

ELLESMERE IN AMERICA



Paul R. Speakman

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ELLESMERE IN AMERICA



*An Account of the
1st Earl's Visit to America
in
~ 1853 ~*

Paul R. Speakman

PREFACE

Whilst carrying out some research into the life of Francis Egerton, 1st Earl of Ellesmere, I came across the book *Personal Reminiscences of the Duke of Wellington*, by Francis, First Earl of Ellesmere. This collection was published in London in 1903, 46 years after his death, and contained a memoir of him, written by his daughter, Alice, Countess of Strafford. She dedicated it to '*My sister-in-law, Mary, Countess of Ellesmere, as the only surviving member of my family who has a perfect recollection of my father, and who can therefore fully appreciate the beauty of his character.*'

On page 50, she wrote about his visit to the United States and Canada, as a representative of our Government at the opening of the New York Exhibition in 1853. Furthermore, she mentioned that he was accompanied by the late Lord Acton (at that point he was Sir John Dalberg Acton), whose '*American experiences were a source of unfailing interest and amusement, especially upon the more humorous side of his impressions.*' Knowing that my wife, Susan, has a distant connection to this Acton family (sharing a common ancestry up to the time of English Civil War), that sparked an even greater deal of interest.

In September 2018, we spent a holiday in Boston, Massachusetts, and this presented a marvellous opportunity to research this story further. Our good friends, David and Marjorie Kelland, hosted our stay and very kindly ordered for us a copy of *Acton in America* from the Acton Institute. And from these beginnings, the contents of this book evolved. A spell in the Boston Public Library and a visit to Harvard set me on the path to writing this book. Suddenly, I found myself writing about places that we have come to know and love, and eminent and distinguished people with whom these two gentlemen conversed. The journals of Lord Acton have helped enormously to plug some of the gaps of the Earl's visit and have enabled me to pursue specific lines of enquiry. This episode of the Earl's life covered about four months, and is one which I knew nothing about. Until the summer of 2018!!

Whilst reading many copies of contemporary newspapers, two things became very evident. Firstly, some accounts occasionally lacked true accuracy, giving occasional diverse reports on the same topic. It was therefore necessary to seek other forms of material to corroborate certain facts. One notable example was the report in some newspapers that Lord Ellesmere was introduced on the platform at the opening ceremony of the exhibition to President Pierce. Clearly, this could not have occurred, since the Earl was in bed, suffering from gout - an affliction which affected him greatly during his visit. His family, though, was present. Secondly, local and regional newspapers frequently used material printed in the major city papers, often verbatim, giving dates which may have been ten or

fourteen days out of sequence. That could lead to some confusion. Where these issues have occurred, I have chosen to accept those reports which concur most and have taken steps to ensure accuracy of dates and times. Occasionally, small regional newspapers have offered a snippet of information which has helped to convey a more detailed picture of the family's travels.

In conclusion, I have chosen to include two other aspects of the connection between the Ellesmere family and the United States. The first is an account of the Ellesmere Chaucer, and the second is an account of the Egerton Travelling Library - both exquisite examples of sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscripts once owned by the family and now residing at The Huntington Museum in San Marino, California.

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CONTENTS

<u>PREFACE</u>	5
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u>	7
ORIGINS	11
THE NEW YORK CRYSTAL PALACE	17
THE COMMISSION	23
H.M.S. LEANDER	34
THE ARRIVAL	37
JUNE TO JULY 1853: THE TRAVELS	41
THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION	52
THE BANQUET	57
ELLESMERE IN BOSTON	62
NOVA SCOTIA	73
AN UNFRIENDLY REPORT	77
THE COMMISSIONERS' REPORT	79
THE ELLESMERE CHAUCER	86
THE EGERTON TRAVELLING LIBRARY	90
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	93

ORIGINS

"On a spring day in 1851 in the city of London, more than two years before the Crystal Palace exhibition opened in New York, an unprecedented exhibition conceived on a massive scale opened to the public, and in many ways the world would never be the same. A display of arts, inventions, and products of industrial manufacture from countries around the world, the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations was the first international exhibit of the technical achievements and consumer goods of the industrial era. It attracted more than six million visitors by the time it closed six months later and immediately spawned the cultural phenomenon of the world's fair."

This is how Sheila Moloney began her article on the building of the New York Crystal Palace. This Great Exhibition (sometimes referred to as the Crystal Palace Exhibition) was the brainchild of Prince Albert. A team of organisers, led by Henry Cole, was established. Cole is credited with being the first person to devise the concept of sending greetings cards at Christmas time (and that in 1843). He was a member of the *Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce*, and as such, Cole lobbied government to gain its support for his campaign to improve standards in industrial design. With the support and patronage of Prince Albert, the Society was granted a royal charter in 1847 and became the R.S.A.

Henry Cole had visited the 11th Paris Exhibition in 1849, a series of exhibitions held every five years in the French capital. Plans were already in hand to hold exhibitions in London in 1850 and 1851, so Cole envisaged adapting these into



one single exhibition in 1851. With the backing of Queen Victoria in 1850, a Royal Commission was set up on the 3rd January to establish the *Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, with Cole as the chief administrator and

Prince Albert as the President. Cole was awarded the C.B. for his work on the Great Exhibition and was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1875. Often referred to in the press as "Old King" Cole, he was known to have the closest personal backing of the Queen and especially of the Prince Consort, who, when he needed a facilitator for one of his pet projects, was heard to remark: *"We must have steam, get Cole"*. The exhibition was held in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London, from 1st May to the 15th October 1851, and was an enormous popular and financial success, making a huge surplus of £186,000 (approximately £22m in today's money).

The Great Exhibition was the first of the international exhibitions which became popular in the second half of the nineteenth century. The exhibition was designed to showcase and to promote the cultures, resources, industries, and products of the countries of the world at that moment in history. The catalogue listed exhibitors, not only from Britain and from its Territories and Dependences, but also 44 countries from Europe and the Americas. Amongst these were James Nasmyth, of Patricroft, who displayed some of his sketches of the moon's surface, and Mr. W. Hughes, Governor of Henshaw's Asylum for the Blind in Stretford, who demonstrated a typograph machine designed by him *"to allow blind persons to express their thoughts upon paper."* Both of these gentlemen were from the Worsley area.

Amongst Her Majesty's 24 Commissioners were the Earl of Ellesmere, F.S.A., and Sir Charles Lyell, F.R.S., under the Presidency of Prince Albert. The Earl was one of 8 members of the Building Committee, appointed on the 24th January 1850. These two names will recur throughout this book. One of the 5 executive committee members was Charles Wentworth Dilke, Esq., whose name will also appear later. The exhibition was divided into 4 classes: 1. Raw Materials. 2. Machinery. 3. Manufactures. and 4. Sculpture and the Fine Arts. Each class was further subdivided. On the day of the inauguration, Prince Albert delivered a report on behalf of the Commissioners, in which he noted:

"Your Majesty having been graciously pleased to grant a site in this your Royal Park for the purposes of the Exhibition, the first column of the structure now honoured by Your Majesty's presence was fixed on the 26th September last. Within the short period, therefore, of seven months, owing to the energy of the Contractors, and the active industry of the workmen employed by them, a building has been erected, entirely novel in its construction, covering a space of more than 18 acres, measuring 1,851 feet in length, and 456 feet in extreme

breadth, capable of containing 40,000 visitors, and affording a frontage for the Exhibition of Goods to the extent of more than 10 miles. For the original suggestion of the principle of this structure, the Commissioners are indebted to Mr. Joseph Paxton, to whom they feel their acknowledgements to be justly due for this interesting feature of their undertaking."

It had been decided that medals would be awarded to deserving exhibitors, not in some form of competition, but as a reward for excellence. The selection of worthy persons was entrusted to Juries, equally composed of British subjects and of Foreigners, the former selected by the Commission, and the latter by the Governments of the Foreign Nations. It was recorded that the opening of the exhibition was on the very day originally selected. This took into consideration the considerable distances over which many of the articles had been collected.



The Opening of the Great Exhibition
by Queen Victoria on 1 May 1851, by
Henry Courtney Selous, 1852

A comprehensive catalogue was produced, listing all the articles to be seen and their location inside the glass house. This contained 319 pages. The building ran East to West, and was intersected by a Transept running North and South. The



half of the Building west of the Transept was given to the productions of the United Kingdom, India and the Colonies. The Eastern half was devoted to Foreign Countries. The catalogue was put on sale at 1s., if purchased in the building, and 1s.3d. if purchased at the City Office in Blackfriars.

It attracted some 14,000

exhibitors, who occupied the Crystal Palace's 990,000 square feet of floor space. Among the Great Exhibition's many attractions was the Crystal Palace itself. The modular, wrought-iron and glass structure rose skyward to an interior height of 408 feet, with an interior height of 128 feet (39 m), allowing the incorporation of large trees in the landscaping of the central corridor. As this picture from Dickinson's pictures of the Crystal Palace illustrates, the extraordinary size of the building, the glass walls, and the careful placement of the foliage blurred the boundaries between interior and exterior space.

A special building, nicknamed The Crystal Palace, or "The Great Shalimar", was built to house the exhibits. It was designed by Joseph Paxton, who drew on his experience of designing greenhouses for the sixth Duke of Devonshire. He received support from structural engineer Charles Fox, with the committee (which included Isambard Kingdom Brunel) overseeing its construction, and it went from its organisation to the grand opening in just nine months. The building was considered to be architecturally adventurous and a marvel of its time.. It took the form of a massive glass house, 1851 feet (about 564 metres) long by 456 feet (about 138 metres) wide, with an interior height of 128 feet (39 m), and was constructed from cast iron-frame components and thousands of panes of glass made almost exclusively in Birmingham and Smethwick. The Crystal Palace featured the first public toilet cubicles. The inventor of these, George Jennings, charged a penny, and some suggest that this is where the expression 'spend a penny' comes from! But this is doubtful. However, 827,280 visitors paid the 1 penny fee to use them!

6 million people (approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population of Great Britain), attended the event, with an average daily attendance of 42,831. The peak attendance was on 7th October when 109,915 came. Prince Albert was determined to make the exhibition available to all, regardless of wealth or status. Hence, ticket prices were set to attract everyone. As the exhibition progressed over the weeks, ticket prices came down. At today's values, they ranged from £311 for a season ticket to £5 for a daily ticket. In effect, four and a half million of the cheapest tickets were sold. In the first week, the prices were £1; they were then reduced to 5 shillings for the next three weeks, a price which still effectively limited entrance to middle-class and aristocratic visitors. The working classes finally came to the exhibition on Monday 26th May, when weekday prices were reduced to one shilling (although the price was two shillings and sixpence on Fridays, and still 5 shillings on Saturdays). The profits raised allowed three outstanding museums to be founded - the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum.

It was attended by many famous people of the time, including Charles Darwin,

Samuel Colt, members of the Orléanist Royal Family, and the writers Charlotte Brontë, Charles Dickens, Lewis Carroll, George Eliot, Alfred Tennyson and William Makepeace Thackeray.

"Yesterday I went for the second time to the Crystal Palace. We remained in it about three hours, and I must say I was more struck with it on this occasion than at my first visit. It is a wonderful place – vast, strange, new and impossible to describe. Its grandeur does not consist in one thing, but in the unique assemblage of all things. Whatever human industry has created you find there, from the great compartments filled with railway engines and boilers, with mill machinery in full work, with splendid carriages of all kinds, with harness of every description, to the glass-covered and velvet-spread stands loaded with the most gorgeous work of the goldsmith and silversmith, and the carefully guarded caskets full of real diamonds and pearls worth hundreds of thousands of pounds."
(The Brontës' Life and Letters, by Clement Shorter. 1907)

William Makepeace Thackeray penned a poem entitled *'The Crystal Palace'* which contained some of these lines:

*With ganial foire
Thransfuse me loyre,
Ye sacred nymphs of Pindus,
The whoile I sing
That wondthrous thing,
The Palace made o' windows!*

*Say, Paxton, truth,
Thou wondthrous youth,
What sthroke of art celistial,
What power was lint
You to invint
This combineetion cristial.*

*This Palace tall,
This Cristial Hall,
Which Imperors might covet,
Stands in High Park
Like Noah's Ark,
A rainbow bint above it.*

Queen Victoria noted in her journals:

"This day is one of the greatest and most glorious days of our lives, with which, to my pride and joy the name of my dearly beloved Albert is forever associated. ... The park presented a wonderful spectacle, crowds streaming through it - carriages and troops passing, quite like the Coronation day, and for me, the same anxiety."

(Royal Archives/H. M. Queen Elizabeth II)

The expected life of the original palace was six months, after which something had to be done with the building. A holding company was established and it decided to re-erect the building on a common on Sydenham Hill, in south-east London. Work commenced in 1852 and, on 10th June 1854, Queen Victoria opened the new build. Although using components and elements of the original, the new crystal palace was quite different in appearance. The subsequent history of the new palace can be found recorded elsewhere. Over the years, it fell into decline, until it was consumed by fire on 30th November 1936. Sir Henry Buckland, manager of the board of trustees, declared: *"In a few hours we have seen the end of the Crystal Palace. Yet it will live in the memories not only of Englishmen, but the whole world."* Winston Churchill broke his return to Chartwell to watch the final moments. He stood transfixed, with tears in his eyes, and murmured: *'This is the end of an age.'*

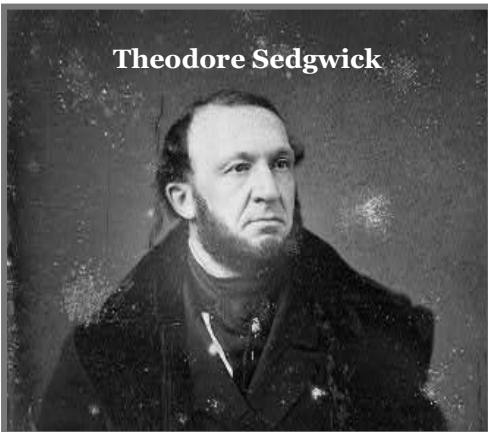
A building and a novel concept thus came to an end 85 years after its birth. Various opinions have been expressed about it, with the view that it was more an example of engineering, rather than architecture. Pugin called it *"a glass monster,"* and W. M. Thackeray *"a blazing arch of lurid glass."* As for its name, the *Punch* issue of 13th July 1850 carried a contribution by Douglas Jerrold, writing as Mrs. Amelia Mouser, which referred to *"a palace of very crystal."*

THE NEW YORK CRYSTAL PALACE

One of the outstanding features of the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 was the architecture of the structure. Despite some negative opinions, it was generally considered to be a magnificent building. For one thing, it was made entirely of cast iron and glass. A new technique by Chance brothers of Birmingham of mass glass production made this achievable, and the use of cast iron in bridge building had been prevalent since the 1770's. This allowed architects to design tall buildings without the need for thick walls, enabling buildings to have more and larger windows. Its designer was Joseph Paxton, a gardener and designer, who had earlier provided the plan for the building based on his large greenhouses, including the "Great Stove," the conservatory that he built at Chatsworth in order to house the exotic plants of the Duke of Devonshire.

Inspired by the success of the London Exhibition, in concept, scale, design and income, a group of public spirited politicians and businessmen in New York City soon began to plan their own international exhibition, and invited proposals for the design of the building in the summer of 1852. In the industrial sphere, America had already achieved some remarkable and significant results which had been brought to the attention of the world in Hyde Park, but there was some regret that *'they were but a fraction of all that this new nation had contributed in terms of resources, industry and arts.'* Furthermore, there was a great desire to give *'to the masses in America an opportunity to see the grand total of the world's industry, and the manifold productions and applications of the arts of design brought in one comparative view.'*

The municipal authority of New York had granted the free use of a designated site within the city. This was between Fifth and Sixth Avenues on 42nd Street, in



what is today Bryant Park, in the borough of Manhattan. One problem the chosen architects would have to face was the massive, fortress-like Croton Distributing Reservoir, source of the city's drinking water, which loomed over Reservoir Square. Without this grant of free land, the project would have been unprofitable. On the 3rd January 1852, the corporation granted a five-year lease of Reservoir Square, with just two preconditions from the

organisers: first, that the building should be constructed of iron and glass (like its English cousin), and secondly, that no admission charge should exceed fifty cents. A charter was granted two months later covering capital, authorisation to occupy any real estate, and the power to award prizes. This charter was not easily obtained because, again like its cousin, there was a lot of hostility towards the idea. On the 17th March, the Board of Directors met and elected Theodore Sedgwick as President.

A statement then followed, in which it was acknowledged that *'the idea was suggested by the brilliant success that attended the London Exhibition of last year.'* The opinion was further expressed that no other nation had provided more evidence of its intellectual capacity and vigour than the American people. It was seen as a natural sequitur that the people would wish to see a similar exhibition in their own country, *'with the beneficial effects that had resulted from its great prototype.'* It was also acknowledged that the London Exhibition was characterised by *'the advance of those arts which increase the comforts and heighten the delights of life, the spread of amicable relations among rival countries, and, above all, the elevation of labour to its proper dignity.'*

It was anticipated that, in comparison with London, more objects of greater utility and interest would be selected, and that the proportion of articles manufactured by American industry would be greatly increased. Assurances had been received from the major countries of the Old World to send over specimens of their industrial skills, but that these would include such rare products that have never been seen before. In addition, these countries would send such examples of the Fine Arts which had hitherto only been seen by those Americans fortunate enough to have seen them abroad. Above all, the committee was anxious to emphasise how this proposal would *'strengthen the bonds of peace and good will.'*

Once all this had happened, events moved quickly. An agent was appointed to secure the co-operation of European manufacturers. An architectural staff was also appointed to discuss the building and, on 12th July 1852, a further statement from the Association declared that the Exhibition would open on 2nd May 1853, and would have representations from many countries of raw materials and produce, manufactures, machinery and the fine arts. Prizes for excellence in the various departments would be awarded *'under the direction of capable and eminent persons.'* These details were sent to all foreign ministers in Washington.

Original and excellent plans were submitted for consideration, including one from Sir Joseph Paxton, but his was discounted on account of its size. Ultimately, the board accepted a design offered by Messrs. Carstensen and Gildemeister. Georg Carstensen (from Denmark) had designed the Tivoli and

Casino in Copenhagen, and Karl Gildemeister (a German) was working in New York as an architect and artist. Their plan was accepted on 26th August 1852 and work started immediately. It was slightly changed from the original on account of cost. The first column was put in place on 30th October.



Juries were organised to make awards to the best contributions. Two medals, silver and bronze, were to be awarded, with an honourable mention category. There would be fifteen juries, with jurors coming mainly

from the Union, with some foreign representatives. The number on each jury would vary, depending on the number of subjects within each category. No set of precise rules was laid down, merely a list of general principles. A panel of 22 directors for the whole project was set up.

The *New York Tribune* described the building in this way: 'Viewed at a distance, its burnished dome resembles a half-disclosed balloon, as large as a cathedral, but light, brilliant, and seemingly ready to burst its bands and soar aloft. In every sense, the Crystal Palace is admirable.' The centre of the dome was 148 feet high. The shape of the building was interesting. It stood two storeys high, the first in the form of an octagon, the second described as a square Greek cross. At each of the four corners stood two towers, each seventy feet high, topped with flag-staffs. The structure of the building was very similar to that of London - iron columns, girders and glass. The main building covered 173,000 square feet, and the additional building 33,000 sq.ft. The prevailing style of the architecture was described as Moorish, and Byzantine in its decorations.

