

Sickness of the Town¹ - up to the above Date the Town had continued in a very healthy state, but the dark, damp weather then set in and brought Fever of the worst kind Amongst the victims, besides sudden deaths of various kinds - were Mr W. B Stones, Mr Rich^d Backhouse, Sol^r [Solicitor], Mr Gillies, Land Surveyor, Mr Ashcroft, shoemaker, Mr Kenyon Solicitor, Mr T Taylor, Green Grocer, Mr Tho^s Bennet, Innkeeper, Mr John Mercer, Innkeeper, Mr Thomas Sower, and many others - As many as 1,000 Cases were said to be in the Town at one time, - There has only been three Days of frost since the Commencement of Winter - myself and family though we have had colds have been most mercifully preserved.

Jan 21. 1855. My eldest Son Thomas left me this day, and took a situation in Preston under Mr Dobson at the Chronicle Office. Though the Young Man is going to a situation and has conducted himself with sobriety under me, it is impossible not to feel a sense of bereavement at his departure as if he had died - and what makes the loss more heavy - I have no other Son, as yet fit to succeed here.

It was about this time a very severe frost commenced, and continued with little intermission up to the 20th of Feb^y, 1855.

From the Reports of the Newspapers all the large Rivers in the Kingdom, including the Thames, Severn, Mersey, Exe, Dee, Ribble, as well also the Reservoirs, Ponds, Lakes, Brooks, Pools & Canal Lodges were completely frozen a Great Distress took place in Liverpool on Monday the 19th Inst there were bread Riots.²

[February] On Sunday the 18th there was a sort of Fair held upon the Great Reservoir at Rishton when from 8 to 10000 people visited the scene. The Ice was 2 feet thick, and thousands of Skaters were upon it. The Frost is considered to be the most severe since the Great Frost of 1813-4 when a Fair was had upon the Thames, Feb. 13 1814.

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[1855]

Saturday Feb. 17th R Walker buried (B [Beardsworth] & Walker) of Fever which yet continues very prevalent.³

22nd Frost continues unabated Rigour!

Feb. 23rd Yesterday the cold was intense, about 3pm the Wind veered to the South East by South and at 6 o'clock the Snow began to fall and continued to do so the whole of the Night.

¹ Like Tiplady, the *Blackburn Standard* attributed the sickness in the town to the mild and wet weather although, in an editorial, it referred to the outbreak of cholera in Britain that began in the latter part of 1854 (*Blackburn Standard*, 3 and 10 January 1855).

² The Liverpool Bread Riots began on the 19 February then continued over the next two days. The river and docks froze because of the severe frost. As a large section of Liverpool's population was employed as casual labour on the docks, few had work. The complex relief system failed to provide support which resulted in many of the unemployed rioting and taking food, including bread from the shops (R.M. Jones, 'The Liverpool Bread Riots, 1855, *North West Labour History Society Bulletin*, 6 (1979-80), pp. 33-42).

³ *Blackburn Standard*, 21 February 1855.

THE WEATHER.

THE PARKS AND THE THAMES.

Many thou- and persons amused themselves by either sliding or skating upon the frozen waters yesterday in the different Royal parks, and many accidents occurred, but fortunately no lives were lost.

The Regent's Park was densely crowded during the day. St. James's Park had nearly 16,000 persons on the ornamental waters during the day, and nearly 30 persons were severely injured by being run down by the skaters or sliders. Some sustained serious head cuts or broken arms or legs.

The thermometer at the Royal Humane Society's Receiving-house yesterday morning was 20½°. At 9 in the forenoon it registered 22; and at noon it stood at 23. Towards the evening the mercury fell to 25, showing that the frost was on the increase. The barometer indexed 29.68 being 28-hundredths less than on the preceding day. The wind was at the same time N. E., indicating a continuance of the present severe weather.

