

Archives; Wigan & Leigh  
The Edward Hall Diary Collection

# **Travel Diary of Mrs. (?) I. Stuart**

1813-1814

EHC/59



Edward Hall, c.1932

## Editor's Note

All diary transcripts have been produced with the intention of faithfully reproducing the text of the original manuscript exactly as it appears. All spellings and punctuation marks have been transcribed as they appear; where clarification was thought necessary by the transcriber, an explanation, current spellings or punctuation have been added in square brackets.

Inscribed on the front inside cover is 'Memorandum Book 5th of July 1813. Mrs. Stuart bought this book at Leeds.' The first set of dates describe a journey made from Durham to Bath, the second from Bath to Weymouth, and the diarist describes all the places stopped at, and passed through, en route; as well as the conditions of the journey. The end of the diary is taken up with memoranda from later years.

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July 5 After a residence of two years and nine months in Durham, we left it on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> of July 1813. It is a delightful, healthy situation and very genteel society. I felt regret t leaving it, and particularly in parting from our amiable, charming acquaintance, Mrs. Stanley Constable and Mrs. Oliphant of Gask.

Our first day's journey was 85 miles through a fine country, good roads and delightful weather. Our route- breakfast at Darlington- changed horses at Kettering (Catterick) Bridge- do at Royal Oak- dined at Boroughbridge: passed Knaresborough, a beautiful place, and supped at high Harrogate, Granby Inn [6 July]. Second day, breakfasted at Leeds, an immense, large City, and saw the Great square Cloth rooms, of more extent than Holyrood House- changed horses at Wakefield. Dined at Barnsley and slept at Sheffield, the country very luxuriant but extremely hilly. Lord Harroughby has a fine Estate and Castle between Harrogate and Leeds, and Sir William Pilkington a smaller one half way to Wakefield. Second stage 49 miles.

Sheffield is a dirty, overgrown, populous Town, but has a number of handsome villas within a short distance of the City.

[7 July] Third day, breakfast at Chesterfield. The Spire of the Church is of timber, covered with lead and is warped awry.

Changed horses at Peacock Inn and stopped at three o'clock (going only 38 miles) at King's Head Inn, Derby, to see the wonders there. We went through the extensive silk manufactory, which was erected in 1734 by Sir Thomas Lombe, who brought the plan of it from Italy. It is a surprising sight, and employs 2 or 3 hundred hands, chiefly girls. This great machinery goes by water- the yellow silk comes from Bengal and Italy, and the white from China. We saw the porcelain manufacture also, and wondered at the perfection of its workmanship. Next, we delighted our eyesight with Mrs. Spink's shop of beautiful Derbyshire spar, in every variety of hue and ornament: she also showed us an elegant grotto tastefully fitted with specimens of spar, shells and marine productions.

The town is clean, large and handsomely built and gay: the fine River Derwent runs through it, and has its source at the Peak. Mr. S. says that he admires the girls more than anything else, as they look very pretty. Here!!! N. B. the cows in Derbyshire are ill-favoured, short legged, squat animals, with branching horns.

[8 July] Fourth morn'g. Breakfasted at Burton, took a bottle of the fam?? ale along with us; there is an uncommon Bridge in that town, low-built with 32 arches.

Next stage, Lichfield, a handsome, genteel City with a grand Cathedral, certainly of less dimension than York, and in many other respects inferior: at the same time, it is highly worth notice for its antiquity and sculpture. Over the altar are some transparent scripture pieces, which for subject, expression and colouring, stands almost unrivalled in this country: and by wonderful good chance, was purchased from a convent in French Flanders during the late peace, for the trifling sum of two hundred and thirty pounds, and in reality is estimated of immense value. We stopped at the Royal Hotel, Birmingham, to dinner, which was charged at sixteen shillings and sixpence and supper nine shillings; everything there astonished us, being a little London and containing upwards of an [sic] hundred thousand inhabitants. In the eveng [sic], we went to the theatre, a second Covent Garden and saw a play acted, when full, it contains three hundred pounds. We also viewed Thomason's ware rooms, finished in the highest perfection of hardware, papier-messer and jewelry of every kind: and all those articles manufactured at Birmingham. This day's journey. 40 miles.

