

Elias DORNING C. E.



A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Elias Dorning', written on a piece of paper with horizontal lines.

Born: 25 January 1819

Died: 18 July 1896

CIVIL ENGINEER



ELIAS DORNING
1819-1896

In the churchyard, behind the east wing of the church, are two family graves (or vaults) close to each other which bear the same surname. That surname is **Dorning**. On closer inspection, they are identical in design, colour and stone. It appears that the family members who are buried in these two vaults all originate from **Elias Dorning**. Elias was the 4th of 9 children born to Jonathan Dorning (aged 21 at his marriage) and Elizabeth (Betty) Radcliffe (aged 19 at their marriage), who had been married by licence at St. Mary the Virgin, Eccles, on 24 January **1809**. Jonathan died on 30 April 1839 and was buried at St. Mary the Virgin, Eccles, on 3 May. In the **1836** UK Poll Book and Electoral Register, Jonathan's name appeared as living at the White Lion, Swinton, in the area known as Ringlows. He qualified by having land and buildings.

Baptism: 28 Feb **1819** St Peter, Swinton, Lancashire, England

Elias Dorning - [Child] of Jonathan Dorning & Betty

Abode: Swinton

Occupation: Publican

No. 146.							
February 28	Elias	Jonathan & Betty	Dorning	Swinton	Publican	J. Buck	
No. 147.							

Although Elias was baptised at St. Peter's in Swinton, the baptism was also recorded at St. Mary's, Eccles, this being the senior parish church for the district. At that time, St. Peter's was a chapel, within the parish of Eccles.

It is interesting to note that Jonathan was a Publican. This was confirmed in the 1836 UK Poll Book and Electoral Register, quoted above. Indeed, at the Baptism of their last child in 1828, he was still a Publican. And yet, at the time of the marriage of Elias in 1849, his occupation was given as Coal Proprietor. But he had died in **1839** and was buried at St. Mary, Eccles. Curiously, this was not mentioned in the marriage entry shown below. The practice was usually to write *Deceased* below the father's name if that was the case.

Marriage: 23 May **1849** St Mary the Virgin, Deane, Lancashire, England

Elias Dorning - above age, Mining Engineer & Surveyor, Bachelor, Eccles

Mary Howarth - Under age, Spinster, Colemans

Groom's Father: Jonathan Dorning, Coal Proprietor

Bride's Father: Christopher Howarth, Bleacher

between us,		of us,						
18 44 Marriage solemnized at <i>the Parish Church</i> in the Parish of <i>Deane</i> in the County of <i>Lancaster</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
430	May 23.	Elias Dorning	above age	Single	Miner	Eccles	Jonathan Dorning	Coal Proprietor
		Mary Howarth	under age	Single	Spinster & Surveyor	Colemans	Christopher Howarth	Bleacher
Married in the <i>Parish Church</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, <i>by Licence</i> <small>of the said Holy Synod of the Province of York</small> <i>for the purpose of the said Holy Synod of the Province of York</i> <small>in the County of Lancaster</small> by me,								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>Elias Dorning</i>			in the Presence of us, <i>Mary Howarth</i>			

It can be seen above that Elias and Mary were married by Licence 'with the consent of Christopher Howarth, Father of the said Mary Howarth, the Minor.'

In the **1851** census, the couple were living at Camp Street, Clifton Place, Broughton - Elias (32, born Worsley, Mining Engineer & Surveyor), Mary (20, born Horwich), Alice Elizabeth (1), plus 2 servants. Ten years later, by **1861**, they were still at Camp Street - Elias (42, Mining Engineer), Mary (31), Alice Elizabeth (11), Herbert (6), Arthur Harry (4), plus 3 domestics. All 3 children - Alice Elizabeth (b. 22 February 1850), Herbert (b. 20 August 1854) and Arthur Harry (b. 12 June 1856) were baptised at Manchester Cathedral.

The census of **1871** showed that they had by now moved to 48 Bolton Road, Pendleton - Elias (52, Civil Engineer), Mary (42), plus 3 servants. In **1881**, they were now at Pendlebury Cottage - Mary (51), Herbert (26), Arthur Harry (24), plus 5 domestics. Elias does not appear. The assumption here is that, since Mary was still recorded as married, that he was absent elsewhere on business. The **1891** census revealed that they were still at Pendlebury Cottage (possibly situated near to near Bolton Road), Pendlebury - Elias (72, Civil and Mining Engineer), Mary (61), Arthur H. (34), plus 6 servants.

And then in the St. Mark's Burial Register we see:

Burial: 22 Jul **1896** St Mark, Worsley, Lancashire, England

Elias Dorning -

Age: 77 years

Abode: Pendlebury

Grave: B.G. 1063

Name.	Abode.	When Buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.	
Elias Dorning	Pendlebury	July 22 nd	77 Years	W. L. Ormrod Vicar of Pendlebury	B.G. 1063

No. 353



The stone reads:

In Loving Memory of
ELIAS DORNING of **PENDLEBURY COTTAGE**

Born 25th January 1819, Died 18th July 1896

Also of **MARY** Wife of the above

Born 2nd April 1830 Died 22nd June 1925

THY WILL BE DONE

The Wills and Probate Records help us a little more.

WILL.

DORNING Elias of Pendlebury cottage Pendlebury and of Manchester civil and mining engineer died 18 July 1896 at Pendlebury cottage Probate **Manchester** 4 September to Herbert Dorning and Arthur Harry Dorning estate agents and surveyors and James Kevan chartered accountant Effects £157,766 4s, 11d. [At today's values, approx. £16m.]

Obituary taken from *The Institution of Civil Engineers*.