The Official Catalogue of the New York Exhibition of 1853 gave a full account of the architecture and structure of the palace, in which it delighted in the central dome:

The Dome, noble and beautiful in its proportions, is the chief architectural feature of the building. Its diameter is 100 feet and its height to the crown of the arch 123 feet. It is the largest, as well as almost the only dome hitherto erected in the United States. ... The Dome is supported by 24 columns. ... Light is communicated to the interior through the lantern, and also in

part from the sides, which are pierced for 32 ornamental windows.

There were three entrances, each 47 feet wide - one on Sixth Avenue, one on 42nd Street and one on 40th Street. The dome was 100 feet across. However, after delays, which should have been expected, the formal opening took place over two months later, on the 14th July 1853, though the building itself was not even then completed, with barely half the articles intended for exhibition in position. Furthermore, for some weeks, there were leaks through the roof on every occurrence of heavy rain, threatening to destroy the more perishable goods, many of which were doubtless seriously damaged. *The Tribune* was of the opinion that their palace could not compare favourably with the one in London, with its indoor trees and its Glass Fountain. However, it did extol its lofty dome which had '*no parallel*' in the world, except for St. Peter's in Rome. The colouring both inside and outside of the glass and iron were in marked contrast with the Puritanical effect in London, even though it was only one-fifth the size of London.



The New York Palace would only comfortably hold 15,000 people, and twenty thousand at its maximum. The retiring-rooms, refreshment saloon, which were considered to be indispensable elements of such

an Exhibition, were not ready for weeks after the opening; and even then, the charges for refreshments were the subjects of general complaint. On an adjacent piece of land stood the Latting Observatory, a wooden tower braced with iron 315 feet high. It had 3 platforms and the topmost allowed visitors to see into Queens, Staten Island and New Jersey. The building was conceived by Waring Latting and designed by the architect William Naugle.

The tower, taller than the spire of Trinity Church (then the tallest building) at 290 feet, was the tallest structure in New York City



from the time it was constructed in 1853 until it burned down on 30th August 1856. The fire, which had started in a nearby shop, destroyed twelve buildings in the neighbourhood and had affected the Crystal Palace, but fire fighters saved it '*with much difficulty.*' There had been fears that it would topple down onto the north nave of the Palace but it crumpled within itself, '*gradually and silently.*'

The New York Times enthused about the tower in its edition of 1st July 1853 when reporting its official opening the previous day. It claimed that the eye could see between 40 and 60 miles, and asserted that nowhere in the world could such a view be obtained, mischievously adding, '*certainly not in London, for there smoke and fog obscure the vision. It rises from the midst of a human hive, whose bees are the best in the world's apiary.*' The ascent was described as being a little fatiguing, but it was said to improve digestion! When describing the scene that lay before him, the writer noticed an immigrant sailing ship approaching and noted that its passengers would land - tomorrow!

A fate similar to the tower and to its cousin in London eventually befell the Crystal Palace, for the Palace itself was destroyed by fire on 5th October, 1858. When it burned, the fair of the American Institute was being held there. The fire began in a lumber room on the side adjacent to 42nd Street. Within fifteen minutes, its dome had fallen and in twenty-five minutes the entire structure had burnt to the ground. No lives were lost, but the loss of property amounted to more than \$350,000. This included the building, valued at \$125,000, and exhibits and valuable statuary remaining from the World's Fair.

Given its slow demise after the closure of the exhibition, this fire may have turned out to be the best thing for the palace. It had already run up substantial debts. On top of this, it had never really caught the imagination of the whole country. Certainly, New Yorkers came out to glorify at this monument, but it had always been tainted by a general opposition to it. *The Scientific American*, in its issue of June 1853, was particularly stinging in its comments. The magazine felt that it came too soon after the London exhibition, preferring a gap of 4 to 6 years. It may then have been able to arrange a truly national event. Furthermore, it would therefore have brought more honour to the country, rather than private gain to a few. Beyond these considerations, it was already more than a month since the exhibition should have opened. The building was nowhere near ready to receive goods for the opening ceremony.

It had earlier expressed doubts about the funding, predicting that it would cost more and cause more trouble than anticipated by the managers. The local New York press, which had argued favourably for the project, was criticised, and had begun to blame the poor management. Vessels from foreign countries, with

goods for the exhibition, had been lying in the harbour for more than two weeks. And ... two government vessels with Commissioners had left England two weeks earlier for the Crystal Palace. In drawing a comparison with Hyde Park, it stated that the site occupied a fraction of the space made available in London, and that neither the energy nor punctuality shown in 1851 had been displayed in England *'had been displayed in the erection of this comparatively little structure.'*

The Richmond Enquirer of the 20th May was equally scathing, reporting that the *'New York Crystal Palace, intended for the so-called American World's Fair, will not be finished until the summer is nearly, if not quite, over.'* It further reported that there was some speculation that the promoters, having already made profits by speculating in adjacent land, were indifferent as to whether the project would even be finished. It pointed out that foreign governments were continuing to fulfil their pledges and was dismayed that eminent people might be coming on a fool's errand. The fear was that such an unedifying situation *'will prove injurious to the good name of the United States, though the nation is entirely innocent. ... If the affair should fail entirely, the indignation will be excessive. Yet the real criminals will escape, for they have made the nation their cat's-paw.'*

These opinions were widespread throughout the regional press. Such, then, was the state of affairs that was about to greet the Earl of Ellesmere and his party, who had come to witness and to report upon this International Exhibition. At the request of Queen Victoria and her Government, a Royal Commission was established to attend the opening of the fair in the summer of 1853, and ordered to present a report upon their findings. This request was made some time in April 1853.

By the time it closed on 14th November 1854, the fair had been visited by over 1.1 million people.

THE COMMISSION

The New York Herald was very impressed by the prompt response of the British Government and its Sovereign to the intimation of the American people to hold an Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations in New York. It reflected upon the general interchange of friendship between the governments and peoples of all nations which took place after the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. As an illustration of this fact, it referred to the wide diffusion of the most recent discoveries in the arts and sciences, and the immediate sharing of the latest philosophical researches and agricultural improvements which followed. This '*tremendous undertaking*' was looked upon as a blessing by the entire civilised world.

It reported that the Government in England quickly became aware of the beneficial influences '*which would flow upon mankind from the uninterrupted march of the new spirit thus engendered by itself, and, with characteristic readiness, it resolved upon lending a helping hand to similar institutions all over the world*'. The newspaper noted the huge contribution made by America to the Crystal Palace in London, and expressed the view that the republic ranked among the most distinguished of the nations in terms of industry, genius and practical application of mechanical skill. Hence, New York was proud to be the first city in America to hold an exhibition of this type upon its own soil.

A letter from Sir Charles Lyell to his friend in America, George Ticknor, (see below) intimated at this response by the British Government. It was confirmed in a letter from Lord Clarendon to H.R.H. Prince Albert, dated 31st March 1853. In it, he noted that he had learned from Lord Granville the previous day that the Prince had approved the appointment of the Earl of Ellesmere to lead the Royal Commission to America, and that he had personally conveyed this to his lordship. Lord Clarendon acknowledged the acceptance by the Earl, and requested instructions from His Royal Highness upon points raised by the Earl about the visit. [Reference to this letter is given '*by permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II*' and is located in the Royal Archives under RA/VIC/MAIN/F/25/157] .

Lord Clarendon (b.1800), styled the 4th Earl of Clarendon in 1838, was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on 21 February 1853, a post he occupied until 26 February 1858. He held the position in other years on two further occasions. Lord Granville was Granville George Leveson-Gower, born 1815, a distant relative of Francis Egerton and the step-father of Sir John Dalberg Acton (q.v.).

According to the press, the Royal Commissioners appointed to attend the inauguration of the exhibition were:

Chief Commissioner: Earl of Ellesmere
Geology and Mineralogy: Sir Charles Lyell
Agriculture: Professor G. Wilson
Textile, Fabrics and Ornamental Art: Mr. G. Wallis
General Commissioner: Mr. Wentworth Dilke
General Commissioner: Mr. T. Whitworth

Many other distinguished gentlemen from various parts of England were also preparing to leave home to visit New York, and to leave on different ships bound for that city. The *New York Herald* warmly welcomed '*all the commissioners, their ladies, and the gallant officers and men of the Leander, [and expressed] the hope that during their stay many opportunities will present, by which the friendly bonds that cement the two great sections of the Anglo-Saxon race may be drawn closer.*'

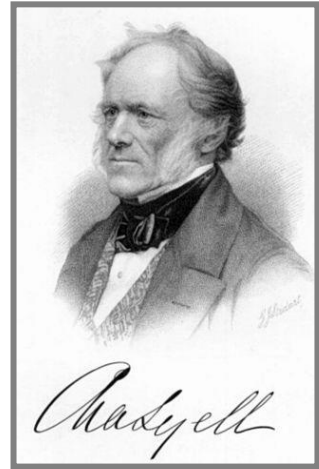
In the collection of Sir John Dalberg Acton's journals, *Acton in America*, the editor states that the British Commissioners were Ellesmere, Lyell and Dilke, and that they were assisted by George Wallis, Thomas Whitworth of Manchester, a producer of steel, and John Wilson, [not G. - Ed.] the Principal of the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester. It seems more likely that the gentleman Whitworth was, in fact, Joseph Whitworth, since he was definitely one of the six Commissioners and was a great friend and companion of George Wallis, with whom he co-wrote a report. Their rôle was to compile a report for the British Government.

The Earl of Ellesmere (1800-1857) was born Francis Leveson-Gower and his rôle in the development and life of Worsley is well documented. It will be sufficient here to read what the *New York Herald* wrote about him and each of the Commissioners in turn.

The nobleman who is placed at the head of the commission is thoroughly qualified to pronounce a judgment upon the merits of the fine arts' section, while he unites with a highly cultivated taste the prestige of rank and wealth. The Earl will be accompanied by the Countess Ellesmere, his daughters, the ladies Egerton, and one of his sons. The Earl was elevated to his present dignity in the year 1846, having been formerly Lord Francis Egerton. His second title is that of Viscount Brackley. He is a Privy Councillor, and a Deputy Lieutenant of Sutherlandshire; he has served in the House of Commons,

been one of the Lords of the Treasury, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary at War. And besides all his titles, he is extremely wealthy. He is a man of high literary attainments, and of the most liberal ideas, and will, doubtless, receive all the attention in this city, to which his distinguished character entitle him.

Sir Charles Lyell (1797-1875) was a Scottish geologist who is best known as the author of *Principles of Geology*. His scientific contributions included an explanation of earthquakes, and, in stratigraphy, (the study of rock layers) the division of the Tertiary period into the Pliocene, Miocene, and Eocene. He also coined the currently-used names for geological eras, Palaeozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic. He was a close friend of Charles Darwin, and contributed significantly to Darwin's thinking on the processes involved in evolution.



Lyell was born in Scotland and entered Exeter College, Oxford, in 1816. There, he studied Classics, gaining his M.A. in 1821. However, after graduation (in 1819), he took up law as a profession, but then he quickly transferred his interest to a career in geology. Prior to his appointment as a Commissioner to the New York Exhibition, he had visited the United States and Canada twice - in 1845 and 1849. He was knighted in 1848, ...

Balmoral, September 19, 1848.

THE Queen was this day pleased to confer the honour of Knighthood upon Charles Lyell, Esq. junior, F.R.S.

... and then received a Baronetcy in 1864.

Whitehall, July 21, 1864.

THE Queen has been pleased to direct letters patent to be passed under the Great Seal,

granting the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland unto

Sir Charles Lyell, of Kinnordy, in the county of Forfar, Knight, and the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten.

These two announcements were promulgated in the *London Gazette*. Lyell himself died as he was revising the twelfth edition of *Principles*. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Lyell initially had sailed to Boston in August 1852 to give a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute, and returned to England before Christmas. In 1853, he was invited by the Government to accompany Lord Ellesmere as one of the Commissioners to the New York International Exhibition. However, because of the frequent cases of gout suffered by the Earl, much of the formal and official business of the Commission fell upon him. He returned in August. His correspondence is of interest, particularly because it casts light upon Lord Ellesmere's status and influence, and the work of the Commission.

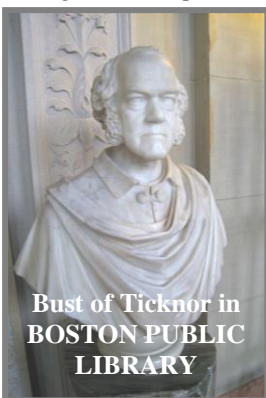
George Ticknor (1791-1871) was an American academic, who specialised in Hispanic language and literature. Born and educated in Boston, he spent two years studying in Europe, and in 1821 was selected as Professor of Belles-Lettres at Harvard University. He resigned the chair in 1835 and was succeeded by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the poet. He became a prime mover in the establishment of the Boston Public Library in 1852. Lyell had had a long correspondence with him and both men clearly had a great friendship, as illustrated in this letter:

To George Ticknor, Esq.

11 Harley Street, London: April 26, 1853.

My dear Ticknor,

I wish to make to you the first announcement of a sudden change in our plans, by which we hope soon to have the



pleasure of again seeing you and other friends on your side of the water. About a week ago, Lord Granville (President of the Council and vice-President of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, which still subsists, and of which I am a permanent member) called here to say, that the Government had determined to send out Commissioners to the New York Industrial Exhibition. That is somewhat contrary to etiquette, but

that they were ready to waive that, inasmuch as the last Government of the United States had partially recognised the New York scheme as national. Lord Ellesmere had offered his services to the ministry, and they had thought of me as No.2, both to represent science and 'as one who would be acceptable to the American People.'

I told him I must take time, at least a day or two, to consider; for unless I could calculate by great exertion to get out my ninth edition of 'Principles,' now eight months out of print, I could not go.' I must also, I said, see the instructions, and I stipulated that if I went, I would not undertake any share, much less a supeintendence, of the Report. Secondly, that I would serve, like Lord Ellesmere, without any salary or pecuniary remuneration. These terms being agreed upon and put in writing by me in a letter to Lord Granville, and shown no doubt by him to Lords Aberdeen and Clarendon, from whom he brought the message, I was nominated, with leave if I could be not ready for the Government steamer in which Lord Ellesmere is to go, to take a mail packet, in which I might sail with my wife.

I also bargained that I might return as soon as the New York business is over, as my scientific work, to be cleared off before sailing for the Canaries in the autumn, will be much interrupted by this affair. In short, I give them two months in all of my time. ...

Lord Ellesmere is, as you know, a most accomplished man, and has really great knowledge and taste in the fine arts, and has a glorious gallery of pictures. ...

*Ever most truly yours,
Charles Lyell.*

The schedules and itinerary of the Commissioners' involvement in the inauguration ceremony and details of their travels will become clear in a later chapter. However, it will be more helpful at this point to include references from Lyell's correspondence. In a letter to Leonard Horner (a Scottish geologist and his brother-in-law) dated 11th July 1853, and written in Boston, he wrote:

My dear Horner,

Lord Ellesmere's illness, and the uncertainty as to what I may be called upon to do in the event of his absence, has kept me in some doubt, but I hope still he will rally, as he usually does rapidly, and not disappoint the meeting, and this I expect will be the end of it. ...

At this point in his letter, he goes on to talk about the parlous state of education in the States and refers to it as a crisis. But he remains optimistic that the institutions will resolve their problems. By the date of the letter, he had already been absent from England for two months - the maximum length of time he had wanted to be away from his work.

Finally, in a letter to his wife dated 23rd August 1853 and written at Osborne House, he said:

My dearest Mary,

*I made out my journey and voyage very successfully. ... I got here between six and seven, and Lord Clarendon arrived just after. I was very glad to find that he was to be the Minister in attendance. As usual, he has made himself very agreeable. He has been reading Lord Ellesmere's speech in my paper and likes it much; the Prince is to have it by and by. ...
Ever affectionately yours,*

Charles Lyell

The *New York Herald* wrote of him:

Sir Charles Lyell has devoted his attention to the investigation of the physical sciences, particularly geology, since a very early age, prosecuting his researches with much zeal and vigour, and with the most happy results. He visited America in the years 1841 and 1845, when he made scientific investigations of the geology of the States, the result of which he gave to the world in a publication entitled "Travels in North America." Sir Charles is a native of Scotland, and about fifty-six years of age. His chief scientific works are "Principles of Geology," and "Elements of Geology."

Charles Wentworth Dilke (1810-1869) was an English patron of the Arts, horticulturalist and politician. Educated at Westminster School, he was admitted as a pensioner to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 1827, gaining his LL.B. in 1834



and his LL.M. in 1860. He became chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, and of the Royal Horticultural Society. He was appointed Commissioner of the 1851 exhibition in London, and as an unpaid Commissioner to the New York exhibition. He was a very active promoter of the Great Exhibition, as a result of which he was offered a knighthood by Queen

Victoria - which he declined. He played a leading part in planning that event and the catalogue, overseeing the installation of exhibits and managing the PR. Later, he also was appointed as a Commissioner to the Paris Exhibition of 1855, when he again refused payment for his services. He lastly served as a Commissioner to the International Exhibition held in London in 1862.

Soon after the death of Prince Albert, he was created a Baronet, and in August 1865 entered parliament as M.P for Wallingford - a constituency he served for three years. The *London Gazette* of 17th January 1862 reported -

Whitehall. January 16, 1862.

The Queen has been pleased to direct letters patent to be passed under the Great Seal, granting the dignity of Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, unto **Charles Wentworth Dilke**, the younger, of Sloane Street, in the county of Middlesex, Esquire, and the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten.

In 1869, he was sent to Russia as representative of England at the horticultural exhibition held at St. Petersburg, where he died in May of that year. Dilke collected as many printed items relating to the Exhibition as he could find, including books, pamphlets, official and unofficial guides and catalogues, sermons, songs and music, poetry, travel guides, trade literature, children's books and games, satirical stories and cartoons, and many illustrated works including prints on paper, gelatine and silk. Dilke gave his collection to the South Kensington Museum (forerunner of the V&A) in 1867. He had personally presented his Catalogue of the Exhibition of 1851 to Queen Victoria on 25th April 1855.

The *New York Herald* wrote of him:

The early connection of Mr. Dilke with the London Exhibition, and the talent and taste which he zealously employed for its final success, have rendered his name and worth known over the world.



Mr. George Wallis (1811-1891) was an artist, museum curator and art teacher, and a member of the Society of Antiquaries. He produced an oil on canvas of *The Great Exhibition of All Nations* in 1851 (see below). It measures 18.7cm high and 61cm wide. He spent various years in Manchester, where he became a great friend of Joseph Whitworth. He was appointed a deputy commissioner for the Great Exhibition of 1851, and, as one of the six commissioners sent by the government to the 1853 New York International Exhibition, one

of his duties was to analyse the development of art and manufactures in America. Together with his friend Joseph Whitworth, they undertook a trip of some 5,000 miles throughout the eastern states and, from their report, they compiled a book '*The Industry of the United States 1854.*' On 7th March 1878, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA). For almost 3 decades, he



was curator of the Art collection at the South Kensington Museum, later to become the V&A.

