land we was better then any man aboard (a Retreaver) i was so fond of my Gim i could do anything with Him and he was as good as a extry man he could pull as well as us And he did not want inviteing as soon as He see us make Sail up come our Gim and very proud he was to go to work. The next day we sailed down the river with a fine stif Breaze Blowing lor how she did lay over to it, and i did hold on for i realy thought she would be over thir she blows it freshened into a Gail - it was take in small sail up me and poor George whent - O My i felt so sick Pew Pew Pew up came my inside O My you should have seen my inside all blowing away, I held on like Grim Deth in the for topmast Crosstrees watching my inside blowing away till i had no inside atall it was all gorn and however we managed to furl the sail i dont Know for it did Blow and rain and she did tumbel about But with all the wind we could

not get moore then about 6 nots out of Her for she was like a log of wood she would look at a sea three times before she would go over it then stop and shak her feathers When me and George came down we was like two littil Drowned Rats. For we had not got any Oil Skins and we might just as well have paper cloths as the ones we had got they might do for the Navy But they was no good for costing for me and george was costers now, And two pretty costers we where O that Quart Pot And O my Poor Sarrah i shall never see her any more and O I was so bad all the pashage down to Shields which took us about four days.

The Old washer woman

We was alloud 7/- quater for washing and that we Paid to a woman in South Shields and all us boys whent ashore every night and amused ourselves singing and dancing we used to Kick up such a row we nearly drove her mad sometimes But she was a good old Girl and she could Dance sometimes she got a lot of old women in and a fiddel and we had a regular intrtainment And you should see them Dance with thir sleeves tucked up it was Or the Bar anys Or Bar then a song By Molly Cacup Come cany folks and set thee down And tell the news thats come fra town The Newcastle folks have catched the meun and made it in a clock fyace It was Sausy Sausy Sailors or the Bar Gun on my lads My bony Sailor Boys, Hip light lu and show your pretty feet, and, such dear littil feet they had they wood make good Rice stampers in Japan for treading Rice, and so it whent on till about 12 midnight we all had the boats at hand so we did not have muchtruble to get on bord

The Old Pike

Sailors as a rule are very good at spinning yarns and of coarse they are all true because he deals in yarns and He maks all sorts of mats with them But the yarns that i have herd i could never make much of so you will have to form your own idea wither this yarn is right or wrong so i give it you as i herd it He was a capital sportman a rair one for the gun he reconed he kill five Birds out 6 - But this day he thought He would have a day fishing - It was up the Thames somewhere i believe it was Teddington Locks He said He had bein Fishing all day in the rain and all he cought was a rare cold so he thought it was good enough to turn it up so he was in the act of pulling is pipe and tobacco out of his pocket when out came a Half Sovereign and into the water it whent 'Coopers Ducks' so that made things wors He whent Home and after a few days he thought He would Have another Go so He set out This time the other side of the Locks and He had not bein thair long before He was rewarded for his trubbel – By bringing to the water such a lovely Pike it had taken Hook and all and when He ripped him open O What a Suprise thir was a peice of paper with 9 shillings and sixpence and 3 pennyworth of Coppers he said you might have knocked him down with a feather How could he count for it, He told all his friends, and they could not make head nor tail of it So they put it befor the Lock Keeper and he said the Old Pike must have had to Pay the other 3 pence to pass through the Lock I could not take it in i have herd and seen Fish flying out of Water But i never herd of them paying toll.

Pew Pew and up it Come

They never kept the Brig in Harbour longer then they could help sometimes only a few days for it was all hurry skurry Out Ballast and in Coals And when she was loaded you could hardly see her Hull She was 15 ½ feet under water And if thir was any sea on She was a real

Beauty she would wash us about like a lot of Mother Carrys Chickens i remember many a dark Night when i was nice and dry just turned out with my eyes winking and blinking like a Bengall Monkey Over would come a nice lump of water and away i would go flying along the Decks like a eel And the men would only laugh at us for me and george was Bouth alike - Just after i had had a good Sea one day - the Mate says if you Boys cant stand on deck Just fist a greas Pot and one of you up Forrod and the Other Haft and give them Masts a good greesing down. That was wors then ever for She did Roll so and O my poor Belle it was Pew Pew Pew and up came my inside all into the Grees Pot and O i was so bad all i could do was to hold on and i had to hold tite They learnt me to hold tight in the Marine Ship so i could manage that bit But i realy thought i should never get over it She did Roll and the winds did blow and the sea looked like a lot of Broken Mountains, when it come dark i keep thinking we where going ashore every minute everytime the sea struck her she only seamed to laugh at it as if it was fun But it was Deth to me I should not have took it so to Hart if men had bein men But they where not, they where Bruts But as sick as i was i was allways trying to learn something i was very inquistitive i wanted to Know all about the Lights along the coast for thir are a Grate number. Some Flash Some Revolves Some Fixed and all Colours Besides Bouys Beacons and Landmarks And the number of Shifting Sands are numerous and thir are a grate number of small Channels to lead you clear of the Quick Lands. I remember one fine evening about 300 of us entering a Small gateway leading into yarmouth Roads, and two or three of us whent through one struck the ground and laid acrost the channel and blocked it up, and the remainder all whent ashor and in the morning they where all down in the Quick Sands you could just see some of the mast sticking out of the water. But i am going away from my tale: After what i called a very ruf voyage we got up to London and it was elter skelter to get the coals oute of her so we had very littil time to go and se Mother But the Capt let me go Home for the night and give me 2/6 to spend. Geordy thats a nick name for George he put me ashore Now i was a real Sailor Fish i was in such a hurry to get Home i run part of the way and when i got to the Old Old Street O My Hart it did burn so and them crewel tears they would come I nocked at the door and when i see my Dear Mother i flew to her and O what a loveing Embrace we bouth had to heave a good cry and the kisses i thought i should have bein pulled to peaces, and the news soon whent that Ben the Sailor had come Home and Knowing i should soon be called upon to answer all sorts of Questions i got myself fuly equiped decks cleard ready for Acktion or Action

Mother commenced O My Darling Boy i am so pleased to see you Once More O how i have drempt about you how do you lik it Ben O its all gay Mar However do you see to go along it must be dark Ben Dark why bless your hart and all the littil peices in your body thirs lights all along the cost and thirs light ships and if we want any more light why we all go down in the Hold and dig for daylight. Mar Lor i shudent have thought it that must be nice Ben Yes its right as long as thir ant to much wind But it do blow sometimes when we whent down Channel it Blowd so hard that me and my mate had to hold the Captains Hair on and Mother Carys Chickens was all frightened out of thir life; Mother Carys Chickens Who are they Well you land lubbers are as Green as a yellow Cabbage Shiver my tarrey top lights and all the running gear abaft the Binicle Dont know what Mother Carys Chickens is Why thir specal mesangers when we want to send a letter importance we sent it with them

Trees at Sea - Tell a Twister

While all this was going a nock came at the door i flew to open it And when i did O My Darling Sarrah & her escort, Yes thir she was dressed in a nice Blue frock and a Garabalde she was red wite a blue like a union jack i bore up along side we broached too dipped Ensines and then whent down the cabin i mean in the Room and thir i found i had got my work cut out Me and Sarrah set in the Old arm Chair and when the others brought themselves to Anchor they commenced to bombard me with Questions thir was 6 girls and Mother and they was as lively as a bt of Crickets –

Poly asked me if we could get plenty fish i told we only had to put them in the pan they flew on bord and if none flue on bord we sent the Dog after them for he was aquainted with all the Dog fish in the german Ocean i told her we never stoped if thir was any wind But if thir was none we tied her up to a tree and stoped till some did come Poly said she didnt think thir was any trees at sea But i said thats where you land lubbers make a mistake for its all forrest down below where the fish livs and they only come up when they want to be fried that set them laughing So i called on them for a song My Sister Alice sung My first love named Sarrah it whent down a treat then we had Good by Sweethart good by and we did give it Coal Box i had a Concertinia i could not play it But i could make a row And i could sing a good song or tell a twister for i never forgot Poor Kitty Durham learning me to tell lies. I sung The Anchors Wheighed Farewell Remember Me and then we wond up with Wappin Old Stairs then they would have a tost But i gave them a Hornpipe instead it was Midnight and i had to go on bord at 6 Oclock in the morning so we broke up they all kissed me and it made my Sarrah so jelous i fet sory for her and i had such a job to get her to go she wanted to stay with me and go on bord but i told her if she did i would take her away alltogether at last i got them all away Mother Bid me good night and whent to Bed and i coild myself up in the old Arm Chair and i was on bord at my time in the morning. i got a very good reception when i got aboard One of the men Give me a towling and said i was no Buiseness on shore.