The Thames was yesterday frozen over to the extent of at least three miles above Richmond, and also at Kingston, by which men could pass over. There has not been so much ice on the river since the winter of 1829-30; the navigation of ships, steamers, and boats is entirely stopped, and the docks are blocked up. The distress among the labouring classes caused by the suspension of labour is appalling, and there are not fewer than 50,000 men out of employ, who have been for several days past subsisting on the scanty outdoor relief doled out by the parishes and unions. Every day is adding to the distress, and there has been as yet a very niggardly amount of public benevolence to alleviate the calamities of a severe winter and stoppage of the ordinary business of the river and the port of London. The destruction of floating property on the river has been immense. Yesterday morning, at half-past 3 o'clock, two coal brigs, laden with coals, and moored off Mr. Wohlgenuth's coal-wharf, in Wapping, broke adrift from their moorings in consequence of the pressure of the ice, and carried away piles, boats, mooring-chains, and everything with which they came in contact. Proceeding upwards with a strong flood-tide the two ships came in contact with Messrs. Thompson's, the coal-merchants, Barge-road, sweeping the craft laden with coals before them, sinking some and crushing others, and tearing away part of Messrs. Thompson's premises. The sides of many coal-lighters were torn out by the ice and the pressure of the ships upon them. The brigs next came in collision with the splendid Aberdeen steamship Royal Victoria, of 800 tons burden, and moored off the Thames police station. The steamer was soon carried away from her moorings, chains, anchor, and gear snapping to pieces. The piles which sustain the floating pier and the huge floating pier and its massive timbers at the Aberdeen wharf were carried away. The whole was sunk below the ice, and in a few minutes not a vestige of the pier was to be seen. The steamer and brigs, after overcoming the impediment, drifted towards the Newcastle wharf, and the floating pier and piles were in an instant destroyed. The steamer and ships were carried by the tide as far as the Union-stairs tier, about half a mile from Wohlgenuth's wharf, where they were stopped about 5 o'clock, when it was nearly high water. On the ebbing of the tide the three vessels floated down the river, and, having cleared all obstacles in their way up, were driven on shore at Execution-dock. Yesterday there was an immense deal of ice, forming a complete block from one side of the river to the other, and extending from London-bridge to Deptford. Beyond that the river is obstructed for all navigable purposes below Woolwich. At 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon the Royal Victoria steamer and the two coal brigs came up again with the flood tide, demolishing the craft, boats, and everything that came in their way.

SOUTHAMPTON.

The weather at this port continues very severe, and the continual hard frosts have covered the outward dock entirely with ice. To prevent navigation from being stopped it has been found necessary to employ one or two tugs to ply about the basin, so as to keep the ice from forming in such large quantities as to check both egress and ingress. In many places where ships have been moored for a few days the ice has become exceedingly thick, and sufficiently strong to bear the weight of several persons. The Tagus in getting away yesterday with the heavy portion of the India and China mails experienced some little difficulty in getting out to the river. Large quantities of ice are to be seen continually floating down with the tide, and in some places in the river it is quite dangerous to ships passing to and fro. Many of the inhabitants of Southampton have suffered great privations from the scarcity of water, several of the conduits and pipes which convey this essential to the various houses being completely frozen up.

DERBY.

For the last fortnight the frost has continued with unabated and, as compared with late years, unexampled severity. The canals in this neighbourhood are locked in ice; the rivers Derwent and Trent are in many places thickly frozen over; building operations and out-of-door employment are generally suspended, and, as a consequence upon these various results, combined with the great depression in the silk trade and the war price of many of the necessaries of life, the humbler classes are suffering an amount of privation and want from which for several years past they have been happily exempted. Soup kitchens have been established, and their operations are in course of extension, but greater funds are necessarily wanted ere their usefulness can be substantially felt.