Professor G. Wilson (Agriculture) was most likely to have been John (1812-1888). From 1846 to 1850, he had been principal of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester. From 1854, he had also been Professor of Agriculture and Rural Economy at Edinburgh. One important aspect of Wilson's career was his intercourse and relations with foreign agricultural authorities and societies. Hence, in 1851, he took up the position of deputy juror at the International Exhibition in Hyde Park. Then, in 1853, the same year that he was sent as Royal Commissioner to the United States, he was appointed knight of the French

Légion d'Honneur. Two years later, he acted as commissioner to the British agricultural department at the Exhibition in Paris.

The *New York Herald* said of him:

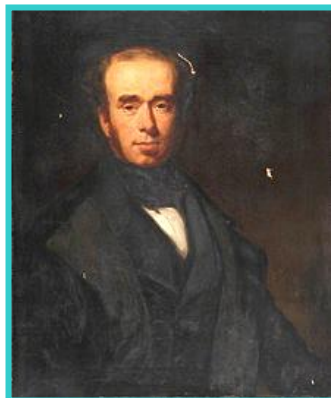
The thought he has given to the field of science renders him a valuable co-labourer in the cause of civilisation and enlightenment.

Sir Joseph Whitworth (1803-1887) was born in Yorkshire and, at the age of 14, was sent to work with an uncle in Derbyshire. He suddenly became interested in machinery and, unable to express himself there, he escaped to Manchester in 1821, a city where his reputation was to flourish. After his marriage and a few years in London, he returned to Manchester where he set up his own business. The next twenty years or so were devoted mainly to the improvement of machine tools, which were all displayed and highly commended at the Great Exhibition of 1851. In 1853, Whitworth was appointed a member of the Royal Commission to the New York Industrial Exhibition. The London Gazette of 8th October 1869 announced:

Whitehall, October 7, 1869

Letters Patent to be passed under the Great Seal granting the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland unto the undermentioned Gentlemen, and the respective heirs male of their bodies lawfully begotten; namely :—

Joseph Whitworth, of The Firs, in the parish of Rusholme, in the county palatine of Lancaster, and of Stancliffe, in the parish of Darley, in the county of Derby, Esq.



He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 1857 and became a highly successful businessman and well-respected mechanical engineer. To this day, his name can be found connected with many buildings and institutions in Manchester - the Whitworth Art Gallery, the Christie Hospital, the Whitworth Building at the Victoria University of Manchester, and Whitworth Street.

This group of gentlemen were eminent experts in their own fields, some of whom were already known and respected in America. They were more than capable of displaying the very best qualities of British knowledge and expertise.

This group of Commissioners received a high accolade from *The Times* in its edition of 27th April 1853.

'The Royal Commission ... will thus consist of six members, and form a body well calculated not only worthily to represent this country on the other side of the Atlantic, but to bring back, in the shape of official reports, the results of the approaching industrial display. the nobleman who is placed at the head of the Commission is thoroughly qualified to pronounce a judgement upon the merits of the Fine Arts' section, while he unites with a highly cultivated taste the prestige of rank and wealth. Science, especially in the departments of raw produce and mineralogy, could not find in this country a worthier representative than Sir Charles Lyell; and Mr. Dilke, the least rewarded and certainly not the least valuable member of our own Executive Committee in Hyde-park, by his practical good sense, his business habits and his experience, may fairly be expected to stamp the new Commission with a useful as well as a merely dignified character. Professor Wilson is favourably known to the public from the attention which he has paid to scientific agriculture, and it may be anticipated that at New York he will find the materials for much useful information to his own countrymen in that and kindred branches of knowledge. The appointment of Mr. Wallis also is a very judicious one. He was one of the most valuable and active officers employed at Hyde-park in 1851, and, apart altogether from his acquirements as a teacher of the first principles of practical art, he has a rare and extensive acquaintance with the merits of textile fabrics in every branch of their manufacture. Perhaps, however, for the material interests of this country, so far as they are likely to be affected by the New York Exhibition, the most valuable member of the new Commission is Mr. Whitworth, the leading maker in this country of what are called 'Manchester Tools.' Mr. Whitworth is the very best man that could be selected to concentrate into a report the mechanical results of the New York Exhibition; and, ingenious and inventive as the Americans undoubtedly are, we need not be ashamed to send over to them, as a reporter, the mechanic who can, by the unaided exercise of his craft, measure the millionth part of an inch. The Commission goes to America carrying with it souvenirs of the display of 1851, with which all its members have been intimately associated. It is accredited neither to the Committee of the

New York Exhibition not to the Government, for the former is a private commercial body which this country could not officially acknowledge, and the latter only indirectly patronizes the undertaking.'

After their return to England, several reports on various parts of the American exhibition were issued in London in **1854**. These reports were drawn up for presentation to Parliament by the members of that commission. Under the chairmanship of the Earl of Ellesmere, Sir Charles Lyell made a Special Report on the geological, topographical, and hydrographical departments, and George Wallis presented a Special Report on manufactures. While these gentlemen concerned themselves only with the Exhibition, Sir Joseph Whitworth toured a group of manufacturing establishments in the eastern United States and wrote a Special Report on the machinery he saw being used in them. He encouraged American manufacturers to adopt his system of uniform screws. Professor John Wilson delivered a lecture on flax at the New York State Agricultural Society's annual fair at Saratoga. They were each able to visit places and areas of specific interest since the opening of the fair had been delayed.

H. M. S. LEANDER

H.M.S. Leander (1848) was commissioned to convey the British Commissioners for the inauguration of the *Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations*, held in New York in 1853. It was a 50-gun fourth rate ship, launched at Portsmouth in 1848 and was later converted to screw propulsion in 1861. It was eventually sold in 1867. It was built in the North Dock and it had the distinction of being the last ship built at the dock. The vessel was designed by a Mr. Blake and was named by Miss Prescott, daughter of Rear-Admiral Superintendent Prescott, C.B. Its official dimensions were as follows:



Length on the water line - 181 feet 4½ inches.

Length of keel for tonnage - 148 feet 11½ inches.

Extreme breadth - 59 feet 9 inches.

Breadth for tonnage - 50 feet 1 inch.

Breadth moulded - 149 feet 5 inches.

Depth of hold - 25 feet 8 inches.

Displacement - 1,987 tons.

It normally had a crew of 525 men. As a side note, during 1855, the '*Leander*' was commanded by Captain William Peel, and was the flagship of Rear-Admiral Charles Howe Fremantle, the Superintendent of Balaclava port during the Crimean War. (© National Army Museum)

It was the third ship in the Royal Navy to be so named after the Greek hero, Leander. In the rating system of the British Royal Navy, the term 'Fourth Rate' was used to categorise sailing warships. A fourth-rate was a ship of the line with 46 to 60 guns mounted. These ships were most suited to shallow waters, like those off the North American coast. They were also suitable as convoy escorts and for service on foreign stations, where larger enemy vessels were less likely to be encountered.

In the edition of **Monday 18th April 1853**, *The Times* reported that the *Leander* had been towed into Plymouth harbour the previous Friday to be fitted for the reception of Lord Ellesmere who was due to leave for New York. There he was

to 'represent the British nation at the Exhibition of Industry in that city'. The ship would be ready in about ten days.

The Times further reported on **Monday 2nd May** that '*Her Majesty's frigate Leander, having been fitted out for the reception of Lord Ellesmere, will go out of harbour [i.e. from Plymouth] on Tuesday [i.e. the 3rd]. His Lordship and suite are expected on Thursday*'. In effect, the ship was towed out of harbour and into the Sound on that day, '*where she took her powder and shells on board*'. She was towed by the steam vessel *Vulture*, which took her 150 leagues westward. It was then announced on **Monday 9th May** that the frigate, under Captain King, would probably sail for New York with the Earl and his suite on the following day.

A report was received from the *Sarah Sands*, a four-masted screw steamship, that it had passed, on May 19th, the *Leander*, '*eight days from England, all well, having on board Lord Ellesmere and suite, off the island of Fayal*'. [Fayal is a Portuguese island in the Azores - Ed.]. Then, on 27th May, the *Geyser*, a paddle sloop sailing from Jamaica to Portsmouth, spoke with Captain King of the *Leander*, with '*Lord Ellesmere and the contributions from England for the Great Exhibition at New York on board*'. Finally, it was announced that the *Leander* had arrived in New York on 10th June from Plymouth with Lord Ellesmere and suite on board. '*The Leander had a very fine passage of 30 days from Plymouth, His Lordship was suffering from a severe attack of gout*'.

The voyage across the Atlantic was described as being most pleasant. A good average speed was maintained throughout and there was no sickness on board - beyond '*the expected stomach qualms of some of the landsfolk comprising the suite*'.

The roll of officers and gentlemen in commission on board the *Leander* was:

Captain: George St. Vincent King

Lieutenants: First: Charles H. May

Second: Charles Agnew

Third: Fred. W. Gough

Fourth: Sir Henry Blackwood

Fifth: Henry Campbell

Sixth: Lord G. Grosvenor [nephew of the Earl - Ed.]

Surgeons: Robertson M.D. and Blake M.D.

Chaplain: Rev. Charles W. Belgrave B.A.

Midshipmen: Messrs. Ward; Hardy; Johnson; Mitchell; Warburton;
Burnston; Ley; Wise.

Royal Marine Force: 68 men. Commanded by Capt. Miller R.N. and Lt.
Douglass R.N., with several non-commissioned officers.

The passengers on board were:

The Right Honourable Francis, Earl of Ellesmere
The Honourable Harriet Catherine Countess of Ellesmere
(His Lordship's children)
Lady Alice Harriet Frederica Egerton
Lady Blanche Egerton
Hon. Algernon Fulke Egerton, Capt. Cold Stream Guards
Hon. Arthur Frederick Egerton, Grenadier Guards

Sir John Acton, Bart. (1834-1902) was also a passenger, stepson of
Lord Granville.

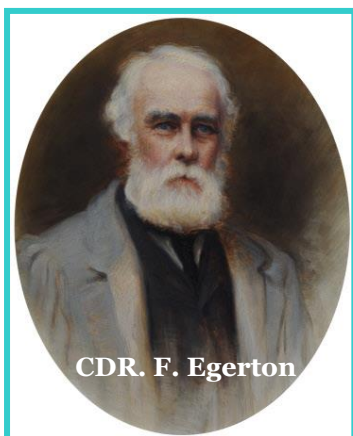
Lord Gilbert Norman Grosvenor (1833-1854) was sixth officer, nephew
of the Earl.

Lord Ellesmere's suite consisted of three maidservants and three menservants. In order to enable the servants to perform their duty with more ease and greater facility, a considerable portion of the aft part of the ship was fitted up as temporary cooking and washing rooms, &c., which somewhat detracts from her appearance. These fixtures will soon be removed, we understand. (The New York Herald)

The New York Herald was clearly impressed by the sight and arrival of the British warship, and by the representation of the British Government, as well as the crew of marines. They were described as being 'in the prime of life, and were excellent specimens of the British military, both in drill, appearance and equipment'. The *Leander* was seen to be a new ship of ample breadth, width, with a good height between decks. According to the report, the boat did not give the appearance of being a very fast one, when seen at anchor, but it was thought to be a quick ship, - in spite of its recent voyage! It was of 2,000 tons laden and had a force of 500 men, of all ranks, with 50 guns mounted of very high calibre.

THE ARRIVAL

The ship *H.M.S. Leander* arrived in New York on **Friday 10th June 1853** from Plymouth, having on board Lord Ellesmere, his family and suite. Sir Charles Lyell and family left England separately on 28th May and were expected to arrive also on the 10th. The ship arrived at the Narrows at about 10.30, and was there taken in tow by a steamtug, *Ajax*. The tug brought the ship to the 'Battery', at the south of Manhattan, where it cast anchor at 12.15, after making the crossing of the Atlantic in thirty days. As the vessel came into the harbour, the officers noticed the American flag flying on Governor's Island and saluted it with a discharge of 21 guns. The cannon of the fort responded within a moment. News of the arrival was immediately sent to Mr. Barclay, the British Consul, and was also telegraphed to the office of the *New York Herald* by its own shipping agent.

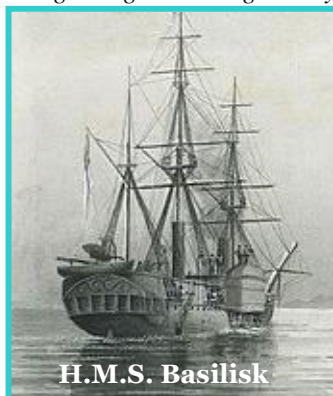


CDR. F. Egerton

The *Leander* was accompanied by the *Basilisk*, a steam sloop, the presumption being that this frigate would convey the British contributions to the Exhibition. The *Basilisk* was commanded by the second son of the Earl, the Honourable Francis Egerton. The *Basilisk* was described as a paddle wheel steam sloop, of 400 horse power. It carried six guns and had recently been serving with the North America and West Indies squadron. *The New York Herald* expressed the hope that the weather would settle before his arrival and that he would not be inconvenienced by '*one of those unkind and unseasonable bouts of rheumatism which sometimes capriciously attacks and makes him a prisoner, but which he thought might be mitigated by the voyage.*'

When first commissioned, the *Basilisk* was commanded by Commander the Hon. F. Egerton, who joined the vessel on the 25th May 1852. He continued to serve as ship's captain during the Crimean War, and served the Royal Navy through to November 1875, gradually achieving the rank of Admiral in 1884 (aged 60).

Much of the detail surrounding the Earl's movements during his time in America has



H.M.S. Basilisk

come from Sir John Dalberg Acton's journal and from the American press, from Tennessee to Ohio. Acton writes that on the evening of **Thursday 9th June**, about 100 miles from Sandy Hook, CT., they picked up a pilot boat. By 8am on Friday morning, land was in sight, and they took on a steamtug, the *Ajax*, because the wind was very light. The *Leander* cast anchor about 300 yards from the Battery, today a public park on the southern tip of Manhattan. Manhattan was described as being very flat, with only two or three church spires visible above the ships' masts!!

It is difficult to say exactly how and when all the members of the Commission travelled to and arrived in New York, but it seems reasonable to suggest that the Earl, his family and their suite crossed together on the *Leander*, and that other members crossed either by private means or on the *Basilisk*. This would explain why some members were already in New York when the *Leander* arrived. *The Herald* quoted an officer as saying that '*many distinguished gentlemen from various parts of England were preparing to leave home for the purpose of visiting us, and that a number had left in the different ships and steamers sailing daily for our ports.*' In addition, the *Herald* announced on **Friday 11th June** that the Commission was now complete. It had been reported that '*Lord Ellesmere has brought some valuable contributions to our exhibition - paintings, works of art, &c. - his own private property, from the family mansion.*' (*Herald*). *The Christian Enquirer* wrote on 18th June 1853 that '*The Earl of Ellesmere has brought to this country some ancient frescoes and the famous Chandos portrait of Shakespeare. It is hoped that they may be procured for exhibition at the Crystal Palace.*'

Health officers, officers from the dockyard, and reporters from *The New York Herald* went on board. Mr. Anthony Barclay, Consul, went on board, wearing a full uniform that he had not worn for four years! He was accompanied by the Consul from Philadelphia, Mr. R. Bunch, and they brought letters. They left the ship after about half an hour to a 9-gun salute, and the Earl and Sir John Acton read their correspondence. The ladies Egerton went ashore in the afternoon, attended by their maids, and with some of the officers. They appeared to be in excellent health. Already they were aware that the Exhibition would not open until the 14th July and, as a result, all their plans for tours would have to be changed.

The ladies returned to the ship at about 7pm., and '*were not in admiration of the place, nor of the Palace which they thought very backward.*' (*Acton*). They had also been bothered by the amount of dust. Just before dinner, Mr. George Wallis (a Commissioner) and Mr. Robert Wilson (an engineer working for James Nasmyth, and a personal friend of Lord Ellesmere) came on board to see Lord Ellesmere about how best to fill their time before the opening. They were already

in New York, staying at the Clarendon Hotel. Sir John was sent up onto the deck to tell them that his Lordship was indisposed and could not see them - he was suffering an attack of gout.

A reporter from *The New York Tribune* had also come aboard and had asked some searching questions. The answers he was given were rather mischievous in nature and were published verbatim the next day - much to the embarrassment and annoyance of one senior officer! Lord Ellesmere was invited to go and visit their offices on the Monday morning.

On the **Saturday** morning (the **11th**), after breakfast, Mr. Theodore Sedgwick, President of the Crystal Palace Association, came aboard, and, amongst other things, offered advice about travelling, which Lord Ellesmere found to his liking. It seems that the President did not appear at all embarrassed at the delay, offering numerous reasons for this. The Earl arranged to meet Mr. Sedgwick on shore later and to



go and see the exhibition site. He then went by boat with his Captain to the Navy Yard, about a mile away, for some things for their ship. At the yard, he was received by three officers and was met with all kinds of military honours. As they left the Yard, they were greeted by a 17-gun salute fired from *the North Carolina*, a 74-gun former ship of the line and now a receiving ship in New York.



After returning briefly to the *Leander*, Lord Ellesmere and Sir John went on shore, where there was a carriage awaiting them, which took them to the office of the Exhibition Committee. There they met several members. Lord Ellesmere then rode with a Mr. Livingstone (maybe Johnston or Mortimer Livingstone) to the site of the exhibition, whilst Sir John rode with Mr. Sedgwick. The Crystal Palace Committee had arranged rooms for Lord Ellesmere and his party at the Clarendon Hotel, as its guests. However, the Ellesmeres preferred to remain on board their ship, which greatly annoyed the staff at the hotel. The first

Clarendon Hotel stood on the corner of Johnson and Washington Streets, across from the Central Post Office building. It was damaged in 1876 in a huge fire that burned down the Brooklyn Theatre, next door to the hotel. The design was of a strong Romanesque Revival design, with turrets and towers.

The Commissioners had brought with them articles provided by the British Government, covering departments such as Ordnance, the Admiralty, the Mint and the Board of Trade. Dr. John Forbes Royle (1798-1858) also had been commissioned to prepare a selection of Art at the expense of the East India Company. A botanist and medical practitioner, he had served with the East India Company for over 25 years. In 1851, he was superintendent of the Indian department of the Great Exhibition. The Earl of Ellesmere took over the Chandos Portrait of Shakespeare from his own collection, three years before he presented it to the National Portrait Gallery as its first exhibit.

Acton was dropped off near the St. Nicholas hotel where a room had been arranged for him. Mr. Sedgwick was to go to Washington the following Monday (13th) to settle all the details with the recently appointed U. S. President, Franklin Pierce. It had now been decided that the exhibition would be opened by the President himself on 14th July. Sedgwick was to invite Lord Ellesmere to dinner on the Friday after returning from the capital. He sought Acton's opinion on the date, since he was most anxious to pay him every respect without the other commissioners, whom he would invite at a later time. Acton then walked along Broadway and met the ladies Egerton in their carriage, having planned to meet at the St. Nicholas for dinner at 5pm.

When Acton returned to the ship (he had no intention of staying at the hotel), he found Sir Charles Lyell waiting for Lord Ellesmere. He had arrived from Boston and was regaling the officers in the gunroom with his conversation. He expressed the dissatisfaction of the commissioners with the Palace. They were disappointed to find that very little had been done to ensure it opened on time. Joseph Whitworth offered his knowledge and expertise, and the officers were pleased to profit from his services.

On **Sunday 12th June**, a good number of visitors went aboard. Amongst the group were some reporters who asked some very inquisitive questions, particularly about the Earl - such as his opinions on America and his favourite dining places. That evening, the ladies Egerton dined at Delmonico's, still a well-known restaurant in the city.