[9 July] Fifth day. Set off at eleven and changed horses at Brooms Grove. Got nice carriage and Borrouch seat. Stopped the rest of the day at Worcester, going only 26 miles. A heavy fall of rain this evening. Lucien Bonaparte resides within 3 miles of this town, and, had the weather proved favourable, we would (have) gone and viewed the mighty Mans house, and perchance have seen some

of the Family-- - at present [I] should like to know how he feels, when all around are rejoicing at Wellington's glorious victory in driving the French out of Spain, and even now threatening to invade great Bonny's dominions, huzza.

[10 July] Sixth morning's ride was uncommonly gay from the number of people we met, driving along the road to Tewkesbury. I beheld the plains where the great battle between York and Lancaster was decided. The Town itself and the buildings are shabby. We breakfasted, changed horses at Glosester [sic] much inferior in appearance to Worcester, and dined at an excellent single house, Rodburgh. During the three or four latter miles, it was a highly cultivated scene ~~of hill and dale and continued to pretty villages~~ [sic]

A short time after, we set out after dinner, we were all alarmed (in climbing a long hill covered with trees) in seeing such a flash of lightening and immediate peal of thunder, that papa and mama covered their darling child with a silk handkerchief, uncertain what might be the consequence should it continue. Fortunately, it travelled further off, and we arrived at Sodborough thunder proof. From this neat, smart house and sweet garden, we were only fifteen miles from Bath, and at half past eight stopped at the White Hart Hotel, where about five years before, Mr. Stuart's dear sister Ann and myself stopped a few days when we came from London on our way to Scotia. When we will take that loved route, I know not. This Inn in every respect is luxurious by night and by day, were their demands on the purse not so extravagant. At the same time, we have often in the course of our journey paid nearly as high bills and had little comfort and attendance for our money. Last day's journey to Bath. 85 miles.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> July, we went to Mr. Wilson's lodgings, 29 Henrietta Street, which were both handsome and comfortable, and remained.

4 July 1814, [sic] left 28, Henrietta Street and arrived at Clifton Bath Hotel. The situation stands very high, very healthy and commands bold and beautiful scenery. I was quite surprised at the great size of this place, as the Crescents, Terraces and fine streets are beyond calculation --- while at the same time you have romantic Country, and the Canal winding round , with a view of the boats, shipping &c.

Looked at the hot Wells, the water such the same quality as at Bath. The York and [blank] Hotels are very superb: the latter contains an elegant small sized Ball room and handsome Tea & Card rooms opening on each side, with folding doors painted in imitation of hanging curtains.

6<sup>th</sup>. Spent the day at Bristol, a large, busy, mercantile City, the Harbour and Quay extending two miles in length and full of shipping. Queens Square is the principal one, with a good Equestrian Figure of King Willm. In the Centre.

7<sup>th</sup>. Left Clifton and dined at the Cross Inn, twenty miles stage. Was agreeably surprised to meet Dr. and Mrs. Rogerson. Slept at the George Inn, Bridge Water, 18 miles. [8<sup>th</sup>] Next morning, reached Taunton, 12 miles, a pretty, large but sombre looking City. We called the following day on Dr. Macdonald, Mrs. Constable's uncle, who formerly practised at Moffat (and who the Rogersons had been paying a visit to). He is an excellent old Man, and received us very kindly, treated us with fruit and flowers and seemed much disappointed we could not spend some time with him. He was not only kind on our dear Mrs. Stanley's account, but was well acquainted with our dear Argyle Square friends, and attended Uncle Matthew when he came from Russia (long ago) in bad health.

[1814 Journey from Bath to Weymouth]

On the 9<sup>th</sup> [July], left Taunton for Wellington, 7 miles, a neat, small village, where our noble, glorious Duke has some ground, and intends building a Mansion house, but it lay so much off the road, I could not get a sight of it --- by the by, every Town and Village, as we travelled along, were decorated with laurel, and eating their fatted ox, and drinking with joyous acclamation of the health of the brave, victorious brave Fellows that had brought peace and happiness to Europe.