Wine And Spirits

1859

For the first 2 years in a Collier was Cats life in fack our Dog was a Gentelman to us Boys, Sometimes we whent to Hollond its a very low Country Diked all round the Cost Sometimes thes Dikes break away and swamps miles of land Rotterdam Nein Deepe a Drought Skeedam these are the only places i have bein to and i allways found the Dutch peopel very clean and tidy civel and Obligeing Spirits & tobacco very cheep tobacco 7d pound Cigars any price you like 1d ½ dozen Spirits 10 Stivers for a large square Bottel 20 Stivers made 1 Guilder thats 1/8 english money thir is not many streets in Holland mostly all canals the peopel go to market in Boats Coals is very Dear they mostly Burn a kind of a turf and keep a littil fire day and night the perfume is not unpleasant to smell ihave seen littil fires burning under the tabel no bad Girls alloud to walk the streets thir are Fine large Places like Pallaces and they are all regestered its a great pity England is not the Same. We discharged our Coals ourselves and after we was done at night Overbord we whent and had a joly good swim and off ashor and amuse our littil selves.

France

1860

i was only once in Germina it was a place called Hamburg they seem to be much about the same stile as the Dutch A very mild Race of peopel Sometimes we whent to France i dont know wither the river Seine takes its name for its scenery But its one of the loveliest rivers ever i was up the City of Rhone is one of the Finest Citys in the wourld but the dirtiest set of men i have bein shipmates with was Frenchmen Thir is a small place at the mouth of the Seine called Honfleur and many a sommers evening have i bein sittin Drinking Cider and listining to the Cokoo Cookoo The same again in Caine thats about 30 mile inland you have to go up a long narrow Creek with the trees touching one another from side to side and when the sun shone threw the trees and the Kookoo singing its lay it was realy Beautiful we was once at Boulogne But i did not think much of that Place it was only a fishing town But it was a grate place for its Oyster beds along the cost Tobacco Cigars Spirits and all Kinds of Cents where very cheep & Plenty of Licenced Palaces for amusement.

1861

The 14th of Dec the Prince Consort Died And the Grate Fire in Toole Street where Our Celebrated Fireman Capt Braidwood was killed by the falling of a High wall while in the act of Given his Brave men refreshments after working night and day He was Buried at Abney Park Cemitory, it was one of the Grandest funerals on record

I remember the time well i was at the back of yarmouth Roads And all the Light vessels had thir Ensigns half mast and when we come to london thir was Hundreds of Bots skimming the tallow off the water some made a littil fortune by it.

I had now served three years and i reconed i new as much about a ship as any man for notwithstanding the Kicks & cuffs i could steer as pady says through the eye of a neadel and i new evry plank in Her and i was now learning Navigation that was my ambition now and i had the right sort of Owners for the job a Gentelman made me a presant of A Epitome American Navagater.

Whent to India

1862

The Exhibition opened at Kensington Mother Allways said she would not have the best man in the wourld no not if his hair hung in Dimonds, But She made a Mistake and alltered her mind - She - Married a Robert Phillip Forman, Porter on the then Easten Counties Railway Now called the Great Eastern Railway and as fare as i see He was a very Quirt man He had a nasty cough in the mornings and they wasent married long before my Brother Phillip got married and whent out to India Driveing at a place called Puna so it was one in and one out But the family still forged ahead like our old craft.

Brother Joe

There was three of them bringing grits to the Mill and another one ready to go out so they where prety comfortabel My brother had a exelent Place in the City earning 8/6 weak he was 17 years of age i was allways adviseing never to go to sea for he begin to get sea on the brain But it was no use

One voyage when i Come home i found My poor Brother was Gorn Mother did fret about it so He was such a nice age and earning good money. i am lying in the tyne Dock and one day when who should walk over the side But my Brother Joe i felt so sorry Knowing what i had gorn threw or through But it was know use the Die was Cast. He belong to the O Gemine of Witby a Brig 400 tons costeing the same as me But he was Ordnerry Seaman £2 10 Month.

I was 19 years of age and we was still trading to London and every time iwhent Home What fun i allways had But i never had any Money and wasent going to see my Brother Joe beat me with his £2 10 and my Sarrah said she thought Sailors could allways get plenty of Gold so i thought i would make a shift and try my luck so this time instead of going Back i let Her go away without me and a day or two after i whent on bord of anothe Brig - Brotherly Love She belong to the same Owners James Young S.Shields and when we got down i Made off to Mrs Cacup the dear old Washerwomen thir was a bit of fun going on one night when in Walked a Gentelman and told me I should have to go with Him, so he took me to the Police Station the Magerstrate Our Owner He says Weel eney, What for yer divener garn on Bord your Ship I told him i was sick and tyrd of the men But it was no go He sent me on bord with a Policeman it was winter time and she was laidup for the winter so thir was nobody on bord But Boys thir must [have been] over a hundred Boys in the Harbour alltogether and Our work was to strip the Rigen all off and fit her out for the Summer.

We where all Masters it was real fun allways some fighting going on and i am sorry for our Washerwoman we Stormed Her the Battel of Inkerman wasent in it. At the same time i kept my weather eye open for a good Chance to Slip my Cabel and that Chance Came one Morning i New a Hand urgently Needed and i embraced the opertunity it Was £4 month in a Brig Called the Niga of Wittby i dont know the name of the Capt - But He was a joly good Chap we whent to Cronstadt (Rusia) and now i was a Man and i felt as if i Could jump over the Main Stay with the Cooks Coppers Slung round My Waist.

Fresh Water

1862

Cronstadt is up the East ore Baltic Sea it tis a inland sea and what is More Remarkabel about it it tis Most all freshwater it as bein known for Vessels to be in Distress for want of fresh water and did Not Know they where Sailing in it. It lays acrost the North Sea in a N E Direction after Crossing the North Sea you Come into a Bay With the Naze of Norway one side and Elega Land the other and it winds round to the Southward for about another 100 Mile where it becomes quite narrow say one Mile acrost and then Cuts its Way sharp round to the N E Copenhagen and Elsenore on the right and Swden on the left and then Comes out into the Open Sea Called the Baltic Sea and about 400 Mile up this Sea is Cronstadt the country Noted for its Mountain and Forrest Vews and the Cargos are Chiefly Wood Tallow Hides oil and Wood Pulp thats what they Make the Best paper and you can get some fine Canphor Wood Chests and Musk Rats Tails which will sent the old House out. They are 10 Copeaks Each The money goes in Rubels a rubel 100 Copeaks and a Copeake was just about the Size of penny peaces so if you had one Rubel in your pocket it would weigh you down - Beef is very dear But Hams any price you like The Rusians are Grate fat loberkin lot of Men and all labourers are something like the poor Indians that is to say they live in long Bungelows ore Cabins 4 or 500 in one place and when the Ships go thir the Capt goes to the Head of them and he Sends as many as you want the Capt pays Him and He pays them and it tis a pay its literally Nothing and they live on Rie Bread and Salt It would do your eyesight good to see

these Men working Coals in Grate big Skin Coats trowsers and Caps they are really a Lousey Lot and they Made us as bad as themselves and we had a rare job to get red of them Spirits and Tobacco is very Cheap and hams from 1/6 to 3/- weighing 11 and 12 lbs O What a feed of Ham it was all Ham and the Best of it was we was Coming to london ... O them Rusians

We arived safe in london it was a littil better this time i did not have to ask to go ashor this time things had Changed But they Might very soon be altered they Might be another Gentelman want to take Me for a walk. So i kept one eye open. When i got Home i found a sick house My two young Brothers Thomas and Fred had bouth had the Small Pox and Now My Sister was just took with it - and John had got Married so thir was Nothing Comeing in only My Step Fathers Money

I could play the Concertina farely well and i was learning the art of Conducting a Ship to port or ports the Nearest possabel way which is Navigation for My aim was to be Captain of a Ship i only stoped home about one weak Brought Mother a New Dress and give her Some Money and i remember bouying or bying My Dear Sarrahs Mother 1/2 ton of Coals and of Corse Sarrah had to have a gold ring for thir was plenty Moor where that Come from and i was the littil Boy that was going to Bring it home i was a Boy for Home Sweet Home and i Can honestly Say Home was My pride and My littil pals Male & Femail where My Companion while i was at Sea.