JUNE TO JULY 1853: THE TRAVELS

On **Monday 13th June**, a more respectable set of people went aboard, compared with the previous day. John Crampton, the British Ambassador to Washington (1845-1856), had written to the Earl to beg him to go to Washington. Lady Ellesmere was none too pleased that he had not done enough, or sooner, in their honour. Their plans to go North had been disrupted by the sudden illness of one of their servants, and so they decided to go to Philadelphia the next day, with two midshipmen.

Lord Ellesmere was to meet Acton at the office of the *Tribune* at 3pm, to be shown around by Horace Greeley, its founder, but he arrived late. It had been arranged that the ladies would call there for Lord Ellesmere, but after waiting for 20 minutes, he went by cab to the Clarendon, condemning the shops which must have detained them in strong words! Sir John Acton found them at the landing-stage with their shopping in their carriage! After they had all changed, they went to the Clarendon, where the Earl had invited the gunroom officers to dinner. They had to wait a long time for dinner, and by the time they had to separate, no-one was in a good mood!

After dinner, the Ellesmeres and Acton, together with several officers, went to visit the Haight's. *'They live in a very smart house on 5th Avenue. This is the great street for great people. It is the finest in New York. All the houses are good and there is plenty of foliage.'* (Acton). Richard K. Haight was a wealthy New York merchant, who traded globally. His wife, Sarah Rogers, was a famous beauty and socialite, who wrote *Letters from the Old World*, 1846. There is no account of the Earl's reception at this house, but it can be assumed that, since Haight had travelled to Egypt and the Nile in 1836, they would at least have had one common topic of conversation.

Haight boasted of his collection of books and pictures, though Acton took a great dislike to him and his family, describing the father as *'vain, house-proud and boorish.'* At least, the supper was described as *'very copious.'* However, amongst the guests at this reception, were Sir Charles and Lady Lyell, George Wallis and Charles Wentworth Dilke. After arriving at 8pm, the guests all left at 11.30pm. *'The Ellesmeres were, on the whole, not pleased with what they saw. The impression made on the officers was almost without exception unfavourable.'* (Acton). They would all have returned to the *Leander* since it appears that they did not make use of the rooms available to them at the Clarendon.

The next morning, **Tuesday 14th June**, Lord and Lady Ellesmere and family left for Philadelphia between 1 and 2pm. As they departed, the crew presented arms, and a salute of 17 guns was fired as they went on their way. It was already

known that the Exhibition would not be ready in time for its official opening for quite some time. It was widely said that the Earl would spend his time travelling with his family, on a visit to the neighbouring provinces, proceeding first to Canada, as reported in *The British Colonist* of Halifax on 25th June.

By the morning of **Sunday 19th June**, the Ellesmeres had returned from Philadelphia and they were pleased to welcome back that morning Sir John Acton from his trip to Niagara. They had found the city most pleasing, though Lord Ellesmere's gout and the illness of one of their servants had threatened their plans. The Earl managed to dissuade Sir John from visiting the south, and together they spent the evening exchanging tales of their travels. Sadly, it would appear that there are no official records of their visit to Philadelphia.

On **Monday 20th June**, the anniversary of the accession of Queen to the throne of the British Empire, Lord Ellesmere and his family, accompanied by the Captain, George St. Vincent King, left for Niagara Falls, via Albany, and from there to Canada. It was intended that they would return to New York for the opening of the exhibition. Other people movements also happened that day. Sir John Acton left New York in the evening, bound for Boston, in a steamboat. It had been expected that, from there, he would make a tour of the Southern states, but that part of his tour was cancelled, due to the strong possibility of catching diseases there in the hot, steamy atmosphere in mid-summer. On the same day, Lord Edward Cecil, one of the lieutenants on the *Leander*, returned from his week's visit to Niagara, and was highly delighted with the Falls and adjacent scenery.

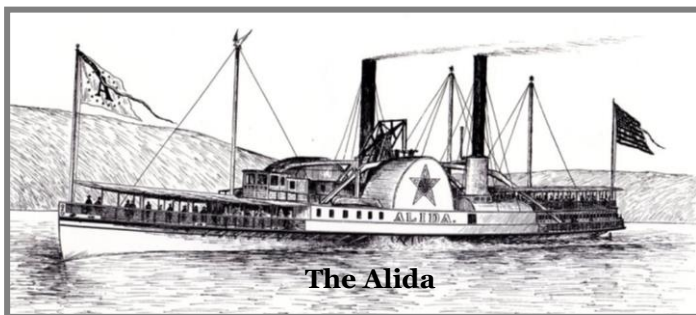
It was announced that the *Leander* was due to leave shortly for Halifax to take on provisions and water. The latter had been made necessary because the authorities in New York had begun charging one dollar per ton, and, consequently the crew had been limited to a ration similar to that whilst at sea. The *New York Herald* condemned this decision by the corporation, believing that it would have been an act of great hospitality to have provided whatever amount of water the ship required. In addition, 24 men had jumped ship and there was some unease between the sailors and the local people.

The Queen's accession was celebrated on the *Leander*. At 8am, the ship was brightly decorated with flags of every colour and hue. In the absence of the Captain, the First Lieutenant May took command of the ship. At 12 noon, a 21-gun salute was fired, whilst a band played the National Anthem. The battery on Governor's Island and the *North Carolina* returned the honour. Staff from *The Herald* were allowed on board to inspect thoroughly the vessel and found a high level of neatness throughout. The crew was described as healthy and good-

natured, compared with the military and stiff appearance of the marines on board.

The New York Herald published the following letter dated "Bagg's Hotel, Utica, NY., **Tuesday 21st June.**"

The Earl of Ellesmere and suite arrived at this house last evening at 8 o'clock, in the express train, from New York. The noble Lord looked fatigued and ill; he wore his left arm in a sling, and appeared to be suffering from his late attack of the gout. The Countess appeared well, and her beautiful daughters attracted much attention, but they did not seem to relish this specimen of an hotel. It does not entirely compare with their quiet country inns in Old England. Aside from the usual excitement of newcomers, the arrival of the noble party created no attention whatever. The people seemed as if live Lords were around in these diggins every day. One of the boys from the Leander attracted more notice among the other boys, by the gold lace and crown on his cap, than all the rest of the party put together. I was amused with a specimen of Yankeedom in the railway station when the train came in. He was a plain countryman, about 40 years of age. He was sitting on a pile of 3 or 4 trunks, with his back against a post, and his straw hat in his lap. I thought him a good subject to astonish, and said - "Do you see that party coming along?" "Wal," said he. "what of 'em?" "That is the Earl of Ellesmere, just arrived to attend the Crystal Palace Exhibition." "The what?" he inquired. "Lord Ellesmere, a British nobleman." "Then he's an Englishman," he replied, very quietly; "He's got a good deal to see 'afore he gits home agin." And in a moment, he added, Guess he'll put up at Bagg's Hotel over night. Wal, that's the



way these places live." It was amusing to see how unconcerned the presence of a live Lord found and left him. The arriving and departing trains kept up an eternal clatter at this house throughout the night. When there were no bullgines (as Burton says) to bellow forth, the cats wawled, and the gay larks of the early morning hours sang their jovial songs, which were not subdued by the open windows. Oh for a quiet night once more! I have not had three consecutive hours' sleep in a week! Trenton Falls is rapidly filling up. Lord Ellesmere's party go over there this morning, and expect to reach Niagara on Friday. From the brief conversation with his Lordship some days ago, he appears to be a remarkably sensible, moderate man, and one who can see through the peculiarities of the people - whatever real good there is in our institutions and our character.

So, welcome to what was the 29th largest city in America, bigger than Chicago or Detroit - at least in the mid-nineteenth century!

Several newspapers printed just one brief comment on the visit of the Ellesmeres to the Niagara region. It is not possible to verify the precise date or location of this encounter because it appeared across the country and over a number of days. The report simply said: *'We overheard the following fragment of conversation the other day, on board the Alida: "I met Lord Ellesmere and his party at Niagara, the other day: I knew the ladies were persons of distinction the moment I saw them, because they wore no jewelry nor any ornament whatsoever".'* Since this comment was heard following the visit to Niagara, and was then made between Albany and New York, this observation must have occurred during the passenger's return journey to New York.



The *Alida*, 265 feet in length, was built as a dayboat for the Hudson river traffic, and commenced her regular trips on 16th April, 1847 between New York and Albany. During her career as a passenger carrier, she was always a favourite with the travelling public. (George W. Murdock)

In fact, the Ellesmeres had left

Niagara for Montreal and Quebec. *The Montreal Herald* reported on **Tuesday 28th June** that the family has been staying at the Clifton House, Niagara.

The painting opposite by Michael Seymour, and dated 22nd July 1846, shows Clifton House on the left and the American Falls on the right at Niagara Falls.

Amongst the large number of arrivals at the Clifton House, Niagara Falls, we observe Prince Victor, of Hohenlohe, Germany; Earl of Ellesmere and party, England; Lord Gilbert Grosvenor, do; Lady Seymour and daughter, Canada; Lieut. J. Grant Raymond, do; Hon. A. Egerton, do.

The Morning Chronicle of Quebec, also dated **Tuesday 28th June**, reported the imminent arrival of Lord Ellesmere and his party.

We learn by the New York Journals that Lord Ellesmere and family left that city for the Falls of Niagara early last week [ie. w/c 20 June - Ed.]. His Lordship is reported to arrive in Quebec on Tuesday or Wednesday next [29 June - Ed.].

The Montreal Herald of **Thursday 30th June**, under the headline - More Distinguished Arrivals - reported the arrival of the suite as follows:

Canada is, evidently, becoming a fashionable tour. ... We observe among the arrivals last night at the Donegana Hotel, The Earl and Countess of Ellesmere, Ladies Alice and Blanche, W. Algernon Egerton, Lord Gilbert Grosvenor, Capt. A. Egerton and four servants. And at the St. Lawrence Hall, Lord Plantagenet and suite.



The original Donegana hotel was burnt down on 20th August 1849 during the Montreal riots, and the site was purchased the following year and rebuilt under American management. In a guide book of 1866, the manager, Daniel Gale,

described it as having '150 rooms, which are large, airy and cheerful. This hotel has been thoroughly refurnished and fitted up in a style second to none on this continent.'

On **Thursday 7th July**, the Earl of Ellesmere was invited to attend a meeting of the Literary and Historical Society in Montreal. *The Morning Chronicle* of Saturday 9th July 1853 reported this as follows:

The following address from the Literary and Historical Society was presented on Thursday last, to the Right Honourable the Earl of Ellesmere, by a deputation of gentlemen, consisting of the signers of the address, who were introduced to His Lordship at Government House, by Colonel Irvine, provincial Aide-de-Camp.

To the Right Honourable Francis, Earl of Ellesmere

We have the honour to appear before your lordship as a Deputation of the Council and Associate members of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec to offer our congratulations upon your safe arrival on this continent, and heartily to welcome to our City one not more distinguished by his station, than by his exertions in the cause of Literature. The circumstances of your Lordship being at this time elected by our Gracious Sovereign as Commissioner to the American Exhibition at New York imparts an additional interest to the occasion.

The eminent position held by your Lordship in the world of Literature, your connexion with the Society of Northern Antiquities at Copenhagen, and the special interest you have manifested in the early communication ascertained to have existed between the Norse Settlements in northern Europe and on the American Seaboard, lead us to hope that the aims and objects of our Society, among which the investigation of the ante-Columbian [the Heroic Age of America] holds a prominent place, may prove not unworthy of your Lordship's interest and attention.

The incorporated association which we have the honour to represent is the oldest of the kind in Canada. It has had many difficulties to contend with: but its published transactions, and the spirit of research which it has excited, attest that its endeavours have not wholly been in vain.

We beg leave to express to your Lordship our best wishes for your continued health and welfare, and respectfully solicit that you will allow yourself to be elected an Honorary and Corresponding Member of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

*We have the honour to be, with every sentiment of respect,
Your Lordship's obd't servants,
Archd. Campbell, H.M. Notary Vice Pres.
Armine W, Mountain, Clerk, B.B.
William Andrew, M.A.
A. Noble, Lieut. R.A.
E.T. Fletcher, Librarian.
F.X. Garneau, Council Secy.
E.A. Meredith, LL.B.
C.N. Montizambert.
Thos. Pope.
Robert Symes.
J. Young.*

Quebec, 7th July, 1853.

Lord Ellesmere replied to this address in the following way:

Gentlemen:- I have to return my warmest acknowledgements for the obliging terms in which you have been pleased to welcome and congratulate me on an occasion which I must admit is a fit subject of congratulation, my visit to this country and this city.

Short and hurried as that visit must necessarily be, it has already been rich in interest and instruction.

I am not one of those who imagine that because they have seen a river tumble itself over a ledge of rock they are in a condition to appreciate the condition and resources of a province. Still though I have seen little I have heard more, and I have seen and heard enough to impress me with a due sense of the value and importance of this one of the fairest portions of that sovereignty on which the sun never sets. I have at least learned something of the extent and richness of the field which it presents for the indomitable energies of a race which seems a destined instrument in the hands of providence for reclaiming the waste and peopling the desert; and have learned how in another portion of its inhabitants it retains with those songs of the Seine which I had the good fortune to listen to last night, the traditions of the kindly characteristics of the France of their fathers, when France was in the van of civilisation as a model to Europe in everything which

attempts and humanises the social intercourse of mankind. That these two races may live and flourish together in the enjoyment of freedom and order continue further on such subjects of moral and is my sincere wish. I dare not however continue further on such subjects of moral and social interest, because within any limits suitable to this occasion I could not do any, the least, justice to the feelings of satisfaction and pride for the present, and hope or the future, which even a cursory glance at this province is calculated to awaken in the breast of an Englishman.

It is a satisfaction to me to know in the busy cultivation of such elements of material progress and prosperity you, gentlemen, can yet find leisure and inclination for such pursuits as those which it is the object of this Society to promote. It is an additional gratification to me to find that accidents of study have led you into a line of historical research specially appropriate to this country which, as you have been good enough to notice, I have myself endeavoured according to my humble means to promote.

It only remains for me, gentlemen, to thankfully accept the honour of that admission into your ranks which you do me the favour to propose. Should any occasion arise in which I can justify that admission, by contributing in any shape to the objects of the Society, I shall be ready and eager to avail myself of it.

E.E.

At some point after the visit to Montreal, the Earl travelled to Quebec, because *The Globe and Mail*, (of Toronto) on **Tuesday 12th July**, reported:

The Earl of Ellesmere and family have arrived at Quebec, on a visit to the Governor General. His Lordship fully intended visiting Toronto, but an attack of gout in both hands and a severe sore throat compelled him to continue his journey to a place where he could obtain repose for some time. We understand that the Earl will proceed to New York, and that he will return to Quebec, to sail for England in the Leander frigate which has been ordered from Halifax to meet him at that port. His Lordship still hopes that he may be able to pay a visit to Toronto.

This is where reliance upon archive newspaper reports becomes difficult when trying to place events into a time sequence. Reports often appear a few days after the events have taken place, and, depending upon their source of information, they can often seem confusing, as far as dates are concerned. Lord Ellesmere clearly had already met the Governor-General, Lord Elgin, and together they planned a visit, since, on **Tuesday 12th July**, *The Quebec Chronicle* said that

'these noblemen are going on a tour up the Ottawa.' This referred to the river, since today's city only came into existence in 1855. James Bruce was the 8th Earl of Elgin, and Governor-General of Canada from 1847 to 1854. During his tenure of office, the nascent country of Canada was still trying to overcome the tensions between English and French residents, culminating in the Montreal Riots of August 1849.

The prolonged visit of Lord Ellesmere in Canada is fortunate, as we feel convinced he will carry with him favourable impressions of the country, and also, it is to be hoped, of the inhabitants.

We are grateful to learn, and feel certain our many friends in the Ottawa, will be equally so, that His Excellency Lord Elgin accompanied by Lord Ellesmere intends to pay a visit to this hitherto neglected portion of the Province, feeling certain that the beautiful scenery and great natural advantages arising from inland water communications, which a little judicious expenditure will develop, will make the most favourable impression on their Lordships as they did on the members of the Cabinet and others ...

This trip must have occurred a few days before the print, since, on **Tuesday 12th July**, *The Montreal Herald* announced that, on the 11th July:

The Right Hon. the Earl of Ellesmere, and the ladies Egerton, Lord Grosvenor, &c., embarked at 5 o'clock this afternoon on board the Steamer 'Quebec' en route for New York. A salute of 17 Guns was fired from Durham Terrace, and the guard of honour was on the wharf. The Governor General, the Hon. R. Bruce and Col. Irvine, and several distinguished personages, also were on the wharf. The Commandant and Heads of Departments accompanied Lord Ellesmere to the steamer.

The events surrounding the Opening Ceremony and the Banquet held to celebrate the opening, both held on the **14th July**, and the illness which confined the Earl to his bed for several days, are covered in following chapters, since they need to be described in great detail.

*The New Orleans Daily Crescent, of **Saturday 23rd July 1853**, reported that 'The President, the Secretary of War, Attorney General, and Pierce Butler, Esq., called on Lord Ellesmere and his two daughters at the Clarendon, on the **14th**'.*

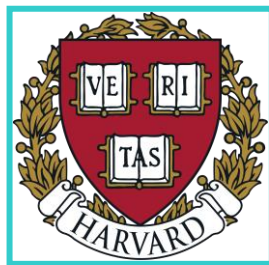
The Montreal Herald on **Friday 22nd July** confirmed the visit by the American President to the Earl on the **14th** at their hotel in New York.

This magnificent establishment, 60 Union Place, is full of distinguished travellers - Lord Ellesmere, Lady Ellesmere, Hon. Algernon Egerton, Hon. Arthur Egerton, Lord Grosvenor, Sir John Acton, Sir Charles Lyell and Lady Lyell, C.W. Dilke, Prof. Wilson, Mr. Whitworth, Mr, Wallis, Commissioners from Great Britain, et al., are all at the Clarendon Hotel, New York. We learn that Lord Ellesmere was for a few days confined to his room, by a severe attack of the gout. The President of the United States, with Governor Seymour of New York, called on him in the evening, after the opening of the Crystal Palace.

Then, in its edition of **Monday 25th July**, it further reported that the 'Rev. Dr. Wainwright and Gen. Scott called on Lord Ellesmere at the Clarendon. Lord Ellesmere had been confined to his house for several days by the gout.' No reference to a date was given for this latter visit, though it will be seen later that he left New York for Boston that day.

Information about Bishop Wainwright and Gen. Winfield Scott appears in the chapter on the Opening of the Exhibition, mainly because of their rôles there. At this point, it is sufficient to say that the Bishop was the Episcopal Bishop of New York, and Winfield Scott was the defeated candidate for the presidency in 1852.

On **Wednesday 20th July**, at the Commencement of Harvard College, the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred on the Earls of Elgin and Ellesmere. The Earl of Elgin was at that time the Governor-General of Canada. It is recorded in the University Archives that, on 20th July, a vote of the President and Fellows of Harvard College (the Harvard Corporation), 1853, agreed to confer an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on Lord Ellesmere.



