

Ironbridge. July 18. 1863.

My dear Mamma,
Yesterday morning I received a letter
from you containing the photograph
and another (here) this evening from
you and Papa. Landen x spells
his name with a re and not a
ro, and I strongly object to your
orthography in spelling the days
of the week without a capital at
the beginning. On Wednesday evening
Pieding and I went down to
Bridge north and spent a couple
of hours there; it is a dull old tower
perched up on the top of a sand-
stone rock, with the ruins of an
old castle, but we had got too much
of it before we left. The trip down
is most lovely - finer by far than

that from Shrewsbury here.

Yesterday evening I went to Little
Wenlock, which lies near the foot
of the Wrekin, and came back
by Buildwas. There is a delightful
walk along the Severn from Buildwas
to Ironbridge and the whole scene
looked enchanting in the setting
sun - several parties were boating
on the river. This evening Ridings
and I went to the top of Benthall
Ridge - the cliff immediately opposite
this place, from which there is the
best view I have yet seen of Iron-
bridge and the Dale - the latter
looked very well. Fogarty has gone
off to London not to return till
Tuesday, so Ridings and I are
left alone in the office, as Notcutt
is out levelling. I don't ^{know} when we shall

be out again, but I ought to go up
to Wenlock some day soon about
some tramway that has to be laid down
on a map. I hear the line will be
opened from Wenlock to Presthope
($3\frac{1}{2}$ miles) before long, but it cannot
be proceeded with till some drawings
of sidings &c are finished.

Tell Grandmamma that I should
be very glad to get a Morning News
now and again, and indeed a stray
Saunders - if not too much mangled -
- would be acceptable too.

I had a letter from uncle Joe yesterday
but nothing new in it.

Ironbridge is certainly in Salop - I
wrote to aunt Annie to day.

There ^{is} a fair sized garden attached to this
house, half vegetables - half flowers.
The chief reason why I do not like the

house is that I do not like the
people though they do all they can
for me, and though there are no
children the house is not a very
quiet one. Another great objection
is that coming in after a long
days work or a long evening walk
the hill is rather too much of a
good thing - Ridings finds it so
much so that he is talking of
going to live down below; however
I shall not be in a hurry to leave
this house unless I see something
very good. Mr Nevitt is either
a master mason or a builder.

I tried to get the Ordnance map both
here & at Bridgenorth, but in vain -
so I shall go to Shrewsbury some evening
for it.

your affectionate son
Francis E. Prendergast

25th - your
cousin
Amelia's
first
occurred

Ironbridge
Salop

July 24. 1863.

My dear Mamma,

On Wednesday Mr Fogarty took Mr
Moore to see the Horsehay Iron
Works and Ridings and I went
with them. It was a great sight
but unfortunately it was a wet day
and we were greatly hurried for time.
They are wrought iron works, and
it is curious to see the way in which
the iron is handled, rolled and twisted
while at a white heat. Many of
the men work half naked - some
have iron wire masks to keep off
the heat and sparks; some of them
are extraordinarily powerful looking
fellows, and the puddlers, who are
merely common workmen, but who
have dreadfully severe work, earn

£5 a week. The work goes on day and night, the men working by relays. It was all the more interesting to me, as I had just been making some tracings of iron girders for bridges which were to be made there, and which tracings were taken up, and left there. Yesterday Nottcutt and I went down by the first train to the Great Cattle and agricultural Show at Worcester. It is a gigantic show - cattle and agricultural machinery to no end, but though there were thousands of people there I saw no gentry (it was a 1/2 day) and scarcely a face or person that could be called nice. The only new things (to me, at least) that I saw

were the traction engines, which were kept moving round in circles to show how they work; they go very slowly, about 3 or 4 miles an hour and look very strange.

Nottcutt, like a regular Englishman insisted on doing the show, and we accordingly ~~visited~~ visited every separate stall, shed and pen, in regular order which was tiresome enough.