Mate of the Brigg

Nothing Daunted back to Shields i whent by the run £4 from london and when i got down i found My Poor Brother Joe his face was like a plum pudding he had had the Small Pox but he soon recovered and he wanted to Come to Sea along with Me So i joined a fine vessel Called the Greater of Blyth Capt Scott the Capt told Me i should find Him a A 1 littel Chap he wanted all Hands She was laying in the Tyne Dock so Me and Joe joined Her But i was Mate this time and poor Joe was Ordanary Seamen She carrid 10 Hands all told 6 A Bs & 2 Ordanary Me and the Skipper She Carried a littil over 500 tons and she was bound for London and Now what will My Sarrah Say to her Sailor Boy. Capt Scott was a beautiful Scholar he learnt Me to take a Meridan Alltitude of the Sun Moon & Stars & work Cronomiter time which was a grate assistance to Me But he was so fond of the wiskey Bottle and Me bein so young i Must admit i was rather Nervus orthough i was well aquainted with the Cost Lights Bouys Channels and Shifting Sands i New and Could See the Danger But thank God we had fine weather we Could put our lines out and Catch as Many Mackrel as we wanted. When we arived in london poor joe had to leave he was took Bad and the Skiper was ashore every Night and of Corse i Could Not get a Chance to see My Sarrah So one Night i whent ashore and as they Say Under a Close reaf Mitten With the thumb braild up Yes thir was the A 1 littel Chap Coild up in the Corner as Drunk as a Fiddel i told Him i thought he was Doing very rong for all the Men wanted Money and so did i and i wanted to go home so he give Me Some Money i think it was £3 and told me to go He said She Could look after herself and home i whent. So we where bouth ashore every Night and i did amuse our littil partys i Could play the Conertina and Sing like a lark and every time i whent home our littil Room was a Regular Concert Hall. And this whent on every hime the littil Sailor Come Home.

It was Better then Being in the Quart Pot.

I was in this Vessel a good time and Made Some Nice Golden Sovereigns and iI Never Forgot My Poor Mother it was allways Something very Nice for Her and My Dear Sister Alice She was about 16 Years Old

Deep Water Sailing

1863

When i left Capt Scott he hoped i would profit by His Instructions and he had given Me a Good Discharge So i thought i would try Deep Water Sailing The articles Runs thus. (At the Shipping Office) The Captn picks out is Men and we all hear this read Thes Several persons whose Names are heatherto Subscribed and whose discriptions are Contained below hearby agree to serve on bord this same and said Ship in the Several Capasities expressed against thie respected Names And to be suplyed with provisions according to the annex Slail And anyone entering himself as Qualified for a duty which he proves Incompedient to perform His wages shall be reduced in preportion to his incompetency. And the said parties agree to Conduct themselves in a ordarly honest and Sober Maner To be at all times diligent in thir respective dutys wither on bord in boats on shore In Concideration of which the Said Master agrees to pay the said Crew the Sums expressed against thir respective names Anyone Considers himself to be agreaved by any breach of agreement or otherwise He shall represent the Same to the Master or Oficer Who shall take such Steps as the Case May require The provisions are 1 lbs Bread a day 1 ½ Beef , 1 ¼ Pork, 3 Quarts Water daly 1/8 Oz Tea ½ oz Coffee 1 lbs Sugar per Weak 1 lbs Butter Vegetabl and Equievelent Substituts according to the Masters Option No Grog alloud

Then we sign our Names this time £4 10 [per month] This good Ship Scotland Capt Blair was Bound from London to Qubeck from thence to any port or ports in North ore South Altantic Ocean and back to a final port of Discharge of Cargo in the united Kingdom or Continent between the Brest and the Elb the Voyage Not to exceed Moor then 3 years.

The Scotland lay in the Victoria Docks She was 3000 tons Carying somewhere about 40 All told I thought My Poor Mother would have broke her Hart and my Sarrah O My you would have thought She would have gorn in a fit i told her i was off for the Gold But She did Not want gold then She wanted Her Ben i had bein So good to Her and Her Mother Besides Someone told her that Sailors had Girls in every port they whent - But she hoped i would be true to Her I told Her i would be as true as Steal And i must Make a long Story short But the parting was Something aful grand what with theshakeing hands and the kisses i had enough to last Me till i Come Back.

Outward Bound

They Come and See Me down to the Docks and when we got thir to See the Crowds of peopel all as buisy as a lot of flys it was like a Babalem thir was peopel of all denomanations runing hear and thir Some crying outhers laughing and Most all of them 2 ore 3 Sheets in the wind and So it whent on until they begin to Cast off the warps and the Steam Tugg got old of the Towline Then for a rush on bord i dident Step for gangways I Slipt into the Fore Chaines and Sailed over the Starbord Bow and i found Most all this peopel was going out in the Same Ship She looked like a littil Town and Me Coming out of Such a small Craft i felt lost and thir was only a about ½ Doz Sailors to be Seen

Then the Bell rung and as She slowly passed out of the Dock thir was Nothing but Horay Huray And good by Nell good by Sall and waveing of Handkerchiefs till She was out of Sight i was prety Comfortabel up to Now laughing and talking with the pashangers when they found i belong to her they begin to Make Differants Contracts during the pashage out so i took them all on Most all of them wanted to know Something they stormed Me with Questions I had to scratch My head befor i Could answer some of them one of them wanted to know how long we Should be going out I told Him it was all according to what sort of temper the Captain was in if him was a sulky Man we should be Sure to have a long pashage out so i should advise you not to upset Him So he Says Well But some one els Might upset Him So i said Well if it should be like that i shall advise you to get out and walk

At last we got to Gravesend the river Pilot left and we took Our Sea Pilot on bord the remainder of the Crew Came on bord and it was all Hands to Muster Pick for watches The second Mate Kept the Starbord Watch and the Mate to Port I was in the second Mates Watch he was the Capt Son and as far Navigation was Concerned He could just do is bit that is to say he Could Just work a days work By Dead reconing But he new Nothing about takeing Obsevation Our Pilot left us off the Silly Ilands thats just outside the English Chanel and we Made Sail We had a differant way of Making sail to what i had been used to We had a jolly good Song on the rops it was all right and if thir was anything to be done it was No Singel handed work what i had been used to and two hands at the wheel when thir anything like a breaze we where Stearing W.N.W. Sharp Braced upon the Starbor tack Going eight Nots to the Hour Quebec is 73 [degrees] West of Greenwich So the Differance of time will be

73
 4x 60)
 292 (4h 52"
 240
 52

4 Hours and 52 Minuts Between London and Qubeck every Degree a Ship goes east or west She alters her time 4 Minuts and every 15 [degrees] one Hour But if you take into Consideration that this Earth being a Glob or Ball which ever you like to Call it as the Lattitude increases So the circles deccreas in distance therefore in the Latt we are Sailing which is 52 N thir are only 38 Mile to one degree and that will equal 60 Mile on the Equatere where all Longetude is Measured. Now if we take the Differance of time which is 73 Degrees and turn it into Distance we Know how Many Mile we have got to go So we will say

73
38 x
 574
219

2664 Miles in Longetude But if we had to Sail to the Same Longetude on the Equatere we Should have to Saile 73 x 60 = 4380 Miles so i think that about as Clear as it Could be put But we allways Carry Greenwich time and we Can allways find Ships time if it tis clear weather but if its foggey we have to use the old old Method that Captain Cook did that is by dead reconing. It was quite a bit of fun to see some of the Old Fogoes looking at thir Watches Sometimes they where twenty Minuts slow they would ask the Cause of it I would tell them they ought to have Boiled it befor they Came away But if they took it to the Cook He would Boil it for a Bob.