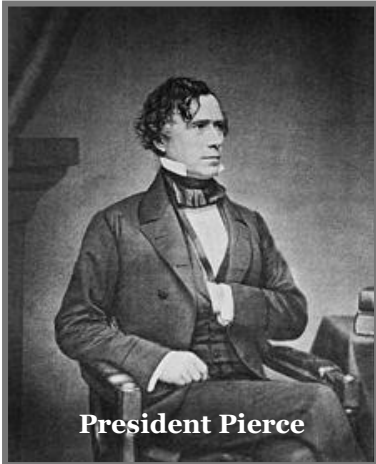
The term *commencement* was used in the Middle Ages to describe the ceremony that admitted candidates for the degree of Master of Arts and gave them license to begin teaching. In more recent times, the ceremony has been moved to the end of an academic year, and is the conferment of degrees on undergraduates and postgraduates, together with honorary degrees. At the ceremony in 1853, James Bruce, 8th Earl of Elgin, delivered the Commencement Day Address. Given that the Earl of Ellesmere moved to

Boston only on Monday 25th July, and that prior to that he had been severely afflicted with gout, it seems probable that the honorary degree would have been conferred *in absentia*. The Archives at Harvard have confirmed that the degree was, indeed, conferred on that date, but that there is no evidence that he either attended the ceremony or not. In point of fact, he did not move to Boston until the following week.

The Earl had been confined to his bed because of his gout for several days. It was on **Saturday 23rd July** that the Earl of Ellesmere was able to make his first official to the Exhibition, together with Lady Ellesmere and Sir Charles Lyell. They stayed for only a short time, but their attention was devoted entirely to the works of art, at least those which had been taken from their cases. More had still to be put on display. The Earl appeared weak and seemed incapable of much exertion, but he was determined to witness the exhibits. *The New York Herald* noted that *'There was nothing in their appearance which distinguished them from the other visitors, and that air of hauteur which we consider inseparable from aristocratic rank, could not be discerned in their plain, unassuming and courteous manners.'*

THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION

Thursday 14 July 1853



President Pierce

Franklin Pierce (1804-1869) became the 14th President of the United States on 4th March 1853, just 5 months before the opening of the Exhibition. He had had a successful legal career before becoming a general in the army. He stood for the presidency as a northern Democrat, who saw the anti-slavery movement as a threat to the unity of the nation. His family life was, sadly, a grim affair, since his wife was suffering from a long-term depression and their 3 sons all died young - the last killed in a railway accident, aged 11, shortly before his inauguration. As president, he was both inept and weak, and is considered by some historians to have been one of the

worst American presidents. His bid for re-election in 1856 failed, because he did not gain the support of his own party.

Following his extended visit to Canada, the Earl of Ellesmere was expected to arrive back in New York in time for the celebrations. Until then, he was intending to wait at Halifax, Nova Scotia, before undertaking that journey.

The President's decision to appear at the opening was a late one, since he was anxious not to offend those groups which either supported or opposed the concept. Furthermore, he was reluctant to appear to sanction the exhibition, since many felt that it was a grandiose idea on the part of some wealthy entrepreneurs in New York. *The Shasta Courier*, (of Shasta, Calif.), on Saturday 13th August reported that "It was his desire to make the trip as a private citizen, and to be spared the annoyance of committees of reception, &c., on the route." The



President, with his secretaries Cushing, Davis and Guthrie, left Washington D.C. on the **11th July** for New York, in order to tour the north and visit the exhibition. The day of the inauguration of the Crystal Palace started very brightly - in fact, it was one of the nicest days of the year. Several thousands of visitors from near and far arrived in the city, by carriage, steamboat, railroad, public and private conveyances. Many came from Europe and the Pacific, and the nearer parts of the homeland. All had come to witness the ceremony and to catch sight of their new president. One of the greatest pictures for the people was the sight of numerous military personnel from a variety of exhibiting countries. Infantry and cavalry created quite a splash of colour. The President and his suite arrived on the steamer *Josephine*, which docked at the Battery. He was welcomed by the city mayor, delivered a brief speech, and then reviewed a line of troops. After mounting a horse, he proceeded to make his way towards the Crystal Palace.

By noon, he was making his way along Broadway, when an abrupt sharp shower of rain started to fall. Suddenly, infantry, cavalry, onlookers all started to seek shelter, dashing into shops, houses, and under awnings. The shower lasted 15 minutes, so that, when the procession reformed, many were dripping and bedraggled. Inside the Palace, the scene was very animated, with people coming to their seats from all directions. Workmen were still opening boxes of goods destined for display. When the President reached the palace, he was seen to be wet and miserable. However, *'A good lunch at an ice cream parlour opposite the palace, and a clean shirt, made the President quite a new man.'*

At 2.30pm, the President arrived at the head of the procession at the Palace. He was greeted inside by the applause of 10,000 people and escorted to the main platform, situated in the north nave. There were seats for 700 people. On the platform were state Governors, U.S. senators, judges, representatives of the army and navy, and, according to some newspaper reports, the Earl of Ellesmere and his suite. It can only be supposed that the reporters were working from some kind of press release, since it has become evident that the Earl was too ill to attend the ceremony, having been confined to his room immediately upon his return to the city, at an early hour in the morning. However, the whole of the British delegation was there, and that included the Countess of Ellesmere and her family, who were seated at the front right corner. Indeed, the whole of the British contingent occupied a very prominent position on the platform. Archbishop Hughes and Bishop Wainwright, together with clergymen of all denominations were also present.

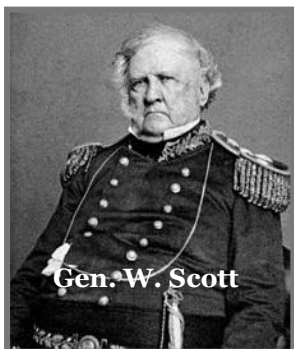
Bishop Wainwright read an opening prayer, and this was followed by an anthem, sung by the New York Sacred Harmonic Society, accompanied by the National Guard Band. Theodore Sedgwick then stood and delivered a short speech, thanking the president for his attendance. It had been seen to be crucial for the

success of the Exhibition that it received the full approval of the national government, even though it was conceived and executed at a more local level. And it was through their own energy that this had come to fruition. He then lauded the aspirations of the committee - to draw closer together the Government and its people; to bind together the two hemispheres; to reveal the inventive spirit and energy of its own people; and to extend the area of commerce between nations.

He proceeded to describe *'the gorgeous and gigantic pageant exhibited in Hyde Park two years ago.'* And then remarked that *'the flag of England, borne by a vessel commissioned by that royal lady who commands the respect of foreign nations as she does the affections of her own people, [applause,] has waved in our waters on this peaceful errand.'*

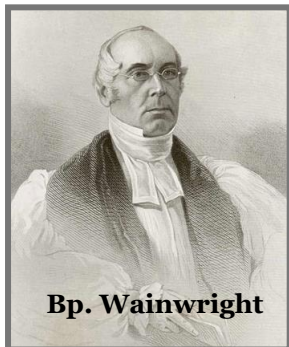
President Pierce then rose. He thanked Mr. Sedgwick for his invitation to the inauguration and to show his respect for the Chairman and his committee in bringing before the people *'all that belongs to the interest of our country.'* He continued: *'Everything around us reminds us that this is a utilitarian age, and that science, instead of being locked up, appears before the admiration of the world, and has begun to be tributary to the arts, manufactures, agriculture, and all that promotes social comfort. [Applause.]'* In conclusion, he acknowledged that the committee had brought together people, not just from the Union, but *'men eminent in almost every walk of life, from every civilised country on the face of the globe.'* And in so doing, they had done more than any man or men to promote peace among men. This speech, though unscripted, was well received.

Reporters noted the presence on the platform of Archbishop Hughes, of the Roman Catholic Church, and Bishop Wainwright, of the Episcopal Church. To their obvious delight, the two clerical gentlemen *'shook hands with each other with a seeming cordiality that challenged many remarks on the part of the lookers-on.'* They also shook hands with the President, the Ellesmeres, and a small number of other distinguished guests. After the ceremonies, the President immediately returned to his quarters at the Astor House.



Three prominent figures in America at that time - Gen. Winfield Scott, Archbishop Hughes, and Bishop Wainwright - all appeared on the platform and were observed in discussion with the recently installed president. **Winfield Scott** (1786-1866) had been a candidate for the Whig Party presidential nomination three times, and was eventually selected in 1852, but he lost the general election to Franklin

Pierce. He was later the army's senior officer at the start of the American Civil War (1861-5) and helped to ensure the successful inauguration of Abraham Lincoln as the 16th president in March 1861. **Archbishop John Hughes** (1797-1864) was born in Ireland and emigrated twenty years later. He became Archbishop of New York in 1850 and was the prime mover behind the establishment of St. Patrick's Cathedral in the city.



Bp. Wainwright

He was described as being a very complex character and was regarded as "*the best known, if not exactly the best loved, Catholic bishop in the country.*"

Bishop Jonathan Wainwright (1792-1854) was born in Liverpool and relocated to Massachusetts with his parents and siblings in 1802. He was made bishop in 1852 and was regarded as "*the best known, if not exactly the best loved, Catholic bishop in the country.*" What was to become the American Civil War was only eight years away and tensions were already rising across the nation. Each of these three gentlemen had views on slavery and the poor urban

workers of the north, and their acknowledgement of each other was clearly of interest to the American people.

The New York Tribune expressed its dismay that there were too many guests representing the military, the judiciary, the legislature - and no representation from the artists and mechanics who had raised the building, and who had been ignored by the Committee of Arrangements. *'We saw fighting men in abundance, politicians and place-holders, but not a single man eminent for the arts which the Crystal Palace was opened to celebrate. ... But we would ask, where were the architects of our Palace, Messrs. Carstensen and Gildermeister? Why were they not on the platform ... Yesterday was their triumph, and they should have been seen and heard.'* The tone of the report was quite condemnatory.

On the **15th July**, the exhibition opened to the public, between 10am admission cost 50 cents, and a junior ticker was 25 cents. A season ticket was also available at \$10. Readers of some newspapers were advised not to come too quickly to the exhibition, since many items were still in boxes, and it was expected that it could take up to four weeks for everything to be in place. Furthermore, carpenters and painters were still at work. On this first open day, admission receipts raised \$3,000 - from 7,000 visitors. The total amount of floor space was approximately 152,000 sq. ft. The United States contributions occupied nearly 55,000 sq.ft. - twice the space taken by the United Kingdom. Among the unopened boxes were eight or ten large crates sent over from London containing suits of armour from the Tower of London.

It was on **Saturday 23rd July** that the Earl of Ellesmere was able to make his first official to the Exhibition, together with Lady Ellesmere and Sir Charles Lyell. They stayed for only a short time, but their attention was devoted entirely to the works of art, at least those which had been taken from their cases. More had still to be put on display. The Earl appeared weak and seemed incapable of much exertion, but he was determined to witness the exhibits. *The New York Herald* noted that *'There was nothing in their appearance which distinguished them from the other visitors, and that air of hauteur which we consider inseparable from aristocratic rank, could not be discerned in their plain, unassuming and courteous manners.'*

By the **27th July**, it was reported that *'probably not more than one-third of the articles intended for the exhibition have yet been introduced into the building.'* The value of goods displayed at that time from England was assessed at \$204,925. And the suits of armour had still not been opened! The accuracy of this report must be treated cautiously, since some newspapers were still very much opposed to the whole concept of the exhibition; but it remains the case that some objects were still to be unpacked.

Theodore Sedgwick was the first president of the Crystal Palace Association. After a year, he was succeeded by Phineas T. Barnum ('The Great Entertainer'), who put together a re-inauguration of the site in May 1854, when Henry Ward Beecher and Elihu Burritt were the featured orators. This revived interest in the Palace; but, when the exhibition finally closed on November 1, 1854, despite the change in leadership and paid attendance exceeding one million, the sponsors of the fair were left with \$300,000 in debt. By the end of 1856 it was a dead property.

THE BANQUET

President Pierce left the Astor House at 10am on **Friday 15th July**, to take a pleasure trip down the bay. Before starting, he received a number of visitors, who had crowded into the hotel from an early hour. That evening, the President, members of the Cabinet, the Governor of New York, Lord Ellesmere, Senators and representatives of the United States, and other distinguished guests, were to attend a grand dinner at the Metropolitan Hotel, in Broadway, given by the Crystal Palace Association. It was expected to be the grandest banquet ever held in the city, with approximately 350 guests in attendance.

Guests arrived between 6pm and 7.30pm. The ceremonies began with a prayer from the Rev. Dr. Spring, after which the dinner lasted for an hour and a half. Fifteen toasts were to be proposed:

1. The President of the United States.
2. The Senate of the United States.
3. The Governments of Foreign Nations which have contributed.
4. Prince Albert, the originator in 1851.
5. The Foreign Commissioners.
6. The Governor of the State of New York.
7. The Governors of our sister states.
8. The Commissioners from the other States in the Union.
9. The Fraternity of Nations.
10. The City of New York.
11. The Arts of Peace.
12. The Judiciary.
13. The Army and Navy of the United States.
14. The American Institute.
15. The Press.

Quite a long list! In fact, the proceedings lasted until half past midnight! Mr. Sedgwick rose to propose the toast to the President, but prefaced his remarks by making reference to *'those who have come forward to greet us, from all parts of Europe, our acknowledgements are justly and emphatically due. But our acknowledgements are due to those English gentlemen who have come from the other side of the Atlantic, and submitted to the annoyances to which they have been subjected in order to render us material assistance in reaching the point to which we have at length come.* [Applause]. He then concluded his comments by comparing the Englishman's loyalty to their Queen to the Americans' loyalty to their president.

President Pierce rose and responded as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen. In rising to respond to the sentiment which has just been proposed, my own thoughts, I confess, dwell on a circumstance which mars - and, so far as my knowledge extends, the only circumstance which does mar - the festivities of this occasion. I refer to the absence, gentlemen, of Lord Ellesmere. [Sensation]. Grateful as we all are that he came among us, how much more gratifying is it to reflect that he came not alone [great cheering], but that he brought his family to grace and honour the inauguration of your Palace. [more cheering]. Sir, (turning to Mr. Sedgwick), I should never be forgiven should I fail to pay my respects to another gentleman who has paid so many compliments, I have sometimes thought hardly deserved, to our countrymen - a gentleman who, if his reputation solely reposed upon the accomplishments of science, would stand at the head of scientific men. But his reputation, Mr. President and gentlemen, rests upon those broader and ampler grounds which have added greatly to the sources of human knowledge. [Great applause]. You understand me that I refer to Sir Charles Lyell. [More cheering].

He concluded his response to the toast by thanking all the overseas visitors for coming, trusting that *'there shall be no rivalry between us and them'*. Regrettably, Lord Ellesmere was not able to attend this event either, due to a recurrence of gout. This was in spite of the fact that he had left Quebec hastily in the hope of being present. It therefore fell to Sir Charles Lyell to present an address to the guests. In replying to a toast of the foreign commissioners, he began by apologising for the absence of the Earl.

I have to return, as your President has called upon me to do so, in my own name, and that of my colleagues, our thanks for the honour you have done us in drinking our healths. After what the President of the United States and the President of this Society have kindly said of their regret for the absence of the Earl of Ellesmere, it is almost unnecessary that I should, although he commissioned me to do so, apologise to you for his unavoidable absence. Not only, in spite of indisposition, did he press his journey from Canada to this city in the hope of being present at the inaugural ceremonies, but he requested me to assure you that he should have been here today had he not been confined to his bed by illness. [Hear, hear] He also begged me to say how much gratified he has been, during his

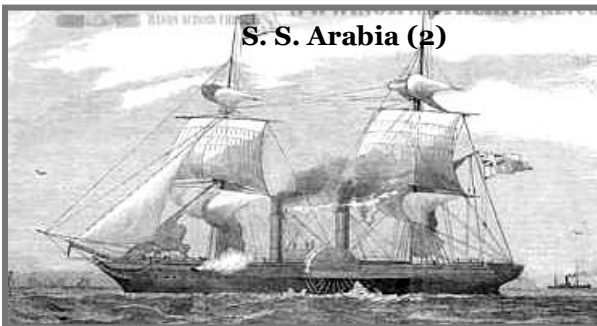
late tour through this country with the kind welcome he has received, and, to use his kind words, "the cordial yet unobtrusive hospitality he has everywhere met with." [Cheers]

Sir Charles then reflected upon his earlier visits to America and to the steadily improving relations between the two countries, quoting the impact that the early Olympic Games had upon the Greek people, *'providing a means for the interchange of mutual kindness and hospitality.'* Indeed, of the many speeches delivered that evening, the one by Sir Charles Lyell was considered to be the best. *'It was happily conceived and worded.'* However, one great disappointment for the press, and which did not go down at all well, was the fact that the architects of the building, Messrs. Carstensen and Gikdemeister, who were present, were not mentioned at the grand dinner.

Later that same evening, the Countess and her daughters attended the opera at Castle Garden. There was great excitement at the prospect of the President appearing. 160 seats in the centre had been reserved for the Crystal Palace dinner party. A small number of the guests, who included Lady Ellesmere and her daughters, with Lady Lyell, were present at the beginning of the performance of Roberto by Meyerbeer. Others were expected to arrive at about 9pm, including President Pierce. The end of the first act was supposed to signal the arrival of the President, and a rush of people was occasionally made.

By the end of the second act, people seemed to have made up their minds that the President would not be coming. In truth, the President had left the Banquet during the third speech, with his secretary. All at once, a cry was heard and there was a stampede towards the door as the President made his way inside to the reserved seats. *'Heroic attempts were made on all sides at this moment to obtain a fair view of him. ... Six inches additional in stature could have been sold at any price. Fortunately for the small men, however, the crisis was of short duration.'* The President showed great pleasure at seeing the lead soprano, Madame Sontag, sing to his neighbours, Lady Ellesmere and her daughters. At the end of the third

act, the President left Castle Garden. The audience rose with him and cheered loudly.



Several days after the ceremonies, it was reported that the Rev. Dr. Wainwright and Gen. Scott called on Lord Ellesmere at the

Clarendon hotel, since he had been confined to his bed for some time because of gout. And then, on **Saturday 23rd July**, the Earl visited the exhibition with Sir Charles Lyell. This member of the Commission, with Lady Lyell, departed New York for Liverpool on **Wednesday 27th July** on the steamer *Arabia* (2). *'During his brief visit here he has taken much interest in the exhibition. His sudden departure will be sincerely regretted by the numerous friends he has made among us.'* Mr. William Mure, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at New Orleans; and the Reverends J. Graham and H. Von Rohr, missionaries to Central Africa and bearer of despatches to Liberia were amongst the passengers. The ship had made its maiden voyage on 1st January 1853, between Liverpool and New York. Built by Cunard, the aim was for the ship to beat all times across the Atlantic. The maiden journey took 15 days, and the return sail took only 13 days, thanks to a fair wind and a smooth sea.

On the Thursday evening, there had been much uncertainty as to whether President Pierce would remain in the city. Late into the evening, he had decided to stay and attend the formal banquet. He therefore left New York on the Saturday morning shortly after 10 o'clock aboard a special train, bound for Newark, Trenton and Princeton. The president's party arrived in Philadelphia at 2 o'clock, and from there proceeded to Baltimore. His staff communicated his safe arrival in Washington that evening.