[10<sup>th</sup>] Next stage. 14 miles to a small place named Columton – and to Exeter 9 miles. On our way, we passed an uncommon, handsome village (Bradnick), with the houses so white, large and substantially built, it appeared quite remarkable. Exeter is rather a large, busy City, with the beautiful River Ex forming a harbour for shops and trade. The oldest Church was built in 1270, and is well worth seeing: the length is two hundred feet and the organ, tis said, the best in the Kingdom --- several Jack Tarrs was [sic] viewing this Cathedral at the same time, and gave a handful of silver to the Verger. Poor fellows. They were newly paid off, and whilst their pockets were well lined, they did not spare the rhino.

[11<sup>th</sup>] We wished to have gone by Sidmouth, Exmouth, Tynemouth &c. but understood that the road by the sea coast was almost unfit for Travelling – therefore, went by Honiton, 16 miles, dined at Exminster, 9 miles, where we saw a pretty and curio and manufactory of imitation Turkey carpeting on a small scale, employing on 60 women and children. Tho' the only one in the

Kingdom, the Carpets from the manufactory sell as high as a guinea per yard, and hearth rungs six feet long, above two pounds.

Our next stage, Bridport, 10 miles, where we slept, but on the road, passed an elegant village occupied by genteel people (named Charmouth). [18<sup>th</sup>] Next day, changed horses at Dorchester, rather a large, busy town, 12 miles, and 8 more finished our journey to Melcomb Regis, alias Weymouth. Here we saw a number of our Troops disembarking from the Coast of France, as there is a very nice Barracks both for horse and foot regiments: indeed, all the way from Exeter, we met large detachments at every Inn. I enquired for some foreign Trinkets, but they were previously disposed of.

[13<sup>th</sup>] We were very lucky in getting comfortable accommodation at £2 per week, at Mr. Fords, 9 St. Mary Street. 13 July 1814.

Began reading the Bible, 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1825. Completely through and finished following 28<sup>th</sup> January. T. Stuart.

[3<sup>rd</sup>] February 1826. Began again, reading the Old Testament and finished 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1827 T. S.

I have very frequently read through the New Testament previously, along with my young Angel, and since that blessed period, often.

A third time I have read through the Bible and Psalms. October 1828 T. S.

27 June 1830, finished and began reading thro' for the fifth time T. S.

The end of February 1832, again read thro' the whole Bible, Psalms included, and commence for the sixth time, in November 1833. T. S.

Again in November 1834, finished reading completely through the Bible, the seventh time- and have much need, frail, weak and sinful as I feel myself, in Body and Mind, to try to improve my bad nature in practising what is right, hoping to gain pardoning grace and mercy, thro' our Blessed Saviour's intercession. T. Stuart.

Monday 17<sup>th</sup>. Commenced again.

1840

First March, received ten pound from Betsy. Still owing me ten. T. S.

Betsy paid the ten pounds. Of course, owes nothing to T. Stuart.#

Transcript produced by Ann Glacki, Archives Volunteer and Alex Milller, Archivist

January 1840, paid house money £30.00

25 March, dozen wine 4” 10”

21<sup>st</sup> May 30” 00”

9 November 30” “ “

July 20 “ “

May 1841 Paid £20 “

July 20

Wine 4 “10

On the first account of the Battle between Wellington and Soult being brought by the Sparrow brig, which left the Fanny Citter to bring home the particulars.

The fleet little Sparrow the tidings first brought  
Of our humbling, proud Soult’s Mighty Crest.  
She only just Twitter’d, “Twas Wellington fought”  
And left Fanny to sketch out the rest.

T. S.

Bath 14 August 1813

Thou tyrant, Bonaparte

England dared Thee out

Moscow burn’t thee out

Austria cast thee out

And

France Kicked Thee Out.

XX

Pasted inside the back cover, an original MS advert

Captn Edwd. Carter have a

Bote for Peshor to portld

Or Lolworth or elsewear

Or for fishing Bote the Bee.

(Weymouth August 1814)