In the Atlantic Ocean

Everything went on very comfortable while there was fine weather they were all grouped round the ship singing and dancing playing cards and various other games from morn till eve it was nothing but write me a letter from home & Good By Honey Dear when are you are away There is a letter in the candle And really it was quite a treat to get a half a gail of wind they did not want any letters from home then they wanted some medicine from the doctor for they were laying about the decks like a lot of drowned rats

On the Banks of Newfoundland

And so it went on for sometime till we got out in about 34 [degrees] 30' 20" W and the wind began to shy we had been very lucky to get as far as we did but now it looked like a change there was a heavy fog bank coming to see who we were and it was down on the top of us before we knew where we was We were now on the Banks of Newfoundland we could not see the length of the ship and they began to enquire how we knew our way we told them we asked a policeman But they could not see a policeman we told them He was on the Banks and his wife kept a logging house and all the poor fishermen slept there. The wind began to increase till at last it blew a liveing gail it was all hands reef topsails furl all small sails and rig in studding booms She did lay over to it and that night it blew a liveing Hurican We had to batten all the poor creatures below and to hear the screams of them was hart rendering I began to wish I was in the Old Quart Pot. For the sea began to come along in such nice lumps they would catch her a clout under the bluff of the bow it shook every timber in her then another scream from below. O dear O dear I wish it was daylight for to hear them poor things moaning and crying it was really awful and we could not help them But as the daylight came in the wind died away But the sea roled mountains high we opened one of the hatchways to give them a little fresh air And O My you never see such a sight, there was dead and liveing all mixed together We hauled up as many as we could get hold of both men woman and children And was clearing out some of the mess When over comes a mountains sea and away goes boats bullworks and spars Besides 2 sailors and we never see them again But that was not the worst of it for the sea half filled the tween decks and sailors and passengers was swimming about like Carrys chickens O how I wished Mother had left me in the Old Quart Pot.

For three days and nights we got hammered about like this till we were fairly knocked into a bundle of matchwood At last the weather moderated and it turned very cold it was enough to bight our noses off. And we soon found what was the clock for there was a large ice burg to windward I should think without exaggerating that the Bay it formed would hold 1800 sail of ships and there were several small ones you talk about Greenlands ice mountains it made me think of the Old Quart Pot. These ice burgs drift down from Davis straits there always being a N W Current They travel away in a S E Direction till they reach the Gulf Stream where they break up The Gulf Stream is a stream of hot water flows from the Gulf of Florida from the American side and cuts its way across the western Ocean and up our channels and is gratefully to do with the temperature of this Country.

How that Quart Pot went was a mystery But how we escaped going to Dave Jones locker is a grater one we lost about 130 lives with the two sailors they did not count sailors anything in them days for they reconed they were used to being drowned But with all our difficulties we

passed up the Gulf of St Lawrence and arrive in Quebec. But there had been no more singing and dancing but it was small prayer Meeting every day. We made a deal of money helping them ashore there was about half of them ashore and we were getting all their luggage up when the Fire Bell rang and before you could say Jack Robinson they were all running about like a lot of lunatics. But it was not much we soon dust it and all I got in the Skirmish was 3 Bars of Soap that was left behind we all got something and we were all satisfied.

As we lay at the Quay we had a splendid view on the opposite side of the river the Falls of Montserrat the waters fall about 120 feet and when the glorious sun shines on it tis a magnificent sight. We loaded with all sorts of timber and Deals and we lay there about six weeks. The North American Indians is very skilful they make Bead Caps Boots Purses and various other things. I bought a rare lot of bead work. Spirits Tobacco Cigars are all very cheap. I have many a time been lying on the Plains of Quebec just over the Stone where Montgomery fell at the Battle. I was always fond of visiting ancient places. We left Quebec the middle of November and had a fine passage home where we arrived just before Christmas and very thankful I was that she came straight home sweet home.

Mother had a letter from India to say My Brother Phillip was Dead and Buried. If I was to put every little detail into this book it would not hold one quarter of my Voyages and I think I have said enough to give any one an idea what Sea life is so what little there is to come will be very short indeed. There is no one knows nor can they form any idea what a sailor's life is but the man that goes to sea father on will be as near as I can account for. The Voyages I have made and the places I have been to.

Lost - My Sarah

So now I have come home and we had such loving embraces I fancy I can see poor Mother first laughing and then crying you would have thought I had been round the moon. I bought a new suit of clothes and I wore a gold band round my cap and it was stand a one side the girls said I did look so nice. But I wanted to know where My Dear Sarah was after loving her all them years and telling her with My last words I would be as true as steel and now brought home the gold. They told me some young man took her away and she was married. So that's what become of My Sarah. And she died raven mad.

Christmas

This was the first Christmas at home for 3 years and I had our little parlor artistically decorated. You could not see a bit of wall for roses flags of all Nations Christmas trees with all the animals from the Ark and the zoo and it was what I call elaborately decorated. There was Apples & Oranges and Nuts of all description figs and sweets till further orders Gin Rum and Brandy & wine I spared nothing I bought everything. Mother had a new dress My Dear Sister Alice I rigged her out and told her she should be My girl for the future and so she was. And we had a jolly Christmas the room was full take or talk about playing Concertina I knocked 7 Bells out of it. And after tea I was sitting with My Bead Cap on and Bead Boots I felt as big as King Edward. Me and Mother was all by ourselves the others were outside. A man came in to inform us that our poor Step Father was coming along on a stretcher Dead. That was a knock down blow it was a awful grand seen it was in reality a Marriage feast turned into - A Funeral Pomp.

1864

Robert Phillips was about 59 years Old he was a very Quirt Man Never interfeard with anyone he was Buired At Manor Park Cemertary Jan 1864 We had two Coaches and Hurse and the Funeral passed off very quirt.

Sacred to the Memory of
Robert Phillips
I Shall Sleep but Not for ever
Thir will be a glorious dawn
We Shall Meet to part - No never
On the Resurrection Morn

And Now poor Mother is left a Widdow thir was five of us singel Alice whent to Servis Fred that Came from the parcely Bed he was a wonderful Scholar and he got a good place. But Thomas he had the Rickets and we thought he would never be any good at all. Brother Joe he was the other side of the world Somewhere So i done My best by leaveing My poor Mother half Pay all the rest of the time i was at Sea When Joe Came Home he followed sute by doing the Same as Me We bouth left half pay that kept the wheel going round. And so we whent year after i think it was the year 1869 I brought a fine large Monkey home i Could do anything with jaco or jacko he would Stand on his head dance Carry a pail or a basket i do belive he Could talk only he was frightened we Should Make Him work. One day after i Come home i asked thomas if he would like to Sell Cats Meet He said 'Yes' So i bought him a basket and 6 pennyworth of Cats Meat and he sold out I whent to sea and left him Charge of the Monkey but it appears after i was gorn away jacko one fine Morning thought he would have some fun So He whent after the Neighbours fowls and pidgons and frightened then all out of thir life and it took all the peopel in the place to Catch Him. After the Chase they Sold poor jacko for 5/- i was Cross when i herd of it.

My Sister Alice

1870

we was then liveing in No. Place Buxton Street and i Come home from Memmel in Prusca. i had a German Flutinna I exchanged My Nice Bead Cap for it i Could Play it farely well so what with that and the Concertina i was gettin a regular Musician But the worst of it was i Never had no Company for all My Girls had got feathers and flew away So i had to play to Myself Most all My palls was Married - So when i wanted a bit of fun i used to go and fetch My Sister Alice if her Mrs would Not let her Come i would take her away alltogather i have took her away from a grate Many places Money was no Object we was off to all the Sights in town and of Corce we understood one another the peopel all thought She was My Sweethart and so She was for thir was no deception about us loveing one another it was love in reality i would Not give Much for the Man that interfeared with Her Sometimes Mar would Come with us and we used to Make the Bells ring the Old Queen was Delighted and i Believe She was happy Me and Joe Bouth left half pay and round whent the Wheel Mother said thir Never was two better boys in the world then her Ben and Joe and we should Never want.

