

Charles Towsey of Henley upon Thames in the County of Oxford Gentleman

Mary Harriet Sparks

H. B. Moorhouse

TOWSEY TALES

NAME: Edward Towsey

BIRTH DETAILS: Sept - Dec 1848, Henley-upon-Thames

DEATH DETAILS: 12 May 1920, Masterton, NZ

CHART REF: Towsey Charts B7 & B1

MARRIAGE DETAILS: 10 Dec.1872

SPOUSE: Hannah McLean



Edward was the third child of Charles Augustus and Mary Harriet Towsey. Edward Towsey's life seems to have been a constant financial struggle. He was, like Arthur, a musician, but without the same rigorous commitment to the propagation of the most refined music.

Edward spent at least some time at the same musical college as Arthur, but does not seem to have come out of it with the same zeal for social and moral evangelism. He was more interested in music as entertainment, than as a vehicle for social elevation.

There are quite a few accounts of concerts at which Edward played the piano, conducted and sang, either solo, in duets, or in the cast of a popular musical and, although he never stooped to performing low-brow music-hall numbers, his repertoire was always more popular than classical.

Though I have never heard most of the songs that Edward sang, titles such as "Evangeline", "Ever of Thee", "See Our Oars", "Ye Shepherds", "I Never Can Forget", "Schooner on The Sands", "When Other Lips", give a pretty good idea of the gentle, lilting nature of these entertainments, or "glees", as they were often called.

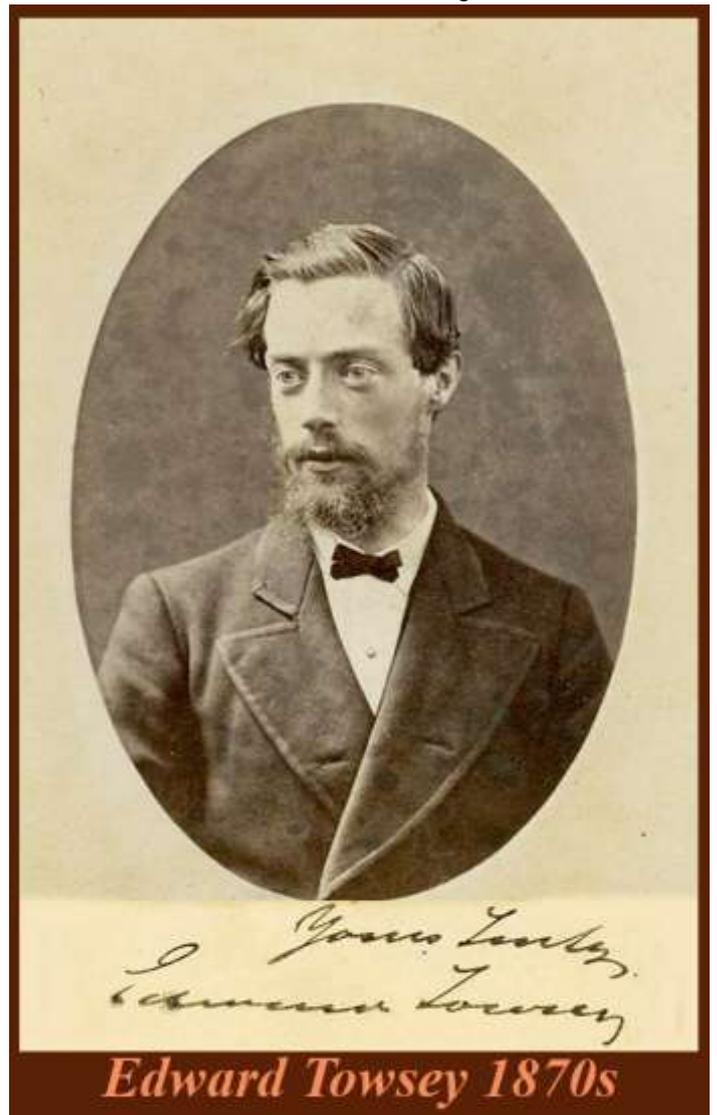
I have seen no reports of Edward ever performing Beethoven, for instance.

Without a musical appointment, like Arthur's at the Dunedin church, Edward was in the same situation as most musicians in those days; always struggling to make ends meet

Edward lived in Dunedin from the time of his arrival with Arthur in 1866, up until late 1875, and during the first half of the 1870s, his occupation is shown as 'clerk'.