ELIAS DORNING, born on the 25th of January, 1819, was articled to the late Mr. William Benson, of Bury, in 1836.

After serving a pupillage of five years, he was engaged from 1841 to 1843 as Resident Engineer on the Bury Waterworks.

Mr. Dorning then commenced to practise on his own account in Manchester as a civil and mining engineer, surveyor and land agent. He became connected with many large works during the early stages of railway development, including extensive Parliamentary surveys and valuations of properties involved, and rapidly extended his business.

He was associated with Sir Thomas Bouch in the purchase of land for the Eccles, Tyldesley and Wigan branch of the London and South Western Railway, and he performed similar work for the North Union Railway, the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Wirral Railway Company.

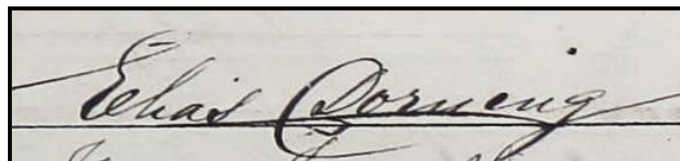
He acted as surveyor for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway until that Company appointed a permanent surveyor on its staff. He again acted for the Company, however, in connection with the purchase of land for the Manchester, Swinton and Hindley line to Wigan.

As a consulting engineer Mr. Dorning acted for the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Sefton, the Earl of Wilton and many other landowners in the north. He was standing arbitrator for the Corporation of Manchester, for which body he purchased 25 miles of land required for the Thirlmere conduit pipe.

He was frequently engaged for other corporations in Lancashire and also as a witness in engineering and compensation cases involving large public and private interests. Mr. Dorning had been sitting for three days as arbiter in a case arising out of the purchase of land by the Liverpool, St. Helen's and South Lancashire Railway Company, when he was taken ill.

He died at his residence, Pendlebury Cottage, Manchester, on the 18th of July, 1896, at the age of 77.

Mr. Dorning was elected a Member on the 6th of December, 1864.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Elias Dorning". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Elias Dorning was a Civil Engineer of some repute, who carried out work extensively throughout Manchester and the North West. The fact that this obituary was published in the Institute's Journal is a testament to that. Below are some instances of his work and expertise.

THE WIGAN IRON & COAL CO. LTD. came into being on 2 December 1865. The constituents of the new company comprised the Haigh, Aspull and Holland collieries of the Earl of Crawford & Balcarres, the Standish & Shevington Coal & Cannel Co., the Broomfield and Langtree collieries of Alfred Hewlett and the collieries and ironworks of the Kirkless Hall Coal & Iron Company. John Taylor's collieries at Standish were absorbed on 1st January 1866. The Wigan Coal & Iron Co. Ltd, when constituted, was the largest joint stock company in Britain. [This report is taken from the *Northern Mine Research Society*.] The article then states: "The inspiration for the formation of the new company is said to have come from **Elias Dorning**, a Wigan mining engineering consultant."

Advice was given to the LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY Board on 19 March 1884 that a new locomotive works should be built in open country, where expansion would be easier, thereby removing the works from the east side of Manchester. Various potential sites were examined and, at a meeting on 21 May, they were informed by **Elias Dorning**, the LYR land agent, of an estate

of 350 acres (140 ha) at Horwich. Members of the Board went to examine the land and **Dorning** was authorised to purchase it for not more than £65,000. At an auction at the Mitre Hotel, Manchester, on 27 May 1884 he bought the land for £36,000. On 15 November 1886, the Horwich Loco Works was officially opened

James Moon wrote a *Treatise on the New Construction of Chimneys* in 1844. In that piece, he proposed a very simple and economical mode of constructing chimneys, by which a better draught, and an easier mode of sweeping, could be obtained. The new flues were to be of a circular design, fitted with a small circular cap designed to prevent smoke from being blown down the chimney. A copy of the journal, *The Builder*, in 1845, invited manufacturers of Bricks and Tiles to apply for a licence from Mr. **Elias Dorning** of 27 Cross Street, Manchester.

A leaflet for the *Southport Parks and Gardens Heritage Trail* describes the emergence of a new suburb to the town at Birkdale. It mentions the construction of a new railway line from Aintree by Cheshire Lines Railway in 1881. The local board proposed the, development of a new recreation ground for the area, separated off by the new railway line. "The civil engineer for the railway, **Elias Dorning**, was a prominent railway surveyor who had worked on schemes in Lancashire as early as 1845. It is possible that the framework of the design for the recreation ground and other landscaping was his responsibility."

And finally ...

Dorning, Elias, of 41, John Dalton Street, Manchester, was elected as a Member of the NORTH OF ENGLAND INSTITUTE OF MINING AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS on 3 August 1865.

Dorning, Elias

Born in Worsley on 25 January 1819 and died in Pendlebury on 18 July 1896. Civil engineer. In 1836 was articled to William Benson, Bury, for 5 years. Between 1841 and 1843 was resident engineer for Bury waterworks. He then began private practice in Manchester as civil and mining engineer, surveyor and land agent, making extensive parliamentary surveys and valuation of properties for railway works. Associated with Thomas Bouch in the purchase of land for the LNWR Eccles-Tyldesley-Wigan line, and they were joint engineers for the Lancashire Union Railways. Dorning also carried out similar work for the CLC and Wirral Railways. Acted as surveyor for the LYR until that company appointed a permanent surveyor, and in 1884 was responsible for securing the land for Horwich locomotive works. At the same time he acted for the LYR in the purchase of land for the Pendleton-Hindley line.

[from Biographies of Civil Engineers, www.steamindex.com]