My Third Love

1872

We are liveing in the Same house we have got 2 Rooms quite enough for Mother and our lanlady is got her littil Sister up from the Country and she was 15 years old Such a pretty littil girl and she was so quick going erronds i always Give her something for herself very often it would be keep the Change My littel beauty and you must not be Suprised to hear that She fell in love with Me And i fell in love with her So thir was a pair of us Now this Makes 3 young laidys or ladys The first whent Mad the 2nd was Paaralized and i wonder what will happen to this one This Voyage Joe Came home the first time i Seen Him a long time And O What a Change i Could hardly beleve it was My Brother By his Conversation he told Me all the hard ships he had to indure and that he had bein Preaching to the poor peopel at the Cape of Good Hope and he was going to lecture at the Sailors Institute in the Commercal Road And he hoped i would Make another Voyage with Him He was liveing by the law of God everything was right Nothing was wrong With Him

The Uninhabited Island

1873

We Bouth Shipped in a Barque for Coulombo The Garden of India and we had Not bein long on bord before we Made her a littil Heaven aflote we all had our heads Shaved when we Crossed the Equatere and on Sunday i am first in church because i play the Flutina and i am Chanting over a peace I Will arise and go to My Father One Man Commenced to laugh and another laughed then the Capt laughed and we all rawed laughing we Could not get on with Sermon for Sometime Just before we got to Colombo - Me and Joe with 4 Men took the Boat and landed on a uninhabited Ireland to get eggs and have a look round But the Birds Came over in Clouds and Made us put them down again the Island was darkened with Birds Not Hundreds But Millons and i believe if we had Not put them down they would have eate us Then we Came to a littil thatched Hutch and on opening the door we see a tempory Alter Beautifuly aranged and tinsald over And on a Small Pedastall Stood a Small Idal for the poor fisherman to Come and pray to i was just passing a remarke that thir was Nothing to protect it When Down Comes a large Owl and stood right before it it opened his wings and shuk his head at us So we was very glad to get out again the Spread of his wings Must have bein 3 feet. At Coulombo Me and Joe took a Bengall Bugge and we whent though Gardens for Miles Nothing but limes, Pine Apples, Bread Fruit, Cocoa Nuts , Cinnement Bannaners, Mellons , Spice and guvers the aroma from the Island perfumes the Pacific Ocean for Miles & Miles and on our pashage home we encounterd a School of locus flys they turned daylight into Darkness and another time the Sea was alive with Beneater fine fish we Could Catch them any how we liked we got a lot and after the Meal Most of us had Sweld heads - poor Joe had a head like a Pumkin one half of us was Poisoned But we got over it

Good by Joe

1874

Soon after it Blew a Hurrican Me and Joe bid one another good by We where up aloft and She Shipped a Sea and filled her up and she was setteling down when a Monstrious Sea struck her and She righted again So we Never got drowned. And when i Came off of the Next Voyage My Brother had left the Sea and was working at Bennets Coppersmiths Kingsland Road and he was doing very well Mother was liveing in long Street Alice was Married to

John Willshere he was also working at Mr Bennetts and poor Tom as we always called him was on with his Cats Meat he always done his work in Such a Artful way you Never New what he earned So we Named him tomy Artful There was a shop to let round the corner in Union Street and one day when the Man Come for the rent tomy Artful give him £5 Deposite for his littil Shop - and he had got a well Stocked Bank up the Chimine I Came home just befor Christmas as usuel and i was acting the Marqus of Waterford for i was a boy to Make the gold fly If any Old woman Came to the door with Stay laces or Boot laces or Baskets of Crockerewhere i would Buy the lot Basket an all. one day i whent out with My Sister Alice and i Sent Home A Cheese 3 lbs Butter, 3/- Eggs, A Side of Bacon and A Bladder of lard i whent littil father and Bought a large Iorn Beadstead 30/- and wound up with a locket a Chain for Alice and a Safe cost 10/-

Paddy Conners Wedding

1874

My yong laidy was now 17 years Old and i was 31 and i had Not the least idar of Gettin Married for i had Nearly Spent all and i was on the point of going away She said if i whent away again withought gettin Married i would Never have her So we Struck the bargen thir and then and on the 25th of Dec Christmas day we got Spliced At All Saints Church Spicers St Brick Lane Spitafields - And it was a real Sailors Wedding you talk about Rost Beef & Plum Pudding it was nowhere and we had a regular Paddy Conners Wedding. My beloveds Name was ELIZA GREENAWAY She was Born in Woodly Berks its about 3 Mile from Reading her Father was a Gardener and Her Farthers Brothers where all wealthy Farmers in Berkshire Her Fathers Name was William Greenaway he had 5 Children that i new David Alfred George Lewey & Eliza Greenaway the old Man used to Say thir was lots of Money Comeing & Some one will be warmed up Some day.

Fish Shop

I still followed up the Sea And My Dear littil Wife Mrs B Towndrow whent down to Ilford to live with My Aunt Ince Mothers only Sister alive living independent the first Child was born 8 months after Marrage lived 10 Monthes She was burried at Sunning in Burkshere Named Rebeckh. In this year My Youngest Brother was earning Good Money he was a good Schollar and a very fast Short Hand writer Me and him Could play the Concertina Well He took a fish Shop in pitfield Street and Married a lewisia Sanders Her Parrents where well off her Father was a Fish Sailsman in Builingsgate Market But She Could not bare the Sight of fish little lone the Smell of it So tomy Artful give him £40 for it and Me and Joe worked the Shop it was oppersite the it was yes indeed it was right oppersite the Viriety Theatere and it was a littil Gold Mine i have seen us take Between £11 & £12 Saturdays thir was 4 Girls Cook and My Dear littil Wife & Me and Joe We Where Bouth drest alike all in White very long Wiskers & Curly Hair.

Parralized

1875

We had bein Married 12 Months and She had a child Prematurely Born and got Nicely Over it Before i whent down into the Shop i was danceing with her and i just got down wen the girl Come runing down to Say Mrs was in a fit I Bolted up Stairs only to find it was to true She had a Parralatic Stroke and lost all the use of he left Side.

1876

She lost her Speach - And O Dear Me i though i Should go Mad it was ruining Me i used sent her by the Doctors orders down to Burkshire to get her own Naturel Air and what with the Doctor one end and the Doctor the other It Made Me wish Mother had kept Me in the Old Quart Pot.

I Stoped along with Joe till the begining of 1879 Then Joe was Married and i Could Not Hit it with her. So i took a shop of My Own at 29 Clifton St Finsbury i gave 27# to go in She gained her speach a littil and lost it again with another fit She had a lot of fits It was in this year that the Bymal Castel run into the Princes Alice and all Hands whent down about 500 Just above Barkin

1879

The same year the Tay Bridge Blew Down I done very well for a littil well i was keeping the pot Boiling But i was being robed through thick and thin What with the Boys Stealing the fish and the girls Stealing the Money it - O that Quat Pot - And all at once thir was another Smash it appeared all the peopel in the Naberhood had had warning to leave for they wanted the property for the Railway and away whent all My Coustomers - And My Brother Joe Said all i wanted was the house on fire. and i had to give the Shop up without a penny peice. And Brother Fred Died The Next was i Must go to work and i have got a Shocking Cough Comeing on but thir was Nothing els for it.

So i got on at the L N W Railway 23/- week and thir i got wors and wors every winter it Was O that Quart Pot.

But i Stuck to it for i had Some wonderful good Mates thir was one Man a Mr G Butler Now lives at No 10 Church Pashage at the back of Homerton Church May God Bless this Man wherever he is for he worked hard to keep me in.

Mother Died

1881

This was the year of the grat Snow Storm it ought to be recorded for London was intirely blocked with Snow My Poor Dear Mother Died - And was buried At Bow where Father was She Died peacefully At the age of 74

My times are in thy hand
My God i wish them thir
My life, My friends, My Soul - i leave
Entirely to thy Care
In Loveing Memmory
Age 74

She was a good wife and a loveing Mother She lived 23 years after Father who Died 1858 and was buried At Bow.