We also went and did Worcester, I was greatly pleased with it as a town - there are only one or two good streets, but these they are fine ones. The cathedral, though a great pile, I thought poor, both externally and internally - no character at all. The whole place was very gay, and we did not leave till past six; there

was great fighting for seats, and
grand crushing on the platform.
It seemed strange going off 40 miles
to a show, and as many back, all
free of charge except if at the show.
Our free passes do not really carry
us beyond Hartlebury 11 miles on
this side of Worcester, but they seldom
make any difficulty about letting
you go on to Worcester.

It is a lovely country the whole
way down and a very pleasant smooth
hike. I think half the railway people
here must be Irish, for the chief
guard on the Severn Valley line is
from Ballinacloe, and one, if
not more of the engine drivers, is
Irish. Tyndall came back from
London yesterday, so now we have

three Irishmen in the office, without
counting Fogerty. I had a long
letter from aunt Nannie on Wed-
nesday, but no particular news in
it. Mr Allen the curate called
again - he is an unfledged young
animal from Essex, only here since
February - his first office I expect.
Fogerty and Ridings went off to Wor-
cester to day, but I have not seen
Ridings since. Mr Moore went
off to day - he is a £600 pupil
of Mr Fowlers - I much wonder
at his giving up a good position
in the Staff College for such an
uncertain profession as Engineering
at his age - 32 -; Fogerty says he
must be mad, to do so.

It has got cool again and Mr Nevitt

is very unhappy that I won't have a fire, and when he hears of my sitting with the window open, says "he will be starved with the cold" but I do not find it ^{at} all cold. The folk here keep roaring fires in all weathers and seasons.

I don't expect Charley will make much of his walking tour unless he is a little harder than he used to be - I think the third day would try him.

I am always very glad to get any L. G. news, but there does not seem to be much to get. Where are uncle Charles and Georgie supposed to be going? I expect to be at Wenlock and Prestthope on Monday, but I suppose I shall be in the field with Ridings all day, and have no time to investigate Wenlock.

your affectionate son
Francis E. Prndergast.

Ironbridge. July 27th 1863.

My dear Mamma

I got your letter this afternoon with the bit of flannel in it, but I had found the nailbrush yesterday. I was very glad to see about the Greenore Railway and I think it is likely to be made, as it is the interest of Watson the contractor for the Newry and Armagh Line, as well as of that company that it should be made.

I went into Shrewsbury yesterday evening with Ridings and got Cruchleys Map of Salop - the Ordnance was not to be had, and the other is a very fair map. We had an hour and a half in Shrewsbury part of which we spent at Sutton Cottage eating gooseberries, which

were very good and very abundant.
Mr F. was in London, but returned
last night, bringing with him a
Mr Moore, late professor of mathe-
matics in the Staff College, but who is
going to turn engineer*. He came down
here to day to see the works &c, and as
it was a wet afternoon he could ~~have~~
seen but little, and spent what must
have been to him, a very dreary half
day in the office, as we were all too
busy to attempt to amuse him.

In spite of all Fogarty's joking and
fun, a great deal of work is got
through in a day, and he both works
hard himself and keeps others busy.

He approves of my idea of going
to live at Church Wenlock, and
says I should get nice lodgings there
so I must put my shoulder to the

* He is not coming to Fogarty.

wheel and try to ferret out some,
which is not so very easy, as it is
not the custom to put cards in the
windows where there are lodgings,
but you have to find out about them
from people who know the place.

Papas ideas of the distance of Wenlock
and the time required to get there need
some correction - it is 5 miles off
and from station to station is never
less than 20 or 25 minutes some-
times more. This evening it came
on regular tearing rain, the first
I have seen here, and it has also got
rather cold, but the rain will be a
great refreshment to everything.

I have not subscribed to the Institution
and do not mean to do so - it is too
far off, up & down a hill, but the
Nevitts sometimes give me local papers
to read.

I shall think about what articles I want over and tell you.