For an account of Edward and his brother's hazardous voyage out to New Zealand, see Arthur John Towsey's 'Towsey Tale'.

Edward played at many concerts over those years, but a lot of them were charity fund raisers for various community projects. All the same, even though the newspaper reports from that time were filled with the usual Victorian-style effusive adjectives, one still gets the impression that Edward was talented enough to truly



impress his audiences.

During the years up to 1875, Arthur and Edward often performed together. They would both play the piano but Edward seems to have been the only one to sing. At such combined efforts, Arthur was always the one conducting.

One such occasion was the performance by the Dunedin Choral Society of the oratorio "Naaman", by the Italian-born British composer Michael Costa, in September 1874. On this occasion, Edward sang the lead role, whilst Arthur conducted. Regarding another performance by the Choral Society, the newspaper reviewer, whilst generally complimentary, did note that Mr Edward Towsey was not so strong on the recitative.

From as early as 1867, we start to see evidence that Edward was not, shall we say, a man at ease with the demands of the material world.

In September of 1867, Edward was fined ten shillings for allowing his chimney to catch fire; the result of failing to keep it clean. This was taken quite seriously in those days, as a chimney fire might possibly cause a lot of damage in an urban area.

In 1872, in Dunedin, Edward married Hannah McLean, the eldest daughter of a reasonably wealthy sheep grazier called John McLean, who had owned a large property in the Upper Waitaki region of Otago, but had died in early 1862, when Hannah was just eleven years old. His estate had been sold soon afterwards and Hannah had been left with what I assume to have been a comfortable sum of money, held in trust.

It may well be that Edward had managed to support himself when he was single, but not long after his marriage, we start to see his appearance in the Magistrate's Court regarding unpaid debts, most likely domestic accounts. These became more frequent over the next few years, until in 1875, the process of moving into bankruptcy commenced.

This was unfortunately, just five months after the birth of Edward and Hannah's first child, Mabel Constance, who arrived in January 1875.

Towards the end of the year, the family moved fifty or so miles inland to a town called Lawrence. Perhaps they moved because they were running out of store keepers in Dunedin who were prepared to advance them credit, but it was just as likely that Edward saw better prospects in the booming gold mining town, whose population, of more than ten thousand people, was about fifty percent larger than that of Dunedin at the time.

Although Edward would have had some music students in Dunedin, he seems to have taken the decision upon moving to Lawrence, to make it a full time profession and took a couple of rooms for the purpose in a new building in the centre of town.

At the beginning of 1876, Edward applied to the bankruptcy court for a delay in their final judgement, as he was in the process of arranging to pay off all of his debts.

The most likely source of this financial relief would have been Hannah's money. It would not though, have been a simple matter of dipping into a joint account, because any such expenditure had to be agreed by her trustees.

It would seem, as often happened in those days, that her father had set things up so that a future husband would be unable to just squander her money.

On 24th April, 1876, Edward's name was struck off the bankruptcy list. Four months later, an ex servant from back in Dunedin had obtained a judgement against Edward in the Magistrate's Court, for unpaid wages. The sum of £32 8s indicates that she must have been working for a very long time without being paid.

To add to the picture of Edward's lack of worldliness, we see in 1877, another fine for allowing his chimney to catch fire. But, on a brighter note, also in that year, Edward conducted a choir of 400 school children at the opening of the new railway between Dunedin and Lawrence.

Edward and Hannah's second child, Charles Augustus Edward Towsey, was born in 1877. Victor Garnet Cyril Towsey, their third child, was born in 1879. This was not long after the birth of Arthur's son, Arthur Cyril Towsey, so maybe Cyril was a fashionable name of the moment.

Throughout the family's years in Lawrence, it is possible to get two very different pictures of Edward Towsey. On the one hand there are the constant appearances in the Magistrate's Court for non payment of debts, including the council tax, then there are the frequent reports of entertainments at which he was performing. As in Dunedin, so in Lawrence, Edward was often performing as a part of various fundraising events in support of schools, hospitals and, closest to Edwards heart, the Lawrence Cricket Club, of which he was sometimes secretary, as well as often playing in the team against teams from other towns about Otago. Edward in fact, seems to have been quite the cricket fanatic.