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FROM THE HIGH-FIELD-HOUSE OBSERVATORY.

| | Feb. 18, at 10 p.m. | Feb. 19, at 9 a.m. |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Barometer (reduced) ... | 29.879 inches | 29.915 inches |
| Thermometer ... | 18.4° | 25.3° |
| Wet bulb thermometer... | 18.0° | 24.6° |
| Direction of wind ... | N.W. | N.N.E. |
| Force of wind (0-6) ... | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Amount of rain ... | 0.000 inch. | 0.000 inch. |
| Amount of cloud (0-10) ... | 1.0 | 10.0 |
| Ozonometer (0-10) ... | 1.0 | 0.0 |
| State of weather ... | Fine | Fair. |

Remarks.—Sunday.—Greatest heat in shade, 29.8°; adopted mean temperature, 17.3°; mean pressure, 29.893; mean temperature of evaporation, 16.5°; range of temperature, 23.7°; amount of solar radiation, 7.4°; very fine; severe cold; wind changed to W. at 11h. a.m., and to N.W. about 7h. p.m. Monday Morning.—Greatest cold in night, 15.7°; amount of evaporation, frozen; minimum temperature on grass, 8.8°; overcast; severe frost; distance very hazy.

E. J. LOWE.

LONDON TEMPERATURE.

STATE OF THE THERMOMETER AND BAROMETER AT THE ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY'S RECEIVING-HOUSE, HYDE PARK, FEB. 19.

| Thermometer. | | | | | | Wind | Weather. |
|--------------|-------|--------|-------------|------------|--------|--------|------------------------------------|
| Morning. | Noon. | Night. | In the Sun. | Barometer. | 9 a.m. | | |
| 21° | 25° | 20½° | 29° | 29.96 | 29.96 | N.N.E. | Hazy, with a cold North-East wind. |

H. WILLIAMS, Superintendent.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

S'r,—I have the honour to forward a statement of the range of the thermometer on the south side of my house, in a sheltered situation. You may notice it or not, as you please.

The thermometer is a self-registering one, and the range given is the lowest point which it has attained during the several nights specified:—

February 10th, 1°; Feb. 12th, 12°; Feb. 13th, 3°; Feb. 14th, 10°; Feb. 15th, 5°; Feb. 16th, 8°; Feb. 17th, 4° below zero; Feb. 18th, 4°.

I enclose my card.

A. Z.

Leicesterhire, Feb. 19.

Similar Accounts from every County in England, Ireland, Scotland & Wales, - The Ice on the reservoir 30 inches thick - Water froze [sic] close to my bedside & split the Water Jugs on Friday & Saturday the 16 & 17th. Inst. (Feb 17 40 below Zero.

C.T.

1855

[February] On the 24th & 25th a Thaw thoroughly set in (Sat & Sunday, and continued until the 1st of March, but again commenced freising [sic] on the 4th & on the 9, 10 & 11th was exceedingly cold, on the 10th it snowed but on the 11th there was a heavy fall of snow from the S & SW which continued till the 12th when the Wind shifted to the West with a Thaw

George Duxbury - (George & Dragon) and John Entwistle, (Star & Garter) died -
March

Feb the 27th Went to London on the Gas Question⁴ 28th appeared before Lord Redesdale in Committee, did pretty well. - Saw Ice on the Thames.

March 1. Returned to Bⁿ with T. Clough.

[March] 7th (Wed) Started again for London same business stopped at the (Dolly's Chop House) Newgate Street with T Clough & W Hutchinson, returned Sat. the 10th. with W.H. - Weather cold! - Expences paid by the Gas Company, Darwen.

March 21st (Wed) General Fast Day on account of the War.⁵ -

The Weather thro March very frosty - almost every night - but the days towards the latter End finer but cold, and so on up to April 5.

Dec^r 1. aged 49 Fred W James, in Australia, late Secretary to the Bolton Railway. -
(Date 1854)

May 4. Friday Sometimes one meets with paragraphs announcing the extraordinary mildness of the Season - but I think the Weather this year has put to flight these old Women's Tales. I should say that we cannot have had less than 100 Nights of severe frost from Jan^y up to this time. - This Morning there was a keen blowing NE Wind & ice - very thick for the time.