The Birth of a Son

1882

Up to the present we had 7 Children but they were all Primatively Born and they all Died and Now this was another one in the parcely bed as My poor Sister use to say we was now liveing in Brushfield St at the Corner of the Market i had the wifs Brother David liveing with Me at the time But i was head Cook and Bottel washer Get the Dinner ready befor i whent to work then Come home and feed her and Myself two i often found the potatoes where where i left them Never seen the fire - and i realy could Not understand half of what She said But we was very loveing together we Never had a row and on Satuday Nights we whent to Market like Darby and Joe and we made the best of a bad job. And on the Glorious June 5th At 2-30 AM Alfred William Towndrow Was Born Yes Bless his Hart and a Glorious Morning it Was i was in My Glory i felt as if i Could dance a horn pipe without Slippers I took hold of a Silver Spone and i put it in his Dear littil Mouth I said you littil Dear i wonder what you have Come for and he begin to laa laa laa.

The Death of the Wife

1882

It was quite a treat to go to Market Satidays you wood Never forget it if you had once Seen Me i got the wife on one arm the Boy on the other and a big Basket with about 8lbs Meat an 7lbs potatoel it was i o whose for the Bank i was like a Ship in a good Breaze with 4 Strockes list to port – How i have laugh to see her pick him up just like a littil Dog and say O My Soney My Soney And hand him to Me to Change him. It was up in the Morning light the fire dress the Boy Get the Brakfast then wash and dress the Wife then get the dinner ready and go to work When i Come Home to dinner i would find them Bouth alike as Black as two Sweeps bein playing with the Coals and My Soney Could eat them as well as play with them I insured them Bouth Soney for £5 and the wife for £7 and we jogged along up till June 1884 i was fetched home to find My poor Wife had another fit and this was to be the last She Died the 24th June 1884 Her Mother and Sister Loue, My Sister Alice And My Brother John whent to the funeral She was burried At Mannor Park By Mr English Undertaker Hare St Brick Lane Bethnalgreen

[This section was two pages later in the book but, to my mind fits in better here]

Life i Know Not what thou art
But know that thou and i must part
And when "ore how" or when we meet
I own to me's secret yet Life we've bein long together
Through plesant and through cloudy weather
Tis hard to part when friends are dear
Perhaps twil Cost a sight a tear
Then steal away Give littil warning
Choose thine own time Say not good Night But
In some brighter Clime Bid Me good Morning.

Viewing the Corpse

The Same And O How beautiful The Same as Memory meets me through the midst of years Love Roses on thy Cheeks and feeling flame But Like an eye unchanged in all And Gorn Where Her very wishes are at rest; And all Her throbbings hushed and achings heald I Gaze till half I deem Her to My breast In thine immortal loveliness reveld; And see Her As in some lovely dream Thir Where thou art Where hear thou dost but seam; I loved thee passing well Thou Wort a beam of pleasure on the storme Seas, With Just so much of mirth as might redeem; Man from the museings of his Miseries, Yet ever pensive like a thing from home; Lovely And lonely as a singel Star; But Kind and true to Me has thou hadst Come From thine own element to be a sinecure to the eyes Now Sickening in the Sunshine of Skys. It where a Crime to weep tis None to kneel, As Now i kneel before this type of thee; And worship Her who tought My very Soul to feel Such worship is know vain idolatry Thou wert My Spirits Spirit and thou art And orthough this be all of thee time hath not reft Love thee old thoughts that hang about the Hart Like withered leaves that meny stormes have left I turn from liveing looks to any trace of thee The lost the Beautyful.. Broken and bowed and wasted with regret I Gaze and weep Why do i weep alone I would not I would not if i Could forget But time is all remembrance Will She never speak Her lips are parted and the braided hair, Seams to wave upon Her Brightening Cheek And Smile And everything is thir But Breath O Will the Cool Clear morning Never Come And Light me to Her in Her Spirits Home

Benjamin Towndrow Thursday May 7th 1903

The lives of great Men all remind us,
We Should Make our lives Sublime
And when Dieing leave behind us;
Footprints on the Sands of time

I Said No

The Old Laidy Offord to take My Dear littil Boy But i said No. Death Should Sever Me from Him first I paid a Girl to Mind Him while i was at work But O i had Such a life it was a Cats life O that Quart Pot and My Health got wors and worse

And one day i was very Bad one of the Managers See Me Breatheing hard and he orderded Me up on the Carpet and told Me i was dismissed from the Companys Servis i had been thir 7 years So i begged his parden and told him i should Declear on the Club where i ought to have bein long agoe So i whent on the Club Examand every Month for 12 Months and then got a bonus of £12 so they did not do Just as they liked with Me. In 1887 My Aunt Ince Died and our Dear Uncel Fricker done us out of £50 we all had £20 each all Mothers Sisters Children thir was about 20 of us Now i Made this Money Spin out as long as i Could i lent Some away and keep getten Worse and worse I had bein liveing in Hackney some time and at last i was took to the Hackney infirmery Homerton.

1888

And My poor littil June Boy was Seprated from Me i thought i should have brake My Poor Hart. After what i had gorn through My Poor Dear wife used to say that my Dear Baby Boy would live to be a Comfort to Me and up to the time i am writeing he has bein very Satisfactory I was in the Infirmary 9 Months i then got Drafted to the Infirm Ward I was well Built with Cod Liver Oil and i Made Myself usful among the poor old Men I sent to My Brothers two ore three times by a Messenger but they Never Come to See Me then i let it go on for years But when i did See then i found No Messenger had been to them and from that time we where Strained relations every Six Months i whent down to Brentwood to See My Darling Boy and take him a few Sweets and Cakes and Sometimes a few Coppers the Meeting was very sweet But the parting was Aful. I Would have Died for him O how i loved Him - And when he left the Schools to go for a Soldier i told him Never to blame Me for it was Not My wish he Joined in Sept 1897. the 1st Royal Dragoons laying at Houndslow

And now in Conclusion of My second Chapter i Must Say that it would be impossabel for Me to give you a Correct account of the Many things that is past But i have endevoired to give it to you as truthful as i Could With the exception of a littil Humer Of corce as i said at the beginning of the Book I am only a Old Sailor Or Whats left of one And the older i get the wors i seam to spell Orthough i Can account somewhat for that - As i write a deal of Shorthand writing Then again thir are a lot of Old Men in the ward talking all sorts of Nonsense Then again i have hurried this Book up For i thought of My poor Father He was Makeing a Spy Glas and never lived to finish it And i have Such Sharp atacks of Mornings that it Seames wonderful how th Old fram Stands what it does And yet i look Well - But the remainder of this book i shall write with Moor ease. And ar as regards that old Quart Pot after 46 years i found it in the same ward as i was in Myself Thir was our Name WT bruises all Complete.

So that Clears up the Mistry And Ends the 2nd Chapter

I have Traveled to

ENGLAND	IRELAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
London	Donegal	Greenock	Holly Head
Rochester....1	Strabain	Montrose	Newport
Yarmouth ...3	Warrans Point	Dundee	
Hull.....1	Dublin		
Hartlepool...4	Newry	GERMANY	RUSSIA
Sunderland...1	Kingston	Hamburg....1	Constadt ...7
Shields	Queenstown	DENMARK	PRUSSIA
Blyth	Cork	Elsenore	Memmel
Dartmouth	KiLcany	Copenhagen	
Brixam			
Plymouth	HOLLAND	N. AMERICA	INDIA
Falmouth	Neindeipe..20	Quebec	Calcutta
Rhyde I White	Dordrecht...4	New Found Land	Bombay
	Rotterdam..15	Saugney	Madras
FRANCE	lkedam.....2	Point Livy	Colombo
Boulogne.....1		Montreal	Ceylon
Honfliure.....1	SEAS	New York	
Havre	North Sea		CHINA
Caen.....11	German Ocean	S. AMERICA	Shanghi
Roen.....5	Baltic Sea	Bika	Hong Kong
	North Atlantic		Singapore
ISLANDS	South Atlantic	AUSTRALIA	
St Michaels	South Pacific	Adelaide	JAPAN
St Helena	Mediterranean		Hiagoh
Madira	English Channel		Armoy
Trinadad	Irish "		Sourabayer
Sanfoulantor	Bristol "		Java
Cedres	Princes "		
New Bay	yon le Nan		BURMA
Totecareen – the	Red Sea		Rangoon
Uninhabited I.	Bay of Bengal		Chittagong
Where the Owl	Suez Canal		Basseine
Flew down to			
Guard the Idol			

When i am Dead and Forgotton the World will be as it is; The same revolutions of Heaven;
 The same Changes of earth and Sea; the like Occurrents of natural events and human affairs.
 It is not in my power to alter the Course of things or prevent what must be, What should i do
 What But quietly take my part of the present; and humbly leave the Care of the future to that
 all-Wise Providence, which ordereth all things; even the most Cross events, according to His
 most holy and just purposes;

[A number of religious thoughts follow: sermons, prayers and religious poems. These have not been transcribed but two sections which we thought would be of more general interest follow. Because these are generally better in regard to spelling, punctuation, etc., we have corrected the remaining errors.]