On one occasion in 1879, we even see a report of Edward donating his services to a fundraiser for a rival cricket club. The newspaper report of that evening, also gives an insight into a slightly temperamental, artistic side of his personality... "The duet between Messrs Grant and Towsey could scarcely be termed a success, owing to an evident misunderstanding between the vocalists and the gentleman who accompanied them. We would suggest to Mr. Towsey, the advisability in future of controlling his temper, as it is scarcely good taste to seize the music from the piano and throw it from him in palpable disgust".

This report though, is at odds with the usual reports of Edwards performances, which mostly commented on his high standards of professionalism and generosity in the donation of his time and talents for community causes.

There is also a noticeable rise in the level of compliments on Edward's performances over his years in Lawrence, to the point where notices of upcoming events would proclaim the inevitable quality and success of an evening's entertainment, due to Mr.Towsey's involvement.

But then, artistic acclaim is one thing and paying the bills is another.

In April of 1880, Edward Towsey is again in court, applying for a certificate of bankruptcy. Mr.McCoy (Edward's lawyer), stated that the bankrupt had been struggling to pay off his debts, which had been a long time contracting, but had found it impossible to do so. His Honour asked whether the marriage settlement could not contribute. Mr.McCoy said that it had contributed very materially, but it could not be expected to contribute to such an extent as to be an injury to the children. The certificate was granted.

Exactly one year later, we see Edward back in court, with his landlord pursuing him for the non payment of rent, in what looks like a bit of a stitch-up by Edward and Hannah. Whether that is what they intended, is another matter. Again the well-employed Mr.McCoy is appearing for Edward, with Mr.Hunter for the plaintiff, who was seeking £9 10s.

Hunter stated that his client had refused to rent a house to the defendant unless Mrs.Towsey, who held a separate estate of her own, accepted the responsibility. A document drawn up by Mr.Webb, solicitor, was produced, signed by Mrs.Towsey, agreeing to pay the rent. The Magistrate: "You can't sue a woman unless her husband is joined", Mr.McCoy objected to the agreement, because it was not stamped. After considerable argument from which it appeared that Mrs.Towsey's estate was under the charge of a trustee, and that she could not act without his concurrence, Mr.Hunter accepted a non suit.

On a happier note, here is a newspaper report from the following year; May 1882.

"We hear that our townsman Mr.E.Towsey intends entering for the singing competition to take place shortly at the



Mabel Constance Towsey circa 1879

THE MIDSHIPMITE.

Twas in "fifty-five," on a winter's night,
Cheerily my lads, yo ho!
We'd got the Rooshan lines in sight,
When up comes a little Midshipmite,
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!
"Who'll go ashore to-night," said he,
"An' spike their guns along wi' me!"
"Why bless 'ee, sir, come along!" says we,
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!

With a loog, loog pull, an' a strong, strong pull,
Gally, boys make her go!
An' we'll drink to-night to the Midshipmite,
Singing cheerily, lads, yo ho!

We launched the cutter, an' shoved her out,
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!
The lubbers might ha' heard us about
As the Mid'y cried, "Now, my lads, put about!"
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!
We made for the guns, an' we rammed 'em tight,
But the musket shots came left and right,
An' down drops the poor little Midshipmite,
Steadily, my lads, yo ho!

With a loog, loog pull, etc.

"I'm done for now; good-bye!" says he,
Steadily, my lads, yo ho!
"You make for the boat, never mind for me!"
"We'll take 'ee back, sir, or die," says we,
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!
So we hoisted him in, in a terrible plight,
An' we pull'd, every man with all his might,
An' saved the poor little Midshipmite,
Cheerily, my lads, yo ho!

With a loog, loog pull, etc.

FRED. E. WEATHERLY.

Christchurch Exhibition. The competition is for different classes of voice, for which different awards are given, and includes sight singing and other tests. Should Mr. Towsey be in good voice, we opine that he will come to the front amongst the tenor vocalists of the colony and uphold the honor of our town in this respect."