Upon his return to England, Sir Charles Lyell was invited to spend two nights at Osborne House, with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. In her journals, the Queen noted that *'Lord Clarendon and Sir C. Lyell (come for 2 nights) dined. The latter told many amusing American stories and Lord Clarendon was all very agreeable. Sir C. Lyell had just returned from the American Exhibition, where he went as one of the Commissioners. The Americans are anxious to improve.'* (Queen Victoria's Journals: 22nd August 1853). No doubt, both the Queen and the Prince were delighted to receive a first-hand account of the exhibition, and to be entertained with stories and tales from across the Atlantic. Sir Charles reflected some of these thoughts of the Queen when he wrote to his wife.

Osborne: August 23, 1853

My dearest Mary,- I made out my journey and voyage very successfully. The parterre of flowers was in great beauty, and the views of the sea in spite of cloudy weather was very pleasing.

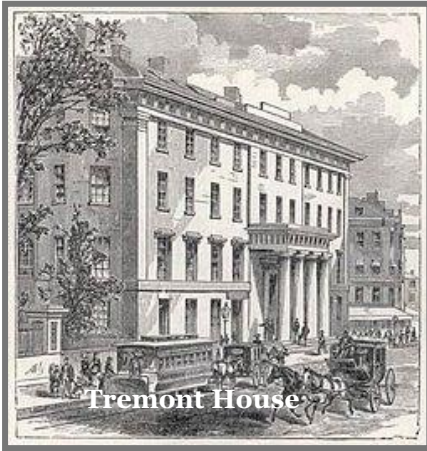
I got here between six and seven, and Lord Clarendon arrived just after. I was very glad to find that he was to be the Minister in attendance. As usual, he has made himself very agreeable.

He has been reading Lord Ellesmere's speech in my paper, and likes it much; the Prince is to have it by and by. ... After dinner, when four of the household played whist, the Prince had a long talk with Lord Clarendon and me about the United States, foreign politics and university reform. ...

The Prince then invited us to join the ladies and sit down at their table, and I was asked by the Queen news of New York doings, and made them merry with Soft-shell, Old Hunkers, &c., and gave an account of the Exhibition prospects, United States prosperity, &c. ...

Ever affectionately yours, Charles Lyell.

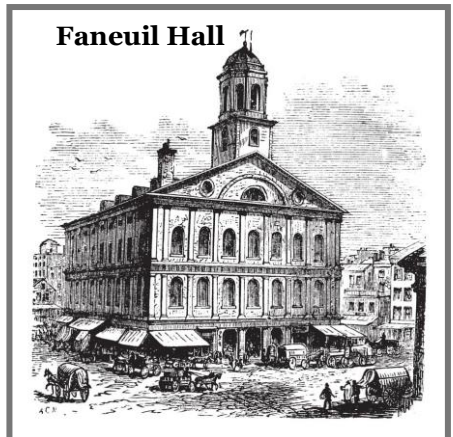
ELLESMERE IN BOSTON



The Earl of Ellesmere and family left New York on the afternoon of **Monday 25th July** for Boston, from where, after a brief visit to Springfield, Mass., and the neighbourhood of Boston, he was to pursue his journey alone, leisurely, to Nova Scotia, and from there to England. Sir Charles Lyell also was expected to leave at about the same time for England. Messrs. Dilke and Whitworth were to remain for in America for some months. The Ellesmeres were booked to stay at the Tremont House hotel at the junction

of Tremont and Beacon Streets. Opened in 1829 (and closed in 1895), the hotel was a four storey building, in the neo-classical style, and boasted several firsts - indoor plumbing and running water, locked rooms for the guests, bellboys. At the time, the hotel set the standard for luxury accommodation.

The American press announced that Lord Ellesmere and his suite had arrived in the city on the **Tuesday** morning (**26th**), and, upon his arrival, accepted an invitation to attend the annual festival of the Public Schools. Lord Ellesmere attended the annual School Exhibition, and in the afternoon, at Faneuil Hall, delivered his first speech in America. He was accompanied by the Hon. Captain Egerton and Lord Gilbert Grosvenor. The Mayor, Benjamin Seaver, preceded him in a brief address, welcoming him to the city, the *'Modern Athens,'* and acknowledged the indebtedness of this country to England. The mayor, who is remembered principally for his effort to secure a building for the Public Library, said, *'To Her, we owe some of our most cherished and most glorious institutions; and we shall never forget the debt, until that time comes when we forget everything that has made us a happy and prosperous people.'* Their distinguished visitor responded in a well-conceived speech, which was frequently interrupted by the applause of



his audience. However, one newspaper noted that *'his health is quite feeble.'* Lord Ellesmere rose to respond, and was greeted with long applause. He spoke as follows:



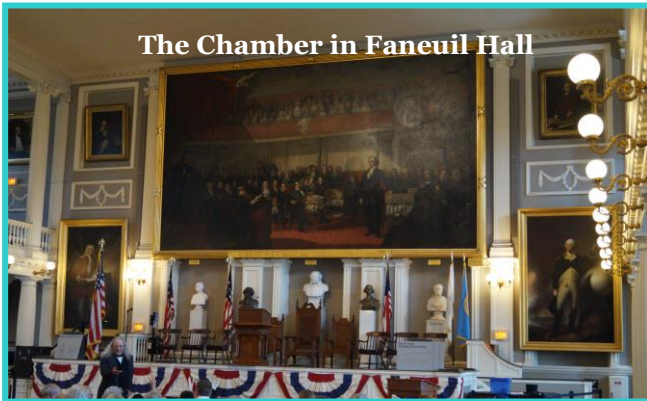
I accept the honour, for such as a stranger and sojourner within your gates, I esteem it, of addressing you, with every feeling of satisfaction but that of any confidence in my ability to do justice to the occasion or to my own feeling. They are, in every other respect, feelings of unmingled gratification, not the less intense because totally unexpected; for I reached Boston, after a night journey from New York this morning, unconscious of the pleasure or the duty which awaited me. I have not wasted or misused the short time which my engagements have permitted me to bestow on a visit to this country. I have accumulated and shall carry away with me a store of recollections, but I can truly say that among these memories of scenes of natural

beauty, or evidences of human progress, none will be more grateful to me than that of the scene I am now witnessing, and of the occasion at which I now assist. I have, indeed, one regret in the absence of certain of my companions of my journey, from whom for a few hours only, I am today separated. When, gentlemen, I resolved at the bidding of my sovereign, to undertake this journey, I did what I recommend every American gentleman who visits my country to do - I took the precaution to take my wife and daughters with me. I had heard that in virtue of the social usage of these States, a character which in the pages of a popular periodical of my country, has drawn tears, though not of grief, from many readers, that of an unprotected female was absolutely unknown in America. I felt that if I, as was too probable, should be incapacitated from infirmity from prosecuting my own researches, I could send such female emissaries further west, if need were. to observe and report. I the more regret on this special occasion, the absence of one whose time, I may say whose life, in her country residence at home, is unceasingly devoted to the task of popular education. Lady Ellesmere, like myself, would have been pleased to see, in the attendance here, so many living and fair proofs of the interest which her own sex takes in that subject. A poet of my country has said that Paradise itself was but a poor abode till made perfect by the presence of woman -

*"The world was sad, the garden was a wild,
And man, the hermit sighed, till woman smiled."*

I know not how this may have been, but of this I am certain that when and where woman abstains from, or is excluded from, a large share in the education of the youth of a community, education will bear bad fruit and cease to be worthy of the name.

I have heard since I came into this room from the Mayor, that formerly this time-honoured ceremony was more restricted than now, that it ended at least in a banquet at which gentlemen only assisted. I congratulate on the change of practice, of which I see the evidence. I hear with pleasure, also, from the Mayor, that the growing facilities of intercourse between our two countries are daily attracting more and more of your citizens as visitors to my own. I am, then, probably addressing many who have made that not difficult, and I hope pleasant experiment. If so, am I wrong in supposing that you have visited with something of a filial interest, the haunts of your ancestors, near or remote, that in contemplating the relics of antiquity there preserved, you have experienced something of the respectful interest with which the younger



members of a noble house may be supposed to contemplate the grey hairs and seemly wrinkles of a father of the race? I do not mean legacy hunters or needy relatives gathering round to watch the symptoms of decay, courting favour and eager to screw down the coffin and open the will, but the pride of their own asserted independence, and affluence, won by their own industry. If I may suppose such to be the character of an American visitor to England, may I not claim to myself

something of a patriarchal pride and joy, as from the decks of your gorgeous steamers, of the windows of your cars, I obtain but too rapid a glimpse of the evidences of your prosperity, and of the flourishing adolescence of the scions of our common stock? It is not for me to acknowledge, nor do I in my conscience recognise, the symptoms of cureless canker or irremediable decay in my own dear country.

We have our evils to remedy, our errors to repair, and our difficulties to struggle with, many of them unknown to you. I have seen great changes and may see more; but those I have seen I think on the whole are for the better. I rust that the time is yet distant when some Layard from this or any other country shall explore the mounds of our Houses of Parliament, or seek in the ruins of St. Paul's, to identify the crypt where the ashes of our greatest seamen repose by those of our greatest soldier. Still, the designs of Providence are inscrutable. I bow by anticipation to His will - but as an Englishman looking to this country, I feel and I say, where or how it will, our chastening, "non omnis moriar." [I shall not die entirely - Ed.] The history, the language, the intellectual feats of my country shall survive beyond the Atlantic. As I look around this room I am reminded of some lines which one of our minor poets has put into the mouth of a young husband addressing his bride, yet in the bloom of her charms, when, not shrinking from the future, he tells her:

*"And when with envy time transported
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted
And I'll go wooing in my boys."*

Yes, gentlemen, I'll go wooing in my boys, and the bride will be fame and empire, and the dower will be the waste reclaimed from savage beasts or man more savage, and the issue will be freedom and civilisation - freedom tempered by a willing submission to legally constituted authority, and civilisation founded on the great text book of true civilisation, the revealed word of God to man.

Throughout this speech, Lord Ellesmere was interrupted by applause on many occasions. At the conclusion of the speech, a band played 'God Save The Queen.'

The schools in Boston began their summer vacation on **Wednesday 27th July**. This was most unfortunate for the Ellesmeres, since they had seemingly missed an opportunity to visit a school, and their stay in the city was only to be for a few days. However, *'when Lady Ellesmere learned that there was to be an*

*examination of candidates for admission to the City Normal School on **Thursday 28th July**, she at once expressed her readiness and desire to attend it. Accordingly she went to the school house in Mason Street, at about 11 o'clock, in company with Nathan Bishop, Esq., the Superintendent of Schools. The visit afforded her an opportunity of seeing one of the school houses, the school furniture, &c., and, among the candidates, many of the graduated scholars of the grammar schools. She made a number of inquiries, which indicated her deep interest in the subject of free, popular education, and her thorough knowledge and intelligent appreciation of its features of encouragement and difficulty. She remained at the school rather more than half an hour.'* (Boston Advertiser, 29th July)

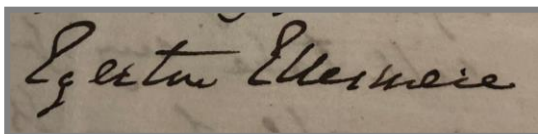
During their brief time in Boston, the town of Plymouth, Massachusetts, celebrated the 233rd anniversary of the first embarkation of a group of Pilgrims from England, who wished to sail to America to establish a colony where they could freely practise their form of worship - free from the ritual and symbols which were used in the Anglican Church. This was held on **Monday 1st August**, but unfortunately the Earl was unable to attend. He chose, therefore, to write a letter regretting his absence.

*Tremont House
July 26. 1853*

Sir,

I much regret that arrangements which it is beyond my power to alter will take my party and myself from Boston, before the 1st August. The meeting of the Pilgrim Soc.^y. is one which with reference alike to its subject and to the character and to attend I should have felt myself much hurried by being permitted to assist at.

Egerton Ellesmere



The original letter is at the Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

On that same date, the following report appeared in *The Daily Republic* (Washington, D.C.).

The Earl of Ellesmere, it is understood, intends to devote much attention to art during his visit to this country, and within a day or two past has examined the best works of several of our principal landscape painters. In the course of his visits he took the opportunity to give Mr. Kensett carte blanche for two landscapes. Such a compliment, from a gentleman of his lordship's acknowledged taste, is well bestowed upon a painter whose landscapes add to the charm of freshness and originality of treatment a truly American character. The pictures when hanging in the Bridgewater Gallery cannot fail to be recognised as the fruits of genius under American skies.

'The Commercial Advertiser' learns also that the Earl has ordered from Mr. Barlow one of Sharp's rifles, and various other firearms for sporting, having them all entirely of American manufacture.

John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872) was an American artist and engraver. His signature works are landscape paintings of New England and New York State, with some seascapes of New England. Kensett travelled through Europe between 1840 and 1847 in order to study painting. Upon his return, he settled in New York and set up his studio there. *The New York Daily Times* of 7th March 1857, when announcing his death, reported: *'While in New York, Lord Ellesmere took great interest in our artists, and visited the studios of some of those who were then at home. He gave an order to Mr. Kensett to paint him two landscapes, and, on receiving them, was so well pleased with them he sent him an order to paint two more.'*

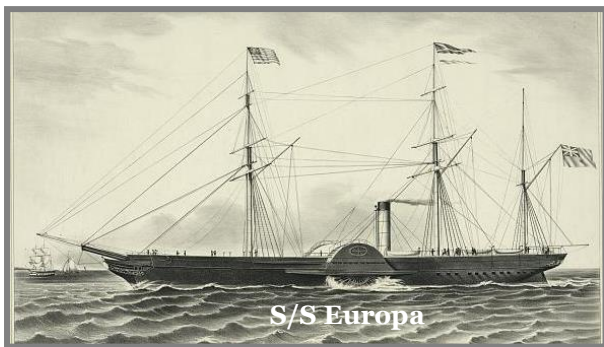


House, Washington D.C.

After endless searches and enquiries, it was with great excitement that the author discovered on 1st May 2019 the existence of one of these artworks. Entitled NIAGARA FALLS it is described as an 'Oil on Canvas' and is dated 1852 - 1854. It is oval and measures 32.75" by 48.06 ". Today, it hangs in the Red Room of the **White**

The Sharp's rifle was one of the most famous breechloaders of its day, and became the ultimate big game rifle for hunters. The military Sharps rifle was used during and after the American Civil War, and was renowned for long-range accuracy.

Finally, on **Tuesday 2nd August**, the Earl left Boston for Springfield and other places in Massachusetts, from where he was due to leave for Halifax, Nova Scotia, and thence to Liverpool. Various newspaper reports stated that, on **Wednesday 3rd August**, he had arrived at Halifax. On that day, the steamship *Europa* (ex. Boston) was due to leave for Liverpool, under Commander Lang, with 100 passengers on board, together with \$185,000 in specie [coin money - Ed.]. Among the passengers would be Lady Ellesmere and one of her daughters, who, it was said, was to be married. This was most likely Lady Alice, who married George Byng, 3rd Earl of Strafford, in July of the following year. The American consul to Austria was also on board. The vessel called in at Halifax on the 5th before continuing the same day. The London *Times* reported that the sum transported was actually \$252,000. *The Times* of **Tuesday 15th August** reported that Lady Ellesmere had arrived two days earlier in Liverpool from Boston, with one daughter. Sir John Acton crossed at the same time. (*The Novascotian*).



The *S/S Europa* was a Cunard Line steamship built in 1847 at Port Glasgow by John Wood and Co. In 1848, it had set a new transatlantic record when crossing from Liverpool to New York in 11 days and 3 hours.

Two further accounts relating to the Earl's visit to Boston deserve to be recounted. The journals of Lord Acton and the journal entries of H. W. Longfellow permit an accurate timing of the events.

William Hickling Prescott (1796-1859) was a distinguished American historian, and Harvard academic, specialising in Hispanic history, and was very fondly remembered by Lady Alice Egerton in her preface to her father's memoirs of the Duke of Wellington. He was awarded a D.C.L. at Oxford in 1850 and became a good friend of Sir Charles and Lady Lyell. He moved to a new villa on

21st June 1853 in Lynn, Massachusetts, overlooking the bay and just a few miles from his previous residence in Nahant. There, he had visits from his friends, the Lyells, and from the Earl of Ellesmere and Lady Harriet, and he joined them all at some point in New York for the Exhibition. On **Friday 29th July**, the Ellesmeres were due to dine with Mr. Prescott and guests.

Two years after his visit to America, Lord Ellesmere wrote a long-overdue letter to Mr. Prescott.

OXFORD. September 27th, 1855

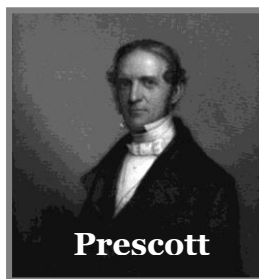
Dear Mr. Prescott,

Your kind and sad letter has remained long unacknowledged. It reached me at a moment when I was leaving London for an excursion less of pleasure than of business, a visit to the Paris exhibition; and from my arrival there to my return a few days since I have been deprived of any use of my right hand by my usual enemy. If my right hand had more cunning than it pretends to, it could not convey what either Lady Ellesmere or myself feels on the frustration of the pleasant hope of meeting again with the kind and good friend, whom I yet hope to meet, though not in this weary world. [Mr Abbott Lawrence]

*It seems but a day, but an hour, since he left us,
With no sign to prepare us, no warning to pain,
As we clung to the hand of which death has bereft us,
Little thinking we should never clasp it again.*

*We ought to have thought so; - to earth, for a season,
Worth, friendship and goodness are lent, but not
given;
And faith but confirms the conjecture of reason,
That the dearest to earth are the fittest for heaven.*

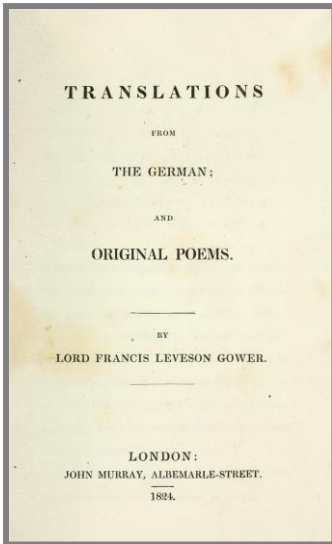
I venture to quote the above, not as good, for they are my own, but as apposite, be they who they may. They were written on the loss of a very valued friend and relative, Lord William Bentinck. We need no knell over the Atlantic to tell us of the frailty of human ties. I have personally been spared as yet, and no name is



coupled with the horrors of our late Crimean despatches which directly concerns mine or me; but some have been reaped in this bloody harvest whom I knew enough to value, and many - a son among the number - are exposed to the further chances of this awful and apparently interminable struggle. Nothing is on record since the siege of Jerusalem, unless it be some of the passages of the retreat from Moscow, which equals the sickening horrors of the "Times" of today; and we in England, though our people did what they could, and died in the Redan, have not the blaze of success to console us, which makes France forget its losses. I believe our cause is good. I cannot truly say that in other respects, as a nation, we have deserved other than severe trial, for we entered on this war, in my opinion, with much levity, ignorance, and presumption. I think we were right in going to war, and that we could not long have avoided it; but it is one thing to face a great calamity calmly and sternly, from a sense of right and duty, and another to court the encounter with cheers and jeers and vaunting. I writhe under the government of Journalism. We are governed at home, and represented abroad, by a press which makes us odious to the world.