[May] 2nd Mrs Astley run over and severely hurt.

John Kay, currier, died.

Good Friday - In the Church Morning - in the Evening, Building Club. John Gregson, Teetotaller, there. John a clever, sober, thrifty fellow. The son of the Old Clerk at Ribchester, John sometimes attacked the moderate Drinkers - I resolved to drink no Spirits a Month (May 4) - Kept it without deviation - 30 Day x 3 = 90 Glasses of Whiskey

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[1855]

May 7, 8 and 9. On these Days I attended my last Meeting as a Director of the Board of the L C of Oddfellows. As usual there were a good many knotty points to unravel, questions to answer and appeals to hear and decide, and as usual there was a deal of "Jaw" from "Daynes", and drollery from "Cox". on the whole the Meeting was comfortable. The Directors, to a Man, except myself, are returned as Deputies to the AMC [Annual Moveable Conference]. - It happened also very awkwardly for me, that my Son, Little Henry was taken severely ill on the 4th & remains so at present. On the 8th the Directors in a body left Manchester to pay Tho^s Kilner a visit to Eccles, where we dined at an Inn, inspected the Old Church and went also to Patricroft to Nasmith's Engineering Works, - We saw the Embryo of a Cannon, now Manufacturing of "Beaton Iron" and also had a view of the largest Steam Hammer in the World - 11 Tons - This we saw in operation by the kindness of Mr Willis the Manager.⁶

⁴ 'An Act to amend the Provisions and extend the limits of the Act relating to the Over Darwen Gas Light Company' was before parliament (*Blackburn Standard*, 28 March 1855).

⁵ Queen Victoria issued, on the advice of her government, 'A Proclamation for a Day of Solemn Fast, Humiliation and Prayer' over the war against Russia in Crimea, similar to that issued in April 1854 (*London Gazette*, 27 February 1855).

⁶ James Hall Nasmyth (1808-1890), mechanical engineer, established, in partnership with Holbrook Gaskell, what would become the Bridgewater foundry next to the Bridgewater Canal. It developed a reputation for

I took leave of the Directors on Wednesday, and so ends my connection with the Board.

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May 31. Dreadfully cold windy winterly & wet.

James S. Livesey Died suddenly. - He was in my shop on Wednesday. (yesterday)

(31)

Oliver Roylance elected on the Board -

234 w
Delivery Form.)

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH COMPANY.
(INCORPORATED 1846.)
Central Station, Founder's Court, Lothbury, London.

PRINCIPAL COUNTRY STATIONS:-

| | | | |
|------------|---|-------------------|--|
| ABERDEEN | At the Aberdeen Railway Station. | MANCHESTER | Ducie Buildings, Exchange, and 1, Mosley Street. |
| BATH | 16, Old Bond Street. | NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE | 15, Sandhill. |
| BIRMINGHAM | Temple Buildings, New Street. | NEWPORT | At the Railway Station. |
| BRIGHTON | Royal York Hotel, 694 Steine. | NORWICH | At the Railway Station. |
| BRISTOL | 1, Broad Quay. | PERTH | At the Railway Station. |
| CAMBRIDGE | 24, St. Mary Street, Market Place. | PLYMOUTH | Union Baths. |
| CARDIFF | At the Railway Station. | PORTSMOUTH | 12, The Hard, Fortsea. |
| DERBY | At the Railway Station. | PRESTON | At the Railway Station. |
| DUBLIN | No. 4, College Green. | SOUTHAMPTON | At the Railway Station. |
| EDINBURGH | 68, Princes Street. | SUNDERLAND | William Street. |
| GLASGOW | At the Exchange. | WAKEFIELD | 47, Westgate. |
| HULL | 52, Low Gate. | WARRINGTON | At the Railway Station. |
| LEEDS | Park Row. | WINDSOR | 48, High Street. |
| LITH | 25, Bernard Street. | YORK | 17, Monklegate. |
| LIVERPOOL | 35, Castle Street, and 9, Exchange Buildings. | | |

N.B.—You are requested to give no fee or gratuity to the Messenger, and to pay no charges beyond those entered in this sheet.