On Resurrection

This world is a world in which all things are covered up - All things have their probation. There is not a seed but what hath its sheath and covering. The seed gradually goes on to ripening. It then throws off its covering and comes out matured for its future use. It is in this light that we ought to regard this world in relation to ourselves.

Man is covered up here. This is not the man we see; it is only the man's dwelling place, it is only the bark of the man, it is but the outward covering. What we touch, what we have to do with in this world of nature is but, as it were, the real mask in which the man lives until he is prepared wither for future happiness or a future of self-will and therefore misery. When he is thus ripened for his future home he leaves the body and enters upon that home. If he lived according to God's laws he will then enter into all the fullness of God's blessing. In this point of view then no one can suppose, with a show of anything like reason, that Death is a thing which we ought to regard with terror and dread. Rather we should regard it as God's permission to move from this lower stage of being to enter upon a higher, holier and happier. It is the period when the soldier who has finished his campaign goes to receive the soldier's crown, or the workman who has done his work goes to receive his reward. In this point of view the scriptures unceasingly present it to us. They bring life and immortality to light and they present it in this aspect.

Resurrection is immediately consequent upon death. This is the first point. Resurrection is not a change that has to be waited for during thousands of years of sleep or dispersion, but resurrection immediately follows death. In the second place the scriptures instruct us that man rose to his eternal home in a spiritual body fitted to that home. Thirdly that inasmuch as the earthly body is fitted for this world and not fitted to a spiritual and eternal world, it is left behind and will never be wanted again. That resurrection is the resurrection of the man and takes place immediately after death. In the doctrine of the sacred scriptures, as every one who is acquainted with the Holy volume will know, it is very strikingly placed before us, both by special instances and by doctrinal teaching. As a special instance we may notice the divine declaration to the thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." We are informed that not that this day a part of him would be in paradise, but "thou" the conscious being, the real man - "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."

There are those who take so strange a view of the body that they imagine the body to be half of the man and that man is only half a man so long as he is without the material body. He will not be a real and full man until he gets it back again. That is not the doctrine of sound thought nor of the sacred word. The scriptures know nothing about man being half man: they never describe man in the future life or immediately after death as having left any of the man behind him. The thing is inconceivable in itself. Why should we imagine that man is a sort of nondescript after death? There have been a variety of notions upon this subject but all confessedly mere conjectures. The scriptures know nothing of them. Sound philosophy know nothing of an idea of this kind, for, as we have already said, the man is not the body.

We feel that the man is something within the body, that, in fact the body is only the mere instrument annexed to him while he remains in the world. Science teaches us that no two hours from birth to death is the body precisely the same. Every breath we exhale takes a part of the impurities of the used up material of the blood, removes it and breathes it into the room. Every inch of the skin of the whole body is moment after moment perspiring used up material and putting it away. Every day a certain weight of the body is put off which philosophy has taught us accurately to estimate, so that we have had in the course of seventy years not only one body as was formerly thought, but probably ten or twelve bodies. The closest resemblance to the constant change that is taking place in the material framework of a man - the house in which he lives - is that it is like flowing water which is ever flowing on and ever having its place supplied by new material. Another idea is as the apostle represents it - a tent that the Arab sets up in the wilderness for a short time. Our body is a tent in which we remain for a period while we are trained for our everlasting home and as soon as its object is accomplished the tent is struck and removed. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved - the Apostle says in 2nd Cor.v.i, "We have a building of God. There is something that will not be dissolved: we have another home. The earthly house is the earthly body; we have another house, the spiritual body, the form of the soul within, a house not made with hands and this is not dissolved but is eternal in the heavens."

If therefore we have done without the first body we had and yet the man exists and grows stronger and nobler, if we have done without the second, the third and fourth, fifth and sixth it may be without a dozen, surely we may do without the last. A man you see is not the body but the soul, as Dr Watts beautifully sets it forth when he said,

"Were I as tall to reach the pole
or grasp the ocean with a span
I must be measured by my soul,
The mind's the standard of the man.

This whole world is God's manufactory for making men. This is the place, the field where we are sown and our whole career in this life, all the activities of God's providence within and around us, are Christ's operations, making us to be men. If we will co-operate with Him, simply to grow up out of bread and cheese a certain height and weight does not make a man. Very often it is but the imbruted serpent of selfishness that a person is, who is yet the full height of a man. Very often it is the embodiment only of the ambitious desire to oppress others that we call a man. Rather call such a one a wolf. Very often it is but a two legged brute that moves about with vulpine cunning yet we call him a man. Our saviour calls such a one a fox. God's characteristic of a man is one that executes judgement and does the truth. "Run to and fro", said God to Jeremiah as you will read in the 5th Chapter, first verse, "and see now and know and seek in the broad places thereof if we can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement and seeketh the truth."

A person who is too lazy or too sensual to bring out the noble faculties that constitute manhood and judge for himself - a person that merely hangs on somebody else's hook is not a man. He only is a man who uses the Glorious God like capabilities of receiving and examining the truth. Coming into God's universe and looking up and around and seeing what God's truth teaches him and examining it: this is to be a man. God says, "Come now let us reason together" He has given us the capacities of reason. He has given us the light and the understanding by which we can enter into the truth, and He says, "Come now let us reason

together." He who does come, who comes to the light and endeavours to receive the truth and to see it in his own mind - not only because somebody else tells him it is so, but to acknowledge it because he beholds its beauty, its harmonies and duties. He is a man who chooses truth and says in the beautiful language of Cowper.

And truth alone, where'er my lot is cast,
In scenes of plenty or the shining waste
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

The idea has prevailed with many that angels are a distinct race of beings from men, were made before them and are altogether of a better class. But such is not the teachings of the sacred scriptures. They teach us that angels are men made perfect. They are always treated so in the volun of heaven. When Monoah said to the angel that appeared to him, "Art thou the man that speaketh unto the woman?" He said, "I am." The first angels that are mentioned to the sacred scriptures, which appeared to Abraham are called - "three men". The angels that appeared to Lot are called, "two men." The angel that spake to John said, when John was about to fall at his feet and worship him, "See thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, Worship God." Nay, not only so, but when a glorious assemblage of angels was beheld in the eternal world itself when ten thousand times ten thousand were seen by the eyes, the spiritual sight, of John and angel came and said to him, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they?" And John said, "Sir, thou knowest." And the angels then added, "There are they that come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Hence then everyone may see that just as those who have gone before us, those who have already had their trials and their triumphs, did not wait for an unknown period, when they should enter into the supernal beauty of "just men made perfect" but are already with palms of victory in their hands, clothed with the white robes of Heavenly intelligence in all the glorious atmospheres of the blest, sending up their loving songs of the holy praise and triumph. So will it be with us. When we lie down in a Christian bed of death, it will be but to sleep for a moment, then awaken in the Christian's glorious world of light and love. Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of glory.

The notion that the body, the earthly carcass of man is raised after lying for awhile in the grave, or having mingled with the elements, the gases that are in harmony with itself, that it is again to be brought up and form a part of a man's everlasting body, is supposed to be taught in the sacred scriptures, but it really is not so. The scripture teach that the man will rise, that the dead will rise, but never that the dead body will rise. On the contrary they teach the very reverse. In the mouth of two witnesses it is said every word may be established. We give you the "two or three witnesses" take the 9th verse of the 7th Chapter of Job, and you will read, "As the cloud is consumed and vanished away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more." Now what is it that goes down to the grave but the body - and that is to come up no more. Take again the Apostolic teaching in 1 Corinthians xv 35 and the following verses: "But some men will say, how are the dead raised up." Now that is the question. Some person will say that when we speak of the dead rising that we mean the dead body rising, but this is plainly a mistake. We call men dead when they die to us but there are two sides to them. When we say the man is dying, the angles say the man is rising. What is to us death, is to them life. What is to us a decease of being, is to them the commencement of higher being. Mortals say, "A man is dead." Angels say "A child is born."