I am here at Oxford doing rather hard and unpaid service on a commission for shaping out and regulating the introduction of the changes directed by Parliament in the University;- a good deal of dry and heavy detail, but without interest and some prospect of ultimate advantage. I lie on my back, and dignities drop into my mouth. I am appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire, for the excellent reason that there happens to be nobody else who comes within the usual category of qualifications of rank, residence, and political tendencies. It makes me a General of seven regiments of militia, an Admiral, and Custos Rotulorum, and covers me with silver-lace and epaulets! It does not, thank Heaven, in Lancashire convey, as in other counties, the power of recommending persons to the magistracy. The fact is, there is usually nothing to do in the office, but at present the militia does involve some business. ...

E. ELLESMERE



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882, and author of *Hiawatha*) was an American poet, who developed a liking for literature at a young age, submitting poems and prose to local magazines. He was educated at Bowdoin College (in Maine today) and became quite proficient in European languages. At the age of 27, he was offered a professorship at Harvard. He retired from teaching in 1854 and devoted his time to writing.

On Tuesday 21st June, '*the hottest day I ever spent. The thermometer was 100 in the shade.*' Sir John Acton walked around Boston for some time. The following day, George Ticknor had given him a letter of introduction to meet Professor Child at Harvard on Thursday (23rd). He went to Harvard College to observe tuition and examinations taking place. At midday, the

young Acton was introduced to Longfellow. That afternoon, Child and he were invited to take coffee at his house. Longfellow showed him his copy of Lord Ellesmere's poems, (above), '*and praised his translation of Faust, for its perfectly gentlemanlike tone. We sat in his garden half an hour, they smoking.*'

Longfellow later mentions the Ellesmeres in his journal entries from July 1853:

Thursday 28. Call on [Rev. William] Mountford at his cottage. He does not think highly of Alex Smith. Drove over to Lynn to call on Prescott. A beautiful house he has there. Tells me that the Ellesmeres and party dine with him tomorrow, but there are so many of them and his own family is so large he cannot ask anyone to meet them.

Friday 29. Mrs. Paige came in this morning to ask us to meet the Ellesmeres at her house. Prescott is bringing them over to see Nahant. But they did not come till our dinner time so we missed seeing them, which I am sorry for. I saw them drive by. Prescott on the box. Lowell dined with us. Drove him to Lynn and Fanny and I continued on to Marblehead. What a dreary old place!

In a letter to her sister, Mary Appleton Mackintosh, Fanny Longfellow (Henry's second wife) wrote on July 3rd:



We have had shoals of young Oxonians lately - some very nice ones. A young Baronet, Sir John Acton, also, a very pleasing youth, one of Lord Ellesmere's suite.

Poor Lord E. is, I hear, quite overcome already with the heat on his way to Niagara and it is hard fate for them to have to be in N. York in the dog-days.'

Then, on Monday 1st August, she wrote to her father:

... The Ellesmeres dined with Mr. Prescott at Lynn on Friday and he drove them over here before dinner apologising to Henry that he could invite no-one to meet them as they made so large a party with his own family.

Mrs. Paige begged us to drop in to see them as they called, and Henry went over but missed them after all, for they did not arrive until our dinner hour and as Lowell was here he could not linger.

He passed the cortège of 3 carriages in the street and was very sorry to get no better glimpse of them. Mr. Lawrence and Prescott were luckily at hand to do the hospitalities for Boston. The latter has a spacious beautiful villa at Lynn overlooking the sea.'

NOVA SCOTIA

And so it was that the Earl of Ellesmere arrived at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on **Wednesday 3rd August** from Boston. For some short time, there had been tensions between the British and American governments over fishing rights off the coast of Canada. These difficulties had been rising at the time of the New York Exhibition, but fortunately there had been no encroachments by American vessels at that critical time of the year when it was likely that such acts upon the colonial fisheries could be expected. Concern had been expressed that the British Admiral, Sir George Seymour, had requested the *Leander* to join the squadron in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The *Leander*, it is recalled, had been sent out expressly to convey his Lordship and family on a complimentary mission to the Exhibition. Then, suddenly, there was an unexpected development! It now transpired that the diplomatic mission to New York in mid-July was about to be followed by another, which was quite unexpected.

It seemed probable that the Admiral's request had been made as a response to the American Government placing three men-of-war on that station. *'Mutual explanations were accordingly made in a perfectly friendly spirit between the British Minister at Washington and the American Executive. It was observed that the presence of a moderate American force might assist the maintenance of a good understanding between the two governments.'* It had been noted that some of the American fishing boats had gone out armed, with no intention of respecting their neighbour's rights. Newspapers in both countries tried to play down the risks of conflict, noting that *'We know of nothing which the two countries need quarrel about; the interests of peace have become too important to them both to be jeopardised without cause.'*

The dispute centred on differing interpretations of the Convention of 1818,



which established the 49th parallel as the boundary between Canada and the US, and fishing rights for the American fishing boats. It marked the beginning of improved relations between the British Empire and its former colony, following the War of 1812. In summary, they were permitted to fish in deep waters to within 3 miles of the Nova Scotia coast, but that precise definition was the issue. Due to a perceived lack of

protection from the American government, some of the fishing crews decided to

arm themselves, and it was deemed prudent to send ships to the area to calm the situation.

One of the ships positioned by the Americans was the *Decatur*. This vessel, a sloop-of-war built in New York in 1838/9, had been sailed into Boston, where she was initially decommissioned to allow for repairs. When she was declared fit to resume her station on 12th July, she joined a special squadron to guard the fishing interests of American citizens in North Atlantic Ocean waters, eventually returning to Boston in September. Curiously, *The New Orleans Daily Crescent* reported that '*On Saturday 6th August, a sham fight took place in the Gut of Canso, on board the U.S. ship-of-war Decatur, in honour of the Earl of Ellesmere.*' Given the tensions that were prevalent, this seems a bizarre way of welcoming a guest. The Gut of Canso is a strait located in the province of Nova Scotia, Canada, dividing the Nova Scotia peninsula from Cape Breton Island. This channel is about 16 miles long.

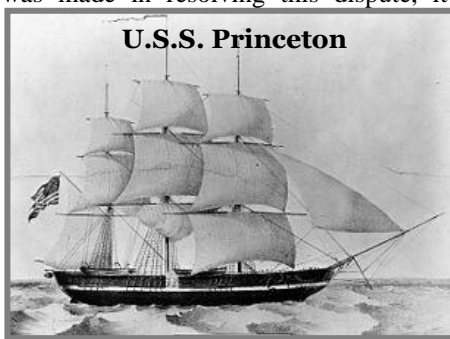
However, this location is a long way from Halifax, where the Earl was staying. A similar report (though different in some key details) appeared in *The Acadian Recorder (Halifax)*, under the headline A SHAM FIGHT, which said:

This was a mock skirmish which began at about 11 o'clock between British naval and army forces and a group of American forces, following on from the fishing dispute in those waters, which had been occurring for some time. The aim of this 'battle' was to show courtesy to each other, and to make both sides believe "that nothing but concord must continue henceforth between the two brothers, having but one object in view - the progress and improvement of the worth in everything that is good, great and wise."

The Earl's ship, Leander, took part in this fight, together with H.M.S. Cumberland and H.M.S. Calypso. Numerous troops, marines and artillery were also in attendance - and this took place amidst "a number of pleasure yachts of elegant form, rig and trim, in rapid and continually varying evolution." All of this was skilfully choreographed to the delight of the onlookers, with both a tremendous visual and sound effect. "It was a day we shall not easily forget with which the sun closed upon the Bloodless Battle Of ELLESMERE: for it was, we believe, in honour of this accomplished nobleman and members of his family, who were present, that these things were done."

It seems reasonable that this latter report is the more accurate. *The New Orleans* report appeared 16 days after the event; New Orleans is some considerable distance from Halifax; and the presence of pleasure crafts is much more likely at Halifax than in the Gut of Canso. Furthermore, American reports show that their own warships were stationed in Halifax.

The *Fulton* and the *Princeton* were also dispatched to the disputed fishing grounds, under the overall command of Commodore Shubrick. He was considered the best man for the job, since it required great sagacity, patience and diligence - qualities of a diplomatic nature, essential for this delicate task. The *Princeton* served as flagship of the Eastern Squadron under his command from July to September 1853. The ship left New York for protection duties in early July, after undergoing a major refit. The *Princeton* arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on **Friday 5th August** and Shubrick met with British representatives the next day. They agreed on terms that would produce a treaty with Canada in 1854. Although significant progress was made in resolving this dispute, it remained contentious for many decades. That evening, Commander Shubrick and Sir George Seymour met over dinner and both were extremely civil towards each other. It was widely expected that diplomacy would win the day. The officers of both the *Fulton* and the *Princeton* were received in Halifax with great hospitality by both naval and army departments.



A week later, on **Friday 12th August**, Commodore Shubrick and the officers of the *Princeton* were entertained by the Mayor and Aldermen of Halifax at Mason's Hall. The conviviality of the evening reflected the general ease between the two opposition parties and this was duly reported by the Commander to Washington. There had been no incidents involving the fishing crews or the British fleet.

On that same date, *The New York Herald* reported:

From Halifax, dated (Sunday) 7 August.
Leander (Special Service) 50, Capt. King. will leave for England about Monday (15th) next. The Basilisk, 400hp and 6, under Commander Egerton, was also in the harbour, as part of the fishery service. The Decatur is on a cruise northward. She was seen a few days ago in the Gut of Canso. The Europa

arrived here on the 5th. and left the same day. She ran ashore, but no injuries. One of the daughters of Lord Ellesmere took passage in her - to be married, it is said. His lordship and party remained.

The daughter mentioned is likely to have been Lady Alice Harriet Frederica, the eldest daughter of the Earl and Countess, since she married George Byng, 3rd Earl of Strafford, on 25th July 1854 in London.

On **Saturday 13th August**, the vessel was visited by the press and local people, and they were politely entertained on board by Commodore Shubrick. The Earl of Ellesmere also visited United States ship *Princeton* that morning. His Lordship was received with a salute of 15 guns, and this compliment was returned from the saluting battery at the citadel. All were shown great courtesies whilst on board. Other guests invited aboard were Major General Gore, Admiral Seymour and the American Consul. Many of the residents of Halifax praised Shubrick for his courtesy. About 200 or 300 local people had been invited to come on board and they enjoyed the dancing and feasting from 3pm to 6pm. The weather at Halifax at that time had been intensely warm, and many deaths had occurred from the heat.

The Acadian Recorder (Halifax, Nova Scotia) printed a more up-to-date and accurate account when it further reported on **Saturday 13th August** that "*H.M.S. Leander, Capt. King, got under weigh yesterday [12th - Ed.] at 6 a.m., but shortly after anchored at Maugher's Beach, where she waited the embarkation of the Earl of Ellesmere and suite for 'home.' At 11 o'clock, the Earl proceeded from the Dockyard, in the Admiral's barge, to join the Leander, and the flag ship gave him a parting salute.*" And so the Earl left the Americas for England.

Amongst all this diplomatic activity, the life of an active service vessel had to continue. Whilst reporting upon the meeting between the Earl and Commodore Shubrick, *The New York Herald* quoted a source from Halifax, N.S., dated **Sunday 14th August** that:

A court martial has been sitting on board the Leander since Monday [8th - Ed.], for the trial of the first lieutenant and chief engineer of the Medea on a charge of disobedience of orders. The court closed yesterday (13th) but the result is not known.

By **Tuesday 16th August**, it was being reported in the press that the English naval vessels were active, but had made no captures of American vessels. Shubrick was the most senior American naval officer afloat on any station, and a gentleman of eminent ability and high social qualities. These courtesies were

highly creditable to both sides, for they indicated the good understanding between the two nations. *'England and America have a common origin, and, we trust, a common purpose. May they never be in hostile array one against the other.'* (The Daily Union 19 Aug. 1853).

Then, suddenly, there was an unexpected development! One diplomatic mission to New York in mid-July had suddenly been followed another which was quite unexpected. The USS *Princeton* had to prepare to leave Halifax for Prince Edward's Island to investigate the seizure of the American fishing schooner, *Starlight*. It appeared that there were 200 barrels of mackerel on board when it was seized by the *Basilisk*, under Captain Egerton! The very ship he commanded on the journey to New York and the son of the Earl of Ellesmere! The vessel was taken to Charlottetown, New Brunswick, on the grounds that this had been a flagrant violation of the provisions of the Convention of 1818.

The Shakespeare Society held its monthly meeting at Snediker's, near Jamaica, L.I., on the afternoon of **Saturday 20th August**. The Secretary of the Society reported that he had written to the Earl of Ellesmere, acquainting him that the society had elected him an honorary member at the previous meeting, and that at an interview with his lordship at the Clarendon Hotel, he had been received with the greatest courtesy. The interview was solicited with the view of asking his lordship to honour the society by inscribing his name on the records, and he had complied in the kindest manner. *The New York Herald*. (New York [N.Y.]), 22 Aug. 1853. (Mon.)

Monday 22nd August was the date given in *The Daily Republic's* edition of the 15th August for the departure of the *Leander* from Halifax on a special service under Captain King. Given that the report referred to a *Special Service*, this is likely to be the date when the Earl finally left the New World.

The New York Herald of **Monday 15th September 1853** reported that the Daily News in England had announced *'The Leander, Capt. Vincent King, arrived this morning [in Plymouth - Ed.] fourteen days from Halifax with the Earl of Ellesmere and suite. His lordship is indisposed from gout. Admiral Sir O. A. Ommaney went on board today. It is said that there are loud complaints on board the Leander of the want of hospitality on the part of the Americans: one illustration is given in the fact that they charged the ordinary price for the water required for the ship, which is quite contrary to the practice observed towards ships of the United States navy in British ports.'* (The Daily News)

Given that the Earl had left on the 13th and that it took 14 days to cross the ocean, this news item was quite late in being reported.

By way of confirming the Earl's arrival in England, *The Alexandria Gazette* (in D.C.), announced on **22nd September 1853**:

Lord Ellesmere arrived in England by the Leander on the 28th ult. The London papers notice the unsatisfactory and mortifying issue of the Royal Commission to our Exhibition, and the shabby treatment received by its members in New York. It is said that 'there were loud complaints on board the Leander of the want of hospitality of the Americans; one illustration is given in the fact that they charged the ordinary price for the water required for the ship, which is quite contrary to the practice observed towards the ships of the United States Navy in British ports.

As a footnote to the American adventures and to the research of the American newspapers, it must be mentioned that *The Jeffersonian*, (Stroudsburg, Pa.), **8th Sept. 1853**, printed an article taken from a British newspaper, in which it said:

An important application of the photographic art has been made in Manchester, England, by which the process of wood engraving from dagueurreotypes will be materially economised, both in time and expense. The Manchester Guardian of July 30 gives the following account of this, probably, most recent improvement in this useful art:

Yesterday Mr. Robert Langton, wood engraver and draftsman, of Cross Street, brought to our office some very successful and beautiful specimens of photography, taken by himself, not one metal plate; or on paper, or on glass, but on blocks of box-wood, such as are ordinarily used in his own art for wood engravings. One was a striking portrait of himself, another was a view of the beautiful little church at Worsley, erected a few years ago by the Earl and Countess of Ellesmere. (The latter was comprised within the ordinary dimensions of a circle 3½ inches in diameter; and, as the image of the church is thus reversed, the design, in all its elegant proportions, and reduced to a miniature such as no hand of human artist, can ever hope to rival, in its exquisite delicacy of light and shade).

AN UNFRIENDLY REPORT

In its edition of **Tuesday 2nd August**, *The Montreal Herald* printed an article from the American Press, which was both unfriendly and disingenuous. Quoting directly, it said:

There appears something a little mysterious in this nobleman's movements. He came to this country sometime since, in an English man-of-war, as the Royal Commissioner to the New York Crystal Palace exhibition. The ship remained but a short time in New York harbour, when she sailed for Nova Scotia, the plea being that her sailors deserted so fast that it was not safe to remain in American waters. She was, however, to return with Lord Ellesmere in due time, and he was to take part in the opening ceremonies of the Palace. But the ship did not return to New York, and though the Earl did, yet on the day of the opening of the Palace he was reported to be too unwell to take any part in the ceremonies; neither was he at the Palace Banquet on the day following, and no reference has since appeared as to any action of his Lordship in relation to the Exhibition, which was the whole object of his visit to this country. And on Monday the New York papers announced that the Earl of Ellesmere and family were to leave New York immediately for Boston and vicinity, whence, after a brief stay, he is to pursue his way leisurely and alone, to Nova Scotia, there to embark for England, while his family sail from this port for home.

Now, the question which will arise in every Yankee's mind, at least, must be - How are we to understand these movements of Lord Ellesmere? What does all this mean? Why has not his Lordship fulfilled his mission to America? Why did he not appear as the Royal Commissioner to the "Great Exhibition"? It is quite evident that his Lordship has been disappointed in the thing itself, or in his reception by its managers, or in both respects. Deceived perhaps by the announcement that the President of the United States was to take part in the opening ceremonies, he might have anticipated that the Exhibition was a National affair, and that as a National representative, he should have been recognised by our Government; or, failing in this, that his arrival should have received some such mark of attention as his private and official character both seemed to demand, from the city of New York or the managers of the

Exhibition. And failing to receive from any quarter a becoming recognition, and finding the whole thing an immature, private speculation, he wisely concluded to withdraw himself, as a Royal Commissioner, entirely from the thing.

The first appearance of Lord Ellesmere in public, was at our School Festival yesterday, and his first speech since his arrival in the U.S. was made at Faneuil Hall on that occasion. In that speech, which we which we copy entire from the Daily Advertiser, he shows himself a scholar and a gentleman well qualified to have honoured his position as a Royal Commissioner, and well fitted to recommend his own country to Americans, and to appreciate whatever is worthy in American institutions, habits and customs, manners and usages. And, though we have reason to believe that he has not failed to make a good use of his time and means of observation since he arrived among us, yet it cannot but be deeply regretted there should have been an even seeming neglect of a gentleman whose private virtues, elegant scholarship, and public character , so strongly recommended him to our respectful regards.

The article was signed 'Boston Traveller.' This was one form of name given to a chronicle published in Boston. Curiously, the Earl was indeed in Boston at that time, but such a view is plainly at odds with all the other reports that were printed about him during his time there, every one of which was complimentary and warm. The only conclusion can be that the article in the journal was politically motivated.

THE COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

The General Report, requested at the time of the announcement of the Commission, was compiled by the chairman, the Earl of Ellesmere, and was sent, dated **1st December 1853**, to the Right Honourable the Earl of Clarendon, K.G., G.C.B., Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

In his opening remarks, Lord Ellesmere acquainted his Lordship *'with the peculiar position in which the Commission was placed on its arrival in that city, early in June last.'* Despite the extended delay in the opening of the building, *'there was little probability that the arrangement of the various contributions would even then be in a sufficiently forward state to allow of that examination and scrutiny so necessary for the proper consideration of their merits.'*

It was therefore decided, after due consideration, that the members of the Commission would visit those parts of the United States *'in which raw materials were likely to be most abundant, mechanical skill most largely applied, manufacturing industry fairly established, and art and science most perfectly developed'* - each of these areas designed to reflect the skills and knowledge of the Commissioners, and within the limited time at their disposal. Sir Charles Lyell undertook to explore Raw Materials (mining and extraction), together with maps and philosophical instruments; whilst minerals (with relation to economics), chemical processes, substances for food, vegetable and animal substances used in manufacture (e.g. tanning), was to be investigated by Professor Wilson.