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| Message... | " | " |
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| Cab Hire.. | " | " |
| Total | " | " |

The following Message forwarded from *Durham* Station,
and received at *Preston* Station *May 31st 1855*

Name *Mr OS Reeph John* Name *M^r Charles Tiplady*
and *Watson the Thumley* and
Address *Deputy at the Durham* Address *Blackburn*
A M C *Lancashire*

Oliver Roylance of Blackburn
and M^r John Watson of Durham
are elected on the Directors let
them know in Blackburn

No inquiry respecting this Message can be attended to without the production of this Paper.

Wm Amersdale Clerk.

Please enter Time of Delivery, and sign Messenger's Ticket.

construction of locomotive steam engines and machine tools. Nasmyth invented the steam hammer in 1839 to fulfil an order to build the paddle shaft of the steamship Great Britain, which required forging of an exceptional size. This invention made Nasmyth, an obscure engineer, famous (R. Angus Buchanan, 'Nasmyth, James Hall (1808-1890)', ODNB).

1855

June 3rd (Sunday) Visited Blackpool where my Wife and three children are. Henry much better. Went down to Fleetwood, 4

June 5th Died after a short illness, Edmund Pomfret, generally known as "Little Teddy" - He formerly kept a Farm at Cicely Hole, just above Mount Street.

June 2nd Appeared the first Number of a Weekly paper called the Blackburn Weekly Times, price One penny, - printed by F J Nicholls of Darwen.

July Died Robert Barlow of Salford.

Aug 6th & 8th These days were memorable for Two Lectures being delivered on Auricular Confession and the Inquisition - The first Lecture I did not attend but at the second I was called to the Chair. - There was a stormy Meeting - The Baron de Camin made some strong statements - Mr Alex^r Woods, Mr Marwood, and Mr Charles Boardman opposed the Lecturer. At Ten o'clock I dissolved the Meeting.⁷

Sep 2. Revd John Hartley son of W Hartley Inc^t [Incumbent] of Balderstone preached his first Sermon from Remember now thy Creator & - also Evening Mellor Brook - I heard him & Mrs T. - then went to T D. with Charles & Richard.

[September] 7th. This day was remarkable to self and Wife on this account, we went upon Pendle Hill, We started for Chadburn [Chatburn] per early train, which we reached at 8 o'clock, from thence we walked to Mrs Badger's the calf's head inn, Worsthorpe and after refreshment sallied forth to the foot of Pendle. The day was remarkably fine, but hazy - we reached the top of the Mount at 12 o'clock - and enjoyed ourselves, - very much returning at 4 pm we took Tea with Mrs B and her interesting Daughters, and with Miles I went a nutting - We returned home safely by the 7 o'clock Train - well gratified & thankful.

Fall of Sebastopol

Sep 10th Rumours of the Capture of the Malakoff Tower were rife - and confirmed by Telegraph in the Times - at 7 o'clock pm. The fall of Sebastopol by electric Telegraph was announced. The excitement was great - the Bells rang - the Bands played, - the people shouted &c &c

[1855]

Sep. 10, 11, 12, 13 Great Rejoicing on the fall of Sebastopol Bells Ringing - Band playing - Mob shouting - Flag Waving - Guns shooting & so on, in the Town. I lost a Hat which the Mob very uproariously made into a football.