On ordinary days I breakfast at about half past seven or a little earlier and dine about half past 4 - I take a sandwich down to the office as it would scarcely pay to go up and down this hill for lunch - tea at 8 or 9 sometimes later, generally when I come in from walking. If going either up or down the line by the 4 train I dine in the middle of the day coming up for it. Ridings sometimes comes in to tea, or I go in to him, but as neither of us smokes drinks or is very talkative there is no great inducement to do so.

I hope you will see John soon and find out what he does at the Depot.

I really did not know that my appearance was so venerable, but some one that saw me in Fogertys few at Shrewsbury asked if I was not a married man (!). ~~and~~ Miss Crookes, daughter of the manager of the Iron Works, is supposed to be going to be married to young Procter, the Dale doctor, whom Papa may remember meeting with his sister in the train. Miss Crookes is several years older than him, but all parties seem pleased, and it will be a great event in the Dale - she has been a sort of Sophia Miller of the Dale for some years. I have made no acquaintance with any of these people yet, except young Procter, who is not a bad sort of a fellow.

Mr Allen the Curate called on me yesterday, but I shall have to call again at Mr Eardleys to find out his abode as he left neither card nor address.

Mr Nevitts weekly bill, all included, comes to £1.. 5.. which for what I get seems rather much (this however includes washing) but it is hard managing for one person, as I have already discovered, particularly in a place where the only meat that can be had on any day except Friday is mutton chops, and where butter is only to be had once a week. The water here is scarcely drinkable and I have been taking her "home brewed" beer, which is very good, but she says she wants it for Mr Nevitt and now she gets me beer from the town.

your affectionate son
Francis E. Prendergast.

Ironbridge July 27. 1863

My dear Mamma,

I have been up at Presthope with Ridings all day - it was boiling hot, and somehow very little work was got through; I had no time to look about at Wenlock, and indeed this place has already so far gained on my affections that I do not much like to do anything more than talk of leaving it. I got your letter with the Saunders, before I left.

The only incident we had to day was when we were getting our lunch at the Plough Inn near "Five Chimneys" there were a lot of half drunken navvies in the

betwixt kicking up a great row
- one of them who must have been
at all events tolerably sober, was
playing excellently on a dulcimer
- he played some dance music
really well and some of the others
danced to it. Where the instru-
-ment came from, I do not know.

I wish you would send Isabellas
carte - if the little album will
come for a penny you might
send it too. I was very glad
to get the stamps - I had not
had to buy any yet. Fogarty
was to be in Kingstown for a
few minutes tomorrow morning
coming in by one packet and

leaving by the other - he is
escorting a Limerick young lady
- the young lady - so far from
London on her way home; it
is considered "suspicious", but
as he told us all about it, and
constantly talks of the aforesaid
lady, I am inclined to think
that she is not the one.

Pidings goes out again to Prestrope
tomorrow, but I am not going
with him. He and I have just
been taking our evening stroll after
the day's work. Trusby's letter
with ^dall geology from first to last,
no news at all. What time do
think it is likely you will go

to Rostrevor? I got another
number of Good Words from
aunt Nannie, also a Newy with
something about W.P.P. in it.
Fogarty will, ^{not} we suppose, be back
till Wednesday - at the office I
mean. It looks like more hot
weather coming on again - the
crops seem to be magnificent.

your affectionate son

Francis E. Prendergast.

P.S. I want a piece of black
cord for my eye glass - can you
send it in a letter?

Tuesday morning -

Papa's and yours of Sunday with the
papers just received. F.E.P.

Ironbridge. July 30. 1863.

My dear Mamma,

In this letter I send you a copy of
Mr. Nevett's last weekly accounts
to me (the name is written Nevett).
How much tea and how much butter
ought to last me a week?

The Derry papers came all right, and
I was very glad to get them.

Fogarty has had "important" business
every Saturday and Sunday in London
but now that Miss Anna Cochrane
has retired to Limerick, I dare say
he will not find it necessary to go
to London quite so often. Notcutt
says she is ^a nice, but rather fat, fair-
haired girl, and says he felt greatly
in the way for the few hours she
was at Sutton Cottage.