Mr. Joseph Whitworth undertook to report on machinery, manufacturing, engineering, and the patent laws, and on the use of the electric telegraph, so widespread in the country. Mr. George Wallis had the largest number of categories: wool, leather, all types of fabrics, printing, ceramics, glass, furniture, carpets and general hardware. The report on the Fine Arts was assigned to the Earl himself.

Mr. Wentworth Dilke undertook to write an account of the Palace itself, and to observe any other developments in the categories not undertaken by the other members. He decided to visit parts of the Western States. When he arrived back in New York, there was a communication awaiting him, requesting his urgent return to England on account of the serious illness of his wife. She ultimately died on 16th September 1853. Consequently, his report was brief, since he had to leave America before the completion of the Palace, and he had seen only a small portion of the states. His contribution to the report was written with the help of Mr. W. Antrobus Holwell, the Commissioner from Canada.

After examining branches of industry within each of their specific interests, the Commissioners all reassembled in New York to attend the inauguration on 14th July. The fact that the exhibition was still incomplete after the day of opening allowed each commissioner to complete the examination of their respective areas.

The room destined to house minerals, maps and charts was unlikely to be completed before September, prompting Sir Charles Lyell to visit other towns and cities in the Eastern States, studying specimens in public and private collections, similar to those destined for the exhibition. This allowed him to draft a preliminary report, which he delivered to Mr. James Hall, geological surveyor for the state of New York. In fact, it was mid-October before the exhibition room was completed and equipped! Sir Charles left for England in August, due to pressing engagements, arriving at Osborne House on **23rd August 1853**.

'The interval previous to the opening of the Exhibition afforded Professor Wilson an opportunity of inspecting several of the more important manufacturing processes in operation in their respective localities, and also of visiting the coal and iron-making districts of Pennsylvania and Maryland; at the same time he availed himself of the opportunity to attend the trials of agricultural harvesting machines, which were at that time taking place in some of the rural districts through which he passed.' Since some of the districts were not due to hold their annual agricultural meetings until September or October, and since some of the building destined for the mineral department was still unfinished, *'it was considered desirable that Professor Wilson should remain in the States some weeks longer than he had contemplated, to enable him to fulfil the special duties which had been assigned to him.'* He managed to visit Cleveland, Ohio, and Montreal and Hamilton in Canada, eventually departing from the States by steamer on the 19th October.

Both Joseph Whitworth and George Wallis left for England on the 10th August. Those sections of the exhibition which would have been of interest to them were still either incomplete or not completely fitted with the contributions. Both gentlemen, however, were able to examine extensively the productions within their respective departments in those towns visited either before or after the opening date.

As for the department which was of greatest interest to the Earl, that of the Arts of Painting or Sculpture in the United States, he bemoaned the fact that *'the Exhibition afforded us no sufficient materials for a judgment of the condition'* of that section. *'A gallery of considerable extent, for the reception of pictures, ... was still only in process of construction at the period of our departure, and no specimens of sculpture had yet reached the main building'* which would, at least,

have allowed him to make a judgment. He was able, however, to express an opinion, based on limited observation, that the Art of Landscape Painting was beginning to flourish in America, and that artists who were already sketching and painting aspects of their own country would very soon establish a school of national landscape of the highest order. *'The aspect of nature in North America'* he wrote, *'has peculiarities of its own, in respect alike of form, of colour, and atmospheric effects, which can hardly fail to attract genius to their pictorial representation, and would justify and reward its highest efforts.'*

Although there had been a prolonged delay in the opening and subsequent completion of the exhibition in New York, the Earl was generous in offering reasons for this - *'the inclemency of the last winter, the great demand for workmen in the building trades, the novelty of construction, and the want of any previous experience in a work of such magnitude.'* In spite of these setbacks, he did not let them affect his admiration for the Committee, whose members expressed *'every courtesy, kindness and ever-ready attention'* towards the overseas visitors. Indeed, these courtesies were displayed in various parts of the United States, *'thus rendering an otherwise difficult and laborious task comparatively easy and agreeable.'*

Overall, he believed that the contributions from Europe *'would not fail to exercise a beneficial influence over the taste, skill and industry of the United States.'* The area allotted to American industry occupied about one-third of the whole building; in point of fact, not much different from that space taken in 1851. The Earl believed it was impossible to illustrate and exhibit all the industrial resources of so vast a territory within such a confined space. He concluded that *'the Exhibition will prove to the intelligent and industrious artisans and enterprising manufacturers of America, [to be] much more of an instructor in what has to be done, than an expositor of what has been done by them, for the latter can be alone fairly judged of in the manufacturies.'*

The five-page report was signed by the Earl of Ellesmere and co-signed by the other five members of the Commission, whose special reports were soon to be completed and forwarded to the Earl of Clarendon *'at as early a date as their completion will permit.'* Official recognition of this and the other reports appears in *Journals of the House of Commons*.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, that She will be graciously pleased to give directions, that there be laid before this House, Copies of the Reports made to the Foreign Office, or to any other Department, by the Commissioners appointed to attend the Exhibition of Industry in the City of New York.

Ordered,

That the said Address be presented to Her Majesty, by such Members of this House as are of Her Majesty's Most honourable Privy Council.

(Journals of the House of Commons. Vol. 109. 6 Feb. 1854. p.34)

In the *House of Lords Journal*, Volume 86, page 36, for the 27th February 1854, it is recorded that

Copies of the Reports made to the Foreign Office, or to any other Department, by the Commissioners appointed to attend the Exhibition of Industry in the City of York; viz. General Report of the British Commissioners; Also, Special Report of Mr George Wallis; And also, Special Report of the Mr. Joseph Whitworth, were severally presented to the House by the Lord Stanley of Alderley, (by Her Majesty's Command), and Ordered to lie on the Table.

Perhaps the final word on the visit of the Earl to New York and the overall conclusion upon all aspects of the exhibition is best left to Edwin G. Burrows, who wrote the book *'The Finest Building in America.'* In it, he tells the story of the New York Crystal Palace from 1853 to 1858. In this observation, on page 151 of 264, he points to the feeling of much of the American Press at that time, particularly in states removed from New York - the inadequacies, the over ambition, the failure to meet deadlines, of the committee members. And yet, the manner and courtesy with which all the commissioners were received is borne out in the reports and journals of each member.

The beginning of Barnum's presidency also coincided with the publication of an uncomplimentary report by a British commission sent the year before to inspect the New York Exhibition. The six-man commission was chaired by the Earl of Ellesmere, noted patron of the arts, and included Sir Charles Lyell, the foremost geologist of his day; Joseph Whitworth, a wealthy manufacturer and civil engineer; and George Wallis, the



prominent art educator and designer. The commission arrived in June 1853 and attended the opening-day festivities at the Crystal Palace. But, as Lord Ellesmere explained, when they realised that the Exhibition would not in fact be finished for months yet, they split up and toured the country instead, visiting numerous cities and inspecting natural resources. Necessarily, therefore, their final verdict on the Exhibition was mixed. On the one hand, they found that the aspirations of the Crystal Palace Association had plainly exceeded their abilities. On the other, the commissioners met with "courtesy, attention and anxiety to assist" everywhere they went, and the Exhibition "may be said to be successful" in so far as "industrious artisans and enterprising manufacturers" will learn from it "what has to be done."

It isn't clear whether the commissioners were bending over backwards to find something good to say about the Exhibition, or just damning it with faint praise. Either way, they didn't slow down Barnum [who went ahead with his plans to re-inaugurate the Crystal Palace on 4 May 1854 - Ed.].

THE ELLESMERE CHAUCER

'On the evening of 24 April 1911, four hundred book collectors and dealers gathered at the sumptuous Clarence Hyde mansion on Madison Avenue and Fortieth Street in New York City to take part in the auction of the Robert Hoe library. Of all the rarities listed in the Anderson Auction Company's sale catalog, lot 269, ... the GUTENBERG BIBLE, thought to be the first book printed in the West from movable type, caused the most speculation.'

Bidding moved forward at a brisk pace, starting at \$10,000, and the hammer finally fell at \$50,000, more than twice the amount of money paid at auction for a printed book. There was then *'a burst of general applause followed by cries throughout the room "The buyer? Who is the buyer?" ... The auctioneer announced that the new owner of the Gutenberg Bible was Henry E. Huntington.'* This is how Donald C. Dickinson announces the arrival of this railway magnate onto the scene of great collectors in America.



the Bridgewater Library of 4,400 books. The *Ellesmere Chaucer* is now on public display there.

From this point, Henry Huntington began an urgent search for rare books and very quickly amassed a large collection, which he was to house in his library in San Marino, California. Sadly, by 1916, taxes were placing a heavy burden upon the Ellesmere family, and it was decided to put the whole collection of the Bridgewater House Library up for auction at Sotheby's. The American railroad tycoon, Henry E. Huntington, purchased outright the Bridgewater library in May 1917, through the agency of George D. Smith. One particular manuscript became known as the *Ellesmere Chaucer* and was recognized as the *'jewel of the collection.'* Huntington had become a collector rather late in life, and over the next fifteen years his enormous wealth enabled him to purchase books from all over the world. A true bibliophile, he established his library on his estate in California. He paid one million dollars for

Most people will know the name Geoffrey Chaucer and will associate this name with *The Canterbury Tales* - a collection of stories centred upon a group of pilgrims as they made their way to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury. The plot was that each pilgrim would tell two tales on their journey. The author chose to write the stories in English, and not French - a significant decision since, in the years following the Norman invasion in 1066, French had been the dominant court and literary language. The tales were written between 1370 and 1400 and this choice by Chaucer made the work one of the first major works written in English.

The Sotheby's catalogue described the manuscript thus:

"A superb manuscript of the highest possible importance. ... This manuscript is unquestionably the greatest monument of English literature in the world."

W. W. Skeat, the pre-eminent British philologist of his time, used the Ellesmere manuscript as the basis for his edition of *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, since he saw it as *'the finest and best of all the MSS. now extant.'*



The **Bridgewater Library** was a family library, *"the oldest large family collection in England to survive intact into modern times."* The library was begun by Thomas Egerton, 1st Viscount Brackley, at Tatton Park in Cheshire, and added to by his son, John Egerton, 1st Earl of Bridgewater. John Egerton, 2nd Earl of Bridgewater also added to the library, and is said to have compiled a manuscript catalogue to it. Although the third Earl of Bridgewater *"made some additions to the library ..., the great period of its growth were now over."* The library now *"forms the core of the Elizabethan and early Stuart collection at the Huntington Library."*

"The **Ellesmere Chaucer** is not only the most beautiful manuscript of Chaucer's best known work, the *Canterbury Tales*, but the most famous literary manuscript in English.

This large, beautiful and innovative manuscript was probably produced soon after 1400. It contains 240 parchment leaves, 232 of which are the text of the *Canterbury Tales*. The remaining eight leaves were originally blank, lined pages that now contain miscellaneous verses, notes and scribbles by various persons during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The text of the Ellesmere Chaucer was written by one scribe in an English style cursive script.

This manuscript was most probably made and bound in London. It is large, about 16 by 11 inches, and elegantly decorated. Seventy-one pages contain floriated borders on the top, left and bottom sides. On most pages there are designs using gold leaf. There are numerous initial letters, three to six lines in height, which are floriated and include gold leaf, as well as many smaller capitals and paragraph markers, painted or with gold leaf, found throughout the manuscript.

In 1802, the manuscript was sent to the Egerton's London residence, Bridgewater House, to be rebound. With Francis Granville Egerton, who became first **Earl of Ellesmere** in 1846, the Chaucer manuscript was made available to scholars. Finally, when the American railroad tycoon, Henry E. Huntington purchased the Bridgewater library in 1917, the Ellesmere Chaucer was recognized as the jewel of the collection. Held by the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, the manuscript is named after Sir Thomas Egerton (1540–1617), who was Baron Ellesmere and Viscount Brackley."

[Text by courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.]

The purchase of this collection occurred at a very troublesome time. Britain and Western Europe was at war, and in spite of the sinking of the *Lusitania* on 7th May 1915, America was not to join the conflict for nearly two years. However, Germany decided to resume unrestricted submarine warfare (earlier suspended in February 1915) on 1st February 1917. This, coupled with the Zimmermann Telegram, brought the United States into the war on 6th April. Once the details of this purchase had been finalised, Huntington, well aware of the threat posed by the German submarines, kept these secret. There was great concern about the safe transportation of these documents. The *New York Times*, on 18th May, 1917, reported the safe arrival of 101 wooden crates of books, and three days later it concluded that the Huntington Library was now '*probably the finest in the world.*' The *Sun* of New York on the 27th May printed a full page article under the banner headline *GEMS OF \$1,000,000 LIBRARY BOUGHT BY H. E. HUNTINGTON.*



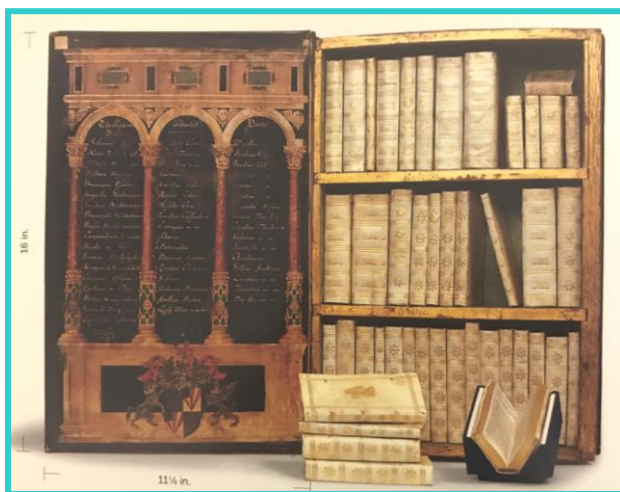
This portrait from the *Tales* is widely believed to be that of Chaucer himself, the narrator and the author.

The library, a small portion only of which is included in the following catalogue, was originally formed by Sir Thomas Egerton, Baron Ellesmere, who was made Keeper of the Great Seal by Queen Elizabeth, and Lord High Chancellor of

England by King James I. His lordship is well known to have been an enlightened and munificent patron of literature. Some of the books came into his possession from the Countess of Derby, whom he married in 1600, whose first husband, Sir John Wolley, appears also to have been a liberal encourager of learning.

THE EGERTON TRAVELLING LIBRARY

One other item, amongst the 4,400 purchased by Henry E. Huntington in 1917 from the 4th Earl, was a travelling library, once in the possession of Sir Thomas Egerton, an English nobleman and judge, who was appointed Lord Chancellor by Elizabeth I in 1596. He served in the traditions of Thomas Wolsey and Sir Thomas More, and later acquired the titles of 1st Baron Ellesmere (1603) and 1st Viscount Brackley (1616). He had also been offered by James I the title of Earl of Bridgewater in 1617, but he declined this honour and died just a few days later.



In his judicial role, Sir Thomas would have travelled across the country and would have taken a small library of books with him. How small can be gauged from the dimensions of his own collection. The book case is 16" x 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". It has a wooden frame and is covered in brown morocco

leather, disguising it as a large folio volume. It is one of only 4 such collections that exist today. There is a total of 44 volumes within the case, each one bound in vellum. This collection is believed to date from c.1615. A catalogue of the books faces them on the inside of the cover, painted in three columns surrounded by an arch design bearing a crest and a coat of arms. This item is commonly referred to as the *'Egerton Travelling Library'*.

The collection comprises 3 groups or topics: Religion and Philosophy (featuring the Bible, and works by Thomas Aquinas); History (by the Roman writers Tacitus, Suetonius, Sallust); and Poetry (again featuring works by the Roman poets Virgil, Ovid, Terence). As an undergraduate at Brasenose, Oxford, he studied the Liberal Arts. On his journeys, he was accompanied by a young secretary, John Donne, the famed poet and cleric, who no doubt enjoyed being party to the Chancellor's acquisition of books for his nascent library, later to become the Bridgewater Library, which grew rapidly. Donne had been appointed

Chief Secretary to the judge at the age of 25. It was this entire library that Henry E. Huntington purchased from the 4th Earl.

The actual size of each volume can be judged from this picture, which shows one volume being held between a forefinger and thumb.

The travelling compendium was probably one of four commissioned by William Hakewill over a period of four or five years. Hakewill

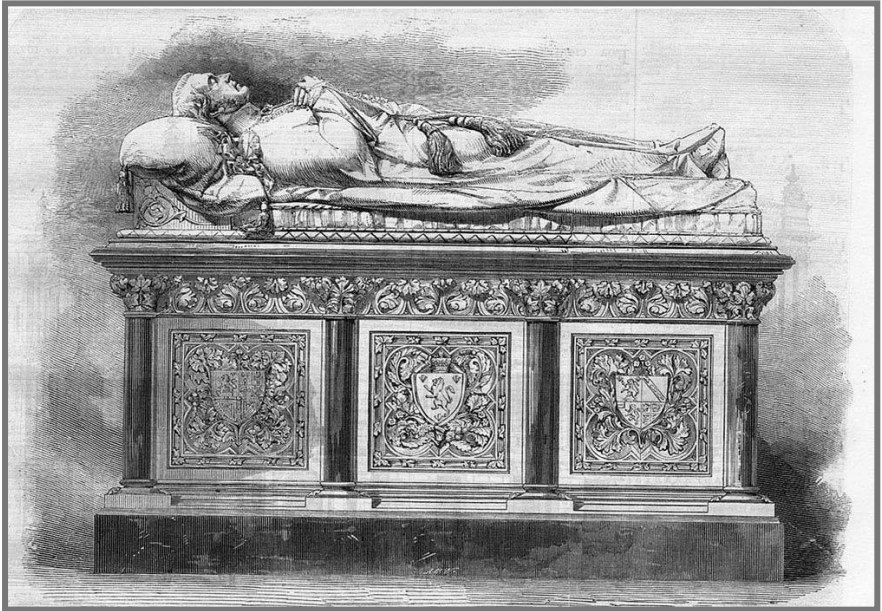


was a lawyer, bibliophile and a M.P. and gifted each set to a friend.

In Nixon and Jackson, it is said that, in the Huntington box, at the back of the bottom shelf of the box is painted - W:HAKEWIL. A^o. D. 1615. The authors further state that this is probably the earliest of the four extant versions. In it, there is a New Testament, a Psalter, and a Psalms in a metre not found in the other three libraries. The plan was as follows for each gift: the top shelf contained philosophy and theology; the middle shelf contained works of history; and the lower shelf contained poetry. The date 1615 is thought to refer to New Year 1615/1616. The books were all listed within the three columns on the opposite side of the box. A full list of the books contained within the three shelves can be found in this work of reference.

The *Oxford University Alumni* book for 1500-1886 says of Thomas Egerton:

EGERTON, Thomas, Baron Ellesmere, chancellor of the university 1610-1616 (natural son of Sir Richard, of Ridley, Cheshire); of BRASENOSE COLL. 1556, aged 17; bar.-at-law, Lincoln's Inn, 1572, treasurer 1588, solicitor-general of England 1581-92, attorney-general 1592-4, chamberlain of Chester 1593 and knighted, master of the rolls 1594-1603, lord keeper 1596, created Baron Ellesmere 19 July 1603, and lord chancellor on 24th, created Viscount Brackley 7 Nov. 1616, died 15 March 1617.



Monument to the 1st Earl in Worsley Church

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