

July 3^d 1863

My dear Mamma,

Lest I should not be able to write to day otherwise, I am writing this in the train going down to Ironbridge.

Yesterday I got lodgings at

Mr Nevitt's Lincoln Hill Ironbridge - a very nice sitting room and a tolerable bedroom - all expenses candles &c included - for 11/ a week the eating to be paid for separately as seems to be the invariable custom. I am to go into them tomorrow

Saturday. Yesterday we had
Tyndal up at Suttons
Cottage, and Notcutt
was complaining greatly of
the row ~~Irishmen~~ make
when they get together. Mr
Fogarty is very hospitable and
and pleasant and keeps a
very nice house. I don't know
about his going to be married
as he is always laughing &
joking about it, so I think
it is not likely. He is
quite independant of his

profession having a private
fortune. His pay as Resident
Engineer is about £500
a year and pupils make
it up to near £1000, so
he is very well off.

I like the look of the country
very ~~well~~ much and it is
much more mountainous
than I had imagined.
I shall try and see Reilly
sometime - Papa can tell
you about his letter. I
could not possibly have written

sooner as at Sutton Lodge
12 is go to bed hour, talking
going on most of the evening
and then getting up at
six and leaving at 7.15.
there is no time for strangers
to do anything at all.

I shall be able to write a
longer letter I hope
next time.

Your affectionate son

Francis E. Prndergast

July 6. 1863

Mrs. Nevitt's

Lincoln Hill

Ironbridge.

My dear Mamma,

I have scarcely had time even
to think since I left, as there
has always been something going on.
Friday and Saturday I worked in
the office all day - the hours are
from 8 till 4 without any break,
but some of the men go home for
lunch for half an hour.

Ridings came up and spent Sun-
-day at Fogarty's; we compensated
for early rising on the week days by
not getting up till past nine, and
when Ridings and I left for church
at 10.30 Mr Fogarty had not ap-
-peared. Ridings and I went to
different churches but met afterwards

and took a walk together going up
a monument to Lord Hill near the
town, from which there is a splendid
view. Mr Fogarty came with us to
evening church - his people are
methodists - and afterward sent
off Ridings and we on a long
and very pretty walk from which
we did not return till past 10
Mr F. having in the mean time put
in two hours flirtation with the
clergyman's daughter - Miss Rhoda
Collie - a very fine young woman
as English women go - and he
has promised to introduce me there.
I hear Mr F. is engaged to a
young lady in London, but I cannot
vouch for the fact; at all events
he is a ladies man, and talks
about some young lady in London

He is only 32 and looks even younger
- he is so small that I could put
my chin on the top of his hat, and
he laughingly says if he did not
wear a large hat he would be quite
invisible. He is out and out
Limerick, and though he speaks
good and correct English to strangers
he indulges in a sound Limerick
lrogue on ordinary occasions.
I like him very much - his chief
fault seems being too free and
easy with his young men who
as often as not address him
as "Fogarty" or "my dear fellow."
He tells us end of stories, but
the worst of it is you never
know what to believe, once he
gets into an anecdotal humour.
He asked for my photograph.

and promised to give me his, which is an excellent one, so I can send it to you when I get it.

Please order, and send me 3 of my cartes. To day Ridings and I were travelling out near Presthope from 8 a.m. till near six Mr F. was with us during the forenoon, but has gone off to London this evening, about station for the Isle of ~~Wight~~ Wight railway not to return till Thursday.

Nothing can be more lovely than the country all about here and office and field work seem to be pretty equally divided; altogether I like the appearance of the place very much and the prospect of staying here, but

Ridings told me he finds it rather dull for want of society. It seems that when the engineers first came here they were much sought after and the young ladies were most gracious, but now that it has been found that the young engineers only talk and flit and go no further, people don't care about them.

This is a very nice sitting room with two windows, one looking out on the road and the other over a garden and the upper reach of the lovely Severn Valley looking up towards Buildwas Abbey, a lovely and very extensive view, somewhat like that of Lynsley Stoke from Combe Down.

I only got my railway pass this morning, but never had to pay but the first day - it frees me from Worcester to Shrewsbury and up to Much Wenlock - about 60 miles in all.

I find I must get a level, which with its appurtenances will cost about £15, so that will make a hole in the remaining cash. Mr F. was to order it for me in London. I will send you more news about this house and its people when I have seen more but as it is barely 2 hours since I entered it, and tea, unpacking, washing and settling have ^{been} gone through including writing this, since then,

I defer further particulars till better informed, and I am too tired with the long days open air work to be capable of thinking much about what I am writing, but ask questions about all that you want to know. Send me any news you have about uncle Joe or uncle Willy

^{of the} 7. a.m. Ridings came in when I had written so far and we went out for a stroll till 11 o'clock. The furnaces and ironworks in the distance looked very grand - the country is covered with them.

I am just going off now for a days' walking with Ridings

and have no time to write
more.

your affectionate son

Francis E. Prendergast

I got your letters all right.

Loughbridge July 10/6³
Perhaps the Postman
took night
like to see
this I must
write to my
Mamma when
I get time.