Somehow this is a place where there seems to be very little spare time as by the time dinner is done, it is going on to six - then tea and some walking intervals before bed time, so that I have really very little leisure in the house.

I have given ^{up} drinking beer in this hot weather, it makes one too sleepy taken at dinner time. It is very hot, but I do not mind it, and we always have a fresh breeze in the office as the five windows ensure plenty of air - most of the people here walk about under umbrellas, but though the sun is so hot the air seldom feels oppressive. It is a very lovely place - not so much Loughbridge itself as the Dale

but indeed it will lovely - the lime-bills are the chief nuisance -

I can count 4 groops of them from this house, and independantly of them, Loughbridge is a smoky place. Loughbridge is not a post-town, Wellington is the post town but even that direction requires "Salop", as there is another Wellington near Bristol.

Wellington is 6 miles off; we saw it from the Wrekin yesterday, and mean to walk there some evening.

The Dale church is a very nice one and has a pleasant peal of bells which they often ring $10\frac{1}{2}$ a.m. and $6\frac{1}{2}$ p.m. are the hours of service both here and at the Dale and both Churches are about the same

distance - 4 or 5 minutes. Localbridge
is the Parish, the Dale church having
been built for the people connected
with the iron works, and indeed
they alone nearly fill it.

Among the things I want from J.J.
are a little gray jacket which you
will find in one of the drawers
a measuring tape - a large one - in
any press or drawer in the hall and
the box sextant in a cloth case
you made for it, also envelopes.
You might have these articles at
hand and I will think of more.

your affectionate son

Francis E. Prendergast

Ironbridge. July 30. 1863

My dear Papa,

Syndal is a Wexford man -
I think he was in the back room
of the office, the day you were here.
He has now been here for two years
and is waiting for something to turn
up. He is a big burly Irishman
of 26 or more but looks much younger,
though vollicking looking he is said
to be steady enough. He is a gentle -
man in the strictest sense of the
word and is a pleasant fellow, but
I do not see very much of him.

You can now probably draw a mental
photograph of him. He lives below
near the Severn, so does not trouble
Lincoln Hill much. Josseelyn

(that is Ipswich orthography) returns
on Tuesday next, but Fogarty says
he will ^{not} be fit for hard work for
some time, and he is going to send
him up to Wenlock to live.

I did know about Edwin Taylor,
but according to the account I heard
of him - from Miss Taylor - he died
of consumption; I think I have seen
a picture of some kind or other of him
at Hillbrook. Fogarty returned
to day having been away since Saturday
- with Miss Cochrane of course - she
is a young lady of 18 just leaving
school and he was taking as far as
Holyhead on the way to Limerick -
they passed through here on Tuesday
evening, and she dined at his house

en passant, at Shrewsbury. Notcutt
says "Mrs Humphries" & "Jane" looked
daggers drawn at her - their easy
times will cease if a Mrs Joseph
Fogarty springs into being.

Yesterday I had a great day - there was
some little tracing to be done in the
morning, and then Notcutt and I
went down by the one train to Bewdley
in Worcestershire to see a new lattice
bridge erecting over the Severn there;
we had just an hour and did what
we wanted very satisfactorily. Bewdley
is a fine old town of some size,
like all the places in the Severn Valley
beautifully situated; it is 17 or 18
miles off. We were back at 4, and
after dinner, at 5, Riddings and I
went off for the Wrekin going via

little Wenlock. It is a tough climb
as we went, up the face; the view
from the top magnificent - panora-
-mic, but it was not very clear over
towards Wales, they say 13 counties
can be seen from the top. There
was a large party of 40 or 50
up at the top with music and
dancing - a gipsy picnic is West
England parlance. We did not get
home till near ten, so it makes
a long walk; afterwards I went and
drank tea with Piddings; I like him
very much, and one reason against
leaving this place is leaving such
a pleasant next door neighbour.

Your affectionate son

July 30 Yours of Francis E. Prendergast.
29th with enclosures
just received. I was not done up. You need
not mind the album (for mamma)