1855

[September] 11th Jury on Jem Kenyon's Wife, - Foreman, bad case of brutal ill treatment - no conclusive Evidence. Inquest adjourned to the 14th - On that day he was convicted of Manslaughter! & at Lancaster transported for Life in March 1856⁸

⁷ Andre Masena styled himself as the Baron de Camin. In the 1850s, he was an Italian ex-Catholic who claimed to have been a priest or monk. He became a rabid anti-Catholic lecturer who provoked violence between the Orange Order and Catholic Irish (Donald MacRaild, 'Transnationalising "Anti-Popery": Militant Protestant Preachers in the Nineteenth-Century Anglo-World', *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 39 Vol. 2 (May 2015), pp. 224-243). The reports in the *Blackburn Standard* failed to mention any disturbances at the meetings whereas the *Preston Chronicle*, in a brief report, did. The *Blackburn Standard* printed a letter from the vicar of Holy Trinity, Blackburn, supporting Camin's claims about Roman Catholicism (*Blackburn Standard*, 8 & 15 August 1855; *Preston Chronicle* 11 August 1855).

⁸ The jury at the inquest found that Betty Kenyon's death was the result of manslaughter by her husband, James Kenyon, although the autopsy showed that the cause of death was tuberculosis. Several witnesses gave evidence that Kenyon had ill-treated Betty and Dr. Martland and Dr. Morley, although disagreeing on details, agreed that Kenyon's beatings could have accelerated her death. Kenyon was convicted of manslaughter at Lancaster

[September] 26th Died Tom Edmondson the Letter Carrier He was, in youth, a School fellow of mine. - A very sober, upright & diligent Servant of the Blackburn Post Office.

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[1855]

Sep. 30th. This Day was appointed by her Majesty to be set apart for Thanksgiving for the late victory at Sebastopol in the Crimea.

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[1855]

October 24th 1855. Son Thomas' 22nd Birthday - May God bless him in all his affairs.

My Wife and two youngest Children Henry and Essy have been now at Blackpool since the 11th Inst. During this time we have been extremely busy and I have found the loss of her help exceedingly - Perhaps never since our Marriage in 1839 have I been more severely tried, and taught the value of an helpmate. In my sleepless hours this Morning at four my mind was much agitated. I was induced more particularly to review my conduct towards her, and tho' I could not charge myself with actual transgression of my Marriage, yet in thought, during temptation, how often had my heart & affections wandered! But in nothing more was I distressed that on the reflection that often by my irritability I had distressed her mind, and sad reflection, caused her affections to be somewhat alienated. In this state of agitation & dejection I could not find no rest on Man or any Creature, but here the Lord exercised his goodness, and gave to me such a measure of his Spirits that I was enabled to pour out my s^l [soul?] troubles before him, - and by earnest & I hope a sincere exercise of repentance was greatly calmed, & felt that if God in Christ that alone sustained a Man under his Burdens - I believe this Trial had done me great service, and I do most solemnly entreat the Al^{ly} [Almighty] thro Christ to give me his Wisdom his help and his support that in future, so long as he shall spare my dear & faithful Mary & myself to one another - I may assume & practice love, forbearance & strict charity - Amen.

My Wife and Children returned safely home this night, for which mercy I thank God.

Nov 8th This Day was interred (Died on the 4th.) Mr John Polding Jun^r aged 38 a very estimable person. The Members of the Union Club, 30 in Number, attended the funeral headed by Mr Hornby, Mr Hopwood & Mr Thos Dutton. He was a R Catholic. Interred at Osbaldeston.

12th. Rent Day. William Fielding of the Spread Eagle Inn, Cable Street died - after a short illness caused it is said by intemperate habits.

[118]

[1855]

Dec^r 10th Mrs Tiplady Birthday - (45) -

[December] On the 1st of this Month old Mr Wraith was taken with a fit, and continued in a state of unconsciousness until the following Day, when he expired - He was a Man greatly respected by all classes. - He was also one of the oldest Tradesmen.

[119]

1855

On the 5th there commenced a hard frost - the Reservoir was frozen over and was skated upon on the 10th Inst.

Assizes and the judge sentenced Kenyon to transportation for life because violence against women had become common (*Blackburn Standard*, 12 & 19 September 1855; *Manchester Courier*, 1 March 1856).