My dear Mamma,

On coming in this evening from
Lewelling I found your letter at
the office and a telegram up here
from Liverpool saying that the
uncles would be at Shrewsbury
at 5.30, and waiting me to
come in, but as I could not
have got caught the train without
much hurry and worry, and
moreover could not have come
back tonight, I sent a note
to say I should be in by the first
train tomorrow morning.

I have been out travelling with
Ridings at Presthope (just

the men Papa saw with Notcutt.
As regards post, the letter leaves
this at 7.0 a.m. and 7.45
p.m. and are delivered
before 8^{a.m.} and about 5 in the
evening, all come from and
go to Wellington by foot post.

-man. I do not want the
little strap. Rain unless very
heavy and continuous does not
stop levelling &c. Reilly went
to Liddell, whose chief assistant
is Richards. I have not had
time to answer him yet.

I have not yet got or seen the
Ordinance Survey of Salop. I have
not a minute even to think
about anything

As to the Working I have not
had time even to look at him
except from the train, or to
ask about any localities or
hills hereabouts - I never was
so hard ^{up} for time in my life,
and questions aggravate me
when I cannot answer them.

As to exploring the country I don't
know when that happy time
will come. The best idea
I can give you of this place
is that ^{it} is like Clifton only
smoother and not quite, but
nearly as steep - there are no absolute
precipices but the next thing to
them, it is an regular climb
of 6 or 7 minutes from the office

up here - steps part of the way
for a short cut - and such steps!
where the Severn Valley opens out
at Builthwaas it is like the open
lower part of the valley of the
Avon after you have left
the cliffs and downs. It is a
most lovely country to the north
and west - east the country
is mined with mines (coal, iron,
&c) and ironworks.

The view east from this consists
of a green bank or low hillside
South there is a glimpse down
the Severn Valley, but little view
Togerty - i.e. the Railway Co -
pay all our field expenses for car
hire food &c - J. F. and 15 young

were stopped for some weeks at
the hotel in Wenlock where the por-
- tamentary survey for the line
was making, and their bill
came to over £200 which
the Co of course paid.

Coming back to day we came on
a carry or small truck; on the
line there is a long incline
down to Wenlock from near
Presthope, and once the concern
is set going it goes by itself
~~and~~ the speed being regulated
by using a piece of wood as
lever against the wheel - it
was great fun and we 2 and the
3 men came down on it at
about 10 miles an hour Tom
being brakeman guard and all.
Mrs Nevitt is a tip top cook and

always asks what I would like
to have but I try to make her
invent the dinner, or rather
tea-supper at 7.30 which, except
breakfast is the only meal I have
had in this house. I think
I have told you all I could
now. I like Riddings very much
he is something like John Irvine
in many ways, and we get on
very well together; he is about
25, a steady hardworking fellow
of a serious turn, but has his own
little fun in him nevertheless.

I am now (9.30 p.m.) going on
to his lodgings to make up our
civil books with him. You need
not be surprised if you do not
hear again for some days - I really
have no time to write comfortably
and must answer Coulter Doun &c
your affectionate son
Francis E. Prudergast

Ironbridge July 14. 1863
you might
want to
Lincoln Hill
- I should get
the letter earlier
than

My dear Mamma

On Saturday morning I went in
by the nine o'clock train to Shrewsbury
and found the uncles at the Raven
Hotel. They came out here by the
12 train in which Mr Fogarty was
and he asked us all to dinner.

After having shown them my lodgings
and all that I thought best worth
seeing about here, we went back
with Mr Fogarty in the 4 o'clock
train. I slept at Sutton Lodge
and after church next morning
went and found them at the Raven,
we there walked about till 5 o'clock
when I came back here and after
tea went to evening church.

Uncle Joe looks sunburnt and I

think older, but he seems in pretty good case. I suppose I shall hear from him from Combe Down some day soon. Mr Eardley the clergyman called when I was out one day last week, and yesterday I went to return his visit; he was out, but the servant said Mr E. was at home so I went in, and paid a pleasant visit of half an hour or so. She is a London lady, very much younger than him. Their house is just below this - as close as Tower Lodge is to you. This evening I walked to Broseley and a good deal further but as I have not yet got a map I don't feel at home in the place. I am thinking of trying to get lodgings up at Much Wenlock; it would be more countryfied than this place

which is rather dusty and smoky though there is plenty of green fields and woods close round, but going up and down this heavy hill twice a day is tiresome, and besides I would rather not be living in the place where I work. The constantly burning limekilns too are disagreeable when the wind is in particular quarters. I fancy however that it would not be very easy to get suitable lodgings at Much Wenlock, but I shall see. I got a few numbers of Good words the other day, which I conclude came from aunt Nannie? Did I leave my nail brush behind? I cannot find it anywhere, but I thought I remembered putting it up. It is the only article I miss, but if there is any chance of sending a parcel over there are

one or two articles I should like to get over. Ironbridge would not do at all for you to visit or stop at - the hill would be beyond your powers and there is little to be seen below but if you were ever going to Bath from Holyhead or Liverpool you could easily make the journey via Shrewsbury and the Severn Valley and see a great deal en passant.

Yesterday and to day I was working in the office, it is cooler there than out of doors, but hard work as it is I think I like the field work best. I suppose you will see John some day soon. If I thought there was any chance of getting an answer I would write to him.

your affectionate son
Francis E. Prendergast.