How are the dead raised up and what body do they come in? That's the real question and you see how the Apostle treats it. He seems to treat it as being a very silly thing to ask. He says, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be but bare grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him." That which thou sowed is not the body that shall be - that which is sown is the body of this world. It suits this world. It belongs to this world. This is the sowing place. Every boy knows when he has sown a seed that it is not the same when he gets it up again. The outer portion of the seed swells, it putrefies, it rots off, it mingles with the earth around and from within, the new plant rises.

This is the image of the resurrection. An angel minded man as a beautiful spirit. More and more beautiful as he perseveres in what is holy, pure and good. It is the inner body that is meant. Only the pure get it in all its lustre and beauty. A bad man is generally forming within himself an ugly spirit. The black hearted man has a black and malignant looking spirit and hence it is that everyone who has paid any attention to the great subject of how mind shows itself in matter and has noticed, for instance, how low minded criminals who are often brought up at our police courts will show such brutality and cunning and malignancy of expression in the very face that he feels often he is near a dangerous person and he would rather keep him a few yards off. It is the dark soul so impressing its ugliness upon the body and this is brought out, so that the malignant desire of the heart has formed a spirit of vice and has expressed themselves through the body as far as the body would permit in this world. At death the mask is taken off and then comes the time in which that is realised of which Moses spake of when he said, "Be sure your sins will find you out."

Oh Lord, search my heart and see if there be any wickedness in me.

Benjamin Towndrow
19/6/1903

MR MASON'S HOTEL

And now as I am drawing near to the end of this book I will give you a little account of this Grand Hotel. I call it a wonderful human machine. For they walk in at one gate, alive, and are carried out of the other, dead, twice a week and if only one man had died every day since I have been here there would have been something like five thousand one hundred and ten passed away. I take it as the will of God that I should be here, so what else should I do but sit down quietly and take my share of the trouble.

It's a fine building and wonderfully constructed with every accommodation for sick, lame and lazy. Sometimes the number runs up to fifteen hundred men, women and children of all nationalities and all classes and conditions of men from a beggar to a London County Councillor. There are tinkers, tailors, soldiers and some poor old sailors, "Clean yer boots, Sir", "Chump wood O" and "Fine water Cresses", "Fine large Shrimps", Navy boiler makers, biscuit makers and Candle stick makers and I could keep on till bedtime. All these men are more or less deserted, morally and physically. There are some of them who are the awfulest blackguards who ever held breath in their body. I have been afishing, as the sailors say, a good many but I never came across such a complicated lot in all my travels. These men are all cared for with food, clothing and everything necessary for the use of man and with a good

bed to sleep on. And what makes things much better is that the master of the Hotel is Mr Mason. He certainly is one of the finest men that ever broke the world's bread, for he has a kind word for everybody. And, I do not believe there is one man in the place who would not speak well of him, and when you come to consider the work he has to go through - for nothing is done without his name; all passes are signed by Mr Mason, all disputes settled by Mr Mason, you may see him with his sleeves tucked up amongst the cooks carving up the meat and tasting it to see if it is all right and if it is all wrong - away it goes. He is not only a hard working man but I believe him to be a good Christian man. He is regular at Divine Service and attends Our Blessed Lord's Supper and will kneel down beside us. I speak as a man and I speak the truth. How much he would be missed.

Meal times and getting up time are all regulated with the Bell; a quarter to six in the Summer and a quarter to seven in the winter, that's getting up time, breakfast is at half past six, dinner at twelve noon and six o'clock tea, at eight - out lights and all hands turn in. At one time they used to wear brown coats and bright buttons. They put you in mind of a Quaker in a fog, but now they go out like city swells of the latest fashion and collared up to dick. And as long as they can go out and get a few pence for tobacco, why they can make themselves all right. But when he cannot get tobacco he is a lost man. I have seen them sell their dinners for a penny and that comes very hard on him for the inner man has to suffer for that. Men have told me that their friends would not give them money if they looked too respectable and I know it's true for it has been the same with myself and I am thinking that I should have come off very poorly if it had not been for my only son - my loving son. In fact I should have been in my grave long ago. But I thank God I am spared to see him grow up and what little time I have to live I will delight in the laws of God.

THE INFIRM WARD

The Infirm Ward is a reception for all old Chronic cases and they are a fine lot of men: some are paralysed, some blind, some can walk a little and some can't walk at all. We are really a job lot and all in a dilapidated condition. Some of them have gone through thousands of pounds and ruined themselves with riotous living. The bell goes at a quarter to six in the Summer, then its all hands on deck, but there are some of them who don't know whether it's night or morning, as for what day of the week it is - that's out of the question. I have had men ask me which was their bed - and them standing alongside of it dressing themselves! Another one would be putting his legs through the sleeves of his coat and looking for his braces. There's another who wants to know if this is the ward he belongs to and after you have told him he will go meandering into the other ward and while this is going on there's poor old Miller with his fists up going to set about Harry Hutchings - one 86 and the other 70 - and to hear them you would think there was going to be some blood spilt. But there's nothing broken, only a chamber pot and that's the other side of the ward.

After breakfast, the nurse comes in and looks around. Everything is all quiet until she's gone then the conversation begins again and it generally finishes up with something very nice. Breakfast over - in comes the newspaper man with the Daily Mail, matches or tobacco, and if you can't afford to buy any, you can go without, there's no tick. After prayers, then the business commences - making beds, scrubbing, dusting, polishing and titivating the ward off, for it's all got to be in apple-pie order by nine o'clock. You should see these old men dodging about with one half of them hardly knowing where they are - if they get out of one's way, they run into others. Nine o'clock: Doctor. It's "Heads up and eyes right." Nurse puts a piece of

paper before him with men's names on and if he's had a bad night's rest, he will take no notice of it, so it is not going out that day. He only looks at us and that's all he says. Verdict guilty. So they all sit in their arm chairs and you can soon hear them driving their pigs to market - when five or six of them begin to snore it resembles a sort of German Band. We often have to wake them up to have their dinner and then they grumble because they have not got any appetite to eat their food and they look as if they could fall out with their own finger nails. Because they can't do just as they like they go all over the building telling everybody what a bad nurse they've got. They would like a little bit of bread and sugar, please nurse and they would like her to kiss them and pat them on the head and call them her pet. But not for Joe, Oh dear no. Our nurse is strict, but she is kind and just and she needs to be for there are some very tricky men amongst us. Its, "Yes nurse," and "No nurse," with such a knowing little grin on them and when her back is turned a little, blood comes out and they're up to every move on the board. I am not going to leave myself out. I have been very bad myself and I have openly confessed it before God and man and I have been coming to the Lord since 1895 and if ever a poor sinner repented for serving the devil, it's Benjamin Towndrow. Oh how seriously have I prayed in bye gone days for the Lord to change me and He did and now sin has very little dominion over me.

For a long time I have prayed earnestly that the Almighty God would bless all who belong to this ward and, as far as it has lain in my power, I have helped them and there are some of them I really love. But I should really have to be an angel to love some of them for they do scoff at me so. But I will still try to love them and I will still pray for them that the scales may be removed from their eyes so that they will realise that they have a soul to save and come to repentance before it is too late. I am in the ward while I write this and if I could have my wish I should like to die in the same ward where my prayers and meditations have gone from me to my Heavenly Father and He has answered them all, so I will go in the strength of the Lord God and I will delight myself in His Holy Laws till He calls me hence and may God help me to do so, for Christ sake, Amen.

The Towndrow Family

Boys

William George	Died	1895
Phillip		1863
John	June 8th Mon	1903
Benjamin	September 26th	1904
Joseph		
Thomas	60yrs	1908
William		1848

Girls

Harriet	Died	1880
Alice	Died	Feb 7th 1899
Mother	Died	Jan 1881
Wife Mrs B Towndrow		June 24th 1884