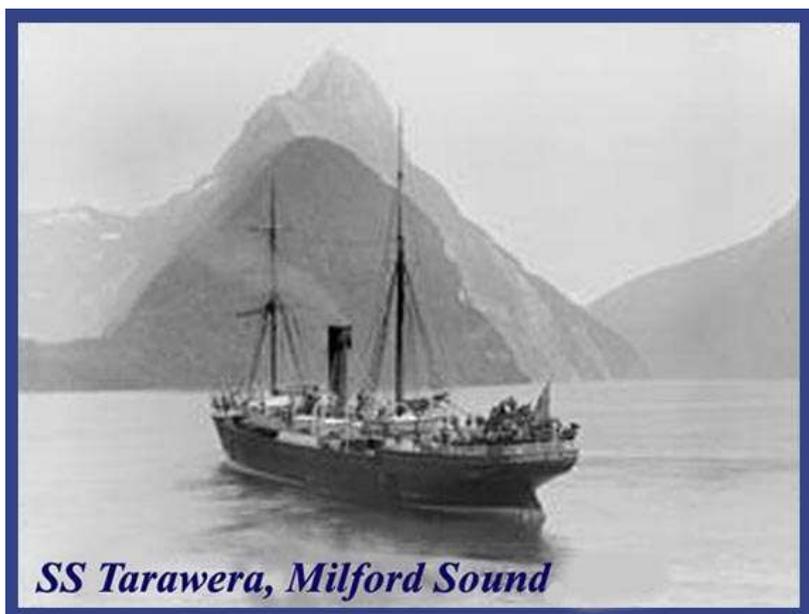
There was a five year gap after Victor's birth, before the arrival of Edward's fourth child, Douglas McLean Towsey, in April 1884.

Two months later, there is a report of the second performance of a rather delightful presentation of Gilbert and Sullivan's "HMS Pinafore", which Edward produced and in which he played the amorous tar "Ralph Rackstraw": - *"Mr.Towsey's rendering of the solo "The Nightingale's Song", was given in his usual artistic manner and may be considered the gem of the opera"*.

The report goes on to mention Edward's daughter, who was nine years old at the time: *"During the interval between the first and second acts, Mr.E.Towsey sang "The Midshipmite Song", Miss Mabel Towsey being discovered lying on a flag in the centre of the stage, surrounded by a number of sailors, in reclining and sitting attitudes. This song and chorus was most effective and at its conclusion, when the "midshipmite" was being carried off with coloured lights burning, the effect was most picturesque, the applause being demonstrative and deserved. In addition to taking part in "The Midshipmite", Miss Mabel Towsey appeared to advantage as a representative of the British sailor, and we are sure her mess-mates and the sailors generally were proud of their well-appointed companion, her appearance on the poop, with telescope in hand, forming now a recognized and indispensable feature of the programme"*.

As an insight into the sophistication, or lack thereof, of colonial audiences of the time, it is worth quoting from a review of HMS Pinafore, from the time of its first performance, in Melbourne, several years earlier:

"HMS Pinafore is a piece which defies criticism in an ordinary way. The motive is a satire, which to many in the colonies is scarcely comprehensible, and so the prime essence of the humour of the piece fails to reach the majority of the audience."



In January of 1885, a steamship cruise was organized for ninety passengers, leaving from Port Chalmers, in Dunedin, for a cruise of the West Coast Sounds. One of the decks was fitted out with a stage, complete with scenery and Edward Towsey was the musical director.

One year later, amongst many other reports of performances, there is an interesting article about a series of concerts given each evening after the horse racing, in what I assume to be an annual race meeting in Lawrence, covering a period of several days. Rather than going into the review, it will be just as informative to look at parts of one of the evening programmes, which took place at the Lawrence Town Hall on Thursday and Friday evenings in January, 1886.

The musical director; Mr. E.Towsey. Pianist; Mrs.Foster. Manager; A.Foster.

Grand Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Entertainment.

Messrs. Barclay and Mercer (from Dunedin), have kindly consented to appear on this occasion in their extremely clever and highly popular Clog and Irish Jig Dances. Mr.Samuel Wootton will also appear in his sensational "Nigger Breakdown".

After the "Sparkling Farce", "My Friend From Leatherhead" there was a ten minute interval, followed by a Popular Musical Interlude:

Overture; Mrs.Foster and Mr.E.Towsey. Descriptive Scene; "The Flying Dutchman"; Mr.Foster. Nigger Step-Dance; Mr.Wootton. Character song;- "Coquette"; Miss Rolfe. Irish Jig; Mr.Mercer. Ballad; "Tom Bowling", (by request); Mr.Towsey. Clog Dance; Mr.Barclay. Extravaganza Duet; "Gypsy Countess"; Miss J.Rolfe and Mr.Towsey.

After another interval of five minutes, the comic operetta "£ S D" (for the first time in New Zealand), after which the evening concluded with a "Grand Race Ball" (Programme of twenty-four Dances).

The later newspaper report said that the dancing went on into the early hours of the morning.

As the 1880s progressed, we see less appearances of Edward Towsey in the Magistrate's Court, but in August of 1886, he did admit to a debt of £3 13s for wages owing to a servant.

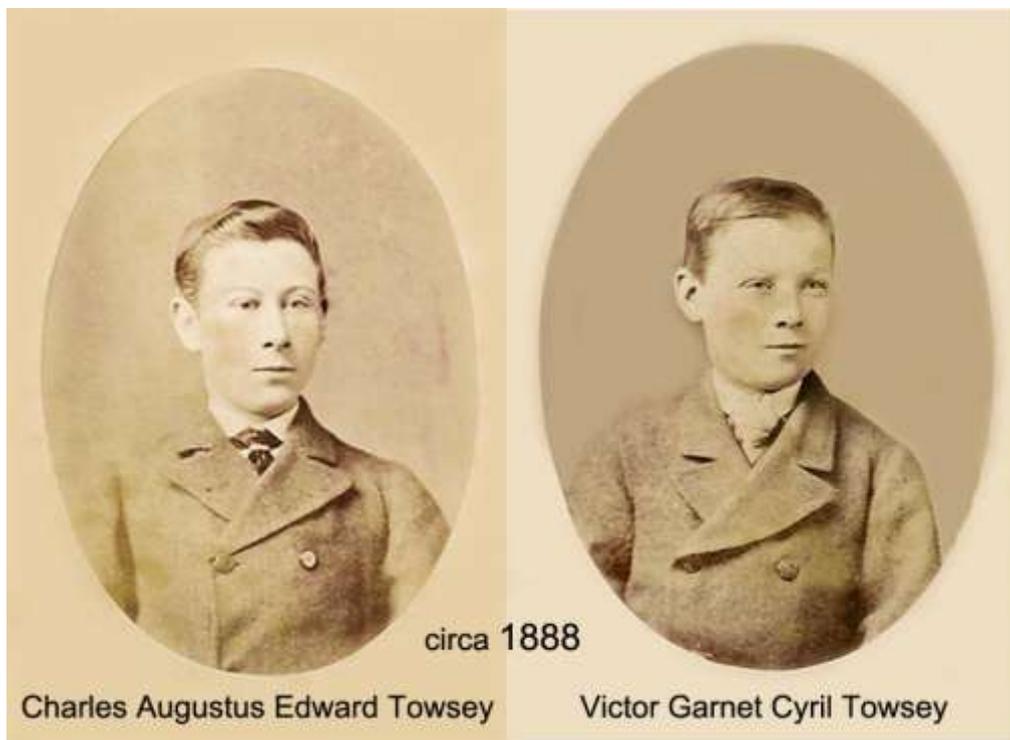
Also in 1886, Edward and Hannah's fifth child and second daughter, Daphne Finn Towsey was born.

In March of 1887, the family moved back to Dunedin. This was just two months after Edward's sister in-law, Annie, had also returned to Dunedin for the court case of her daughter, Elizabeth Jones. The proximity of these dates is probably coincidental.

As soon as Edward arrived back in Dunedin, he started advertising his services as a teacher of pianoforte, singing and harmonium.

A harmonium of that period, was an organ, about the size of an upright piano and without pipes.

Later in the year, Edward was again in the Magistrates Court, over a small debt.



1888 was the year in which Edward and Hannah's last child, Lancelot Hugo Towsey, known as Len, was born. It was also the year in which their eldest son, Charles Augustus Edward Towsey, died at the age of eleven, on September 5th.

Life went on in its usual manner, with Edward teaching music, performing in various concerts and appearing in court.

In 1889, he even managed to appear in a police court for having an unlicensed dog.

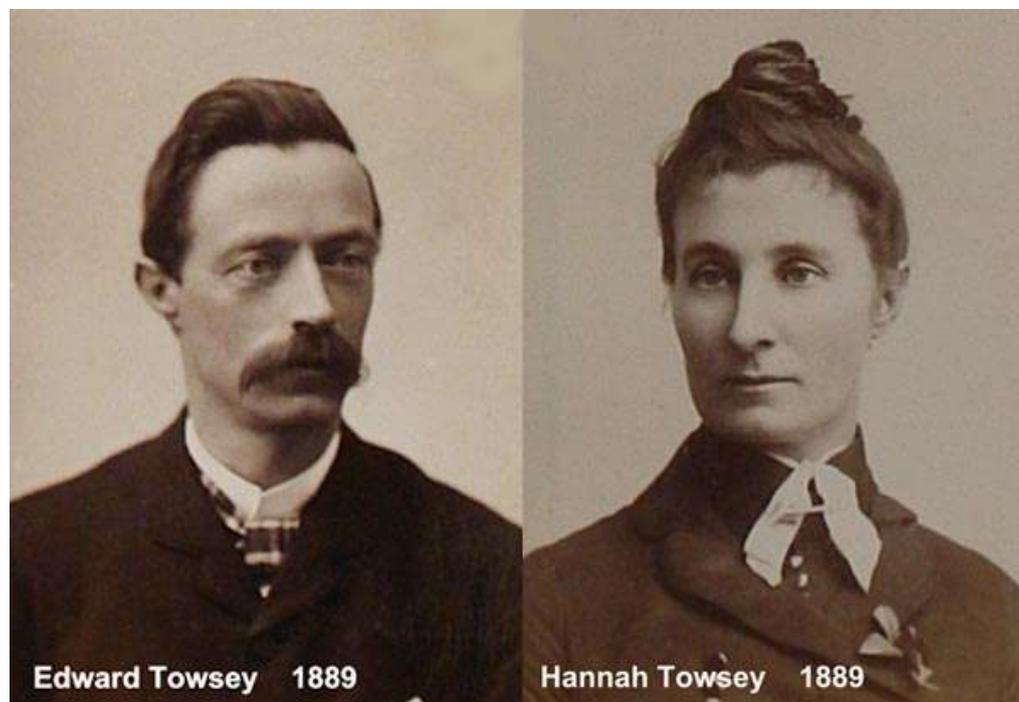
In the middle of 1893, Edward and the family moved 120 kilometres north of

Dunedin, to the town of Oamaru, on the Pacific coast. Apart from his usual occupation of teaching music at rooms that he hired in the town, he also took up a position as Choirmaster at the local church. Whether or not this was a paid position, I do not know. He also became immediately active in the production of various operettas, starting with a new, amateur production of "The Pirates of Penzance", followed soon afterwards by "The Wreck of The Argoshire"

As usual, Edward was also involved in a range of fund raising activities and of musical evenings by students at the local schools. Reviews of these various performances, invariably commented on the high standard of Edward's performance.

Edward's wife Hannah also involved herself in the organization of fund raising events, as did their daughter Daphne, who was about eight years of age by then.

Having come from a family whose father was a success in life, Hannah might from time to time have reflected on the fact that her husband, nice as he obviously was, was never going to be one of life's great winners. The apparently fickle finger of fate had also not pointed favourably at Hannah's brother, who dropped dead in August 1896. The report of



his death stated that; 'Dr. McLean, who had been practising at the Waikaia for some time, was found dead in his room there on Sunday, with his head resting on the fire grate, and the left part of his face burnt to a cinder. He acted as relieving doctor in this district some years ago and bore at the time a very high reputation in his profession. He has not however, since then fulfilled the higher promise which his distinguished career as a student inspired. He was one of the earliest students at the Otago Medical School, going afterwards to Edinburgh where he took his degree, and was looked upon as one of the brightest and ablest men of his day in the university. He was also a noted athlete and has figured in interprovincial football matches as a representative of Otago'.

The family moved back to Dunedin in October of 1896, this time settling in the northern suburb of North East Valley, where they stayed for the next sixteen years.

Edward took up the position of organist at the local church. As usual, he also directed various musical productions and even conducted the orchestra at the exciting new form of entertainment; The Cinematographe.

It is interesting to note that 1896 was the first year in which moving pictures were exhibited and the new

technology seems to have wasted no time in getting to the furthest limits of the Empire.

Edward participated in many fundraising concerts, including for the local school.

One such occasion was a "Patriotic Concert", at which was sung such stirring numbers as "Sons of The Empire", "England Will See It Through", "Soldiers of The Queen" and "Dear Mother England". There was a cantata performed by a number of the children, in which Miss Daphne Towsey (then aged 13) played the Fairy Queen. The programme finished with Rule Britannia, followed, as always, by God Save The Queen.

In the same year, a fundraising event for the church organ fund, saw Hannah helping out on the Refreshments and Produce stall, whilst Daphne assisted on the flower stall.

By 1900, Mabel Constance Towsey, then aged 25, had moved up to Masterton, north of Wellington, where she married William Wilkinson, whilst, back in Dunedin, at the performances to end the 1900 school year, Lancelot Towsey (called Leonard), aged twelve, sang "The Midshipmite" song.

It could be that by 1905, Edward

was not able to make a living from teaching music, as he is shown in a trade directory as running a tobacconist shop in the city. In 1908 at the age of 60, and probably for some years after, Edward worked as a theatre usher in Dunedin.

Between 1901 and 1909, Mabel and William Wilkinson had four children. But 1909 was also the year in which Edward and Hannah's youngest, Lancelot, died at their home at 21 years of age.

In 1911, Daphne Towsey, who had been working as a kindergarten teacher, married William Otago Clarke, a dental mechanic living in Wanganui, on the south west coast of the North Island.

Daphne's uncle, Arthur John Towsey, was living in Wanganui at the time, and it is possible that she had been staying with him when she met William Clarke. It might even be that Arthur had arranged the kindergarten teaching job in Wanganui for her.

In April 1912, Victor Towsey, who was still unmarried at thirty three, was working in Palmerston, north of Dunedin, as a labourer, when he died of tuberculosis. Three months later, Hannah died, aged 61, in Dunedin.

Amusements.

THE CINEMATOGRAPHE
SALON,
Next Wain's Hotel.

The ELECTRICAL MARVEL of the CENTURY.

**RECORD ATTENDANCES AND POSITIVELY
LAST DAYS.**

Mr MACMARON announces with great gratification the complete and instant success of the Cinematographe, the startling effects of which literally astonish the enormous and unbroken throng that crowds into the Salon daily.

**TO-DAY (THURSDAY),
GRAND CHANGE OF PROGRAMME.**

12 GLORIOUS SUBJECTS. 12

Broadway (street scene), New York, Wrestling Dog, Chinese Laundry (by request), Execution of Mary Queen of Scots (coloured), Women Fencers, Train Entering Waterloo Station, Skirt Dancer (coloured), Burning of Joan of Arc, Boxing Cats, Barber's Shop, The Gaiety Girls, and "Trilby" Burlesque (by request).

Exhibitions at the following hours: 12 noon. Afternoon—2.30, 3.30, 4.30, 5.0. Evening—7.30, 8.0, 8.30, 9.0, 9.30.

Conductor of Orchestra ... Mr E. TOWSEY.
Admission, 1s; Children, 6d.

Dunedin 1896

In 1914, Edward and Hannah's last surviving son, Douglas McLean Towsey, also died from tuberculosis in Dunedin, where his occupation is shown as Farmer. At 30 years of age, he had also not married.

It may well have been after the death of his wife, or that of his last son, Douglas, that Edward Towsey moved up to Masterton. There are no more records of Edward in Dunedin.

Edward might have moved north whilst Mabel and her family were still in Masterton, but we know that by 1913 they were well established in Auckland.

In November 1913, Mabel and William's greengrocer shop in Alexander Street, Auckland, was raided by the police, who discovered substantial quantities of gin and whiskey hidden about the place.

The illegal retailing of alcohol, was a fairly widespread crime in those days of strict licensing laws, where pubs closed early and the sale of bottled drinks was restricted to bottle shops attached to hotels.

These strict limits on the availability of alcohol persisted right up to the 1960s and sly grog shops were, consequently, pretty much accepted, even welcomed by the public.

Back in Auckland, Mabel Wilkinson was again in trouble with the police in July, 1915, as reported by the sensationalist New Zealand Truth newspaper.

A DEPLORABLE DEN AUCKLAND "JOHNS" MAKE A RAID Prostitutes, Paramours and "Pretty Polls"

A raid by the "John" Department upon a "sassiety" home in Liverpool Street, Auckland, on Friday evening, saw the breaking up of a happy family.

About seven o'clock, four members of the "Lor", Potter, Wilson, Maguire and Dessant, visited the house uninvited and on Monday the result of the visit saw Margaret Little, Ida Lillian Roach (21), Mabel Constance Wilkinson (41), James Roach (38), Patrick Lockett (35) and John Laing Smith (47), dancing attendance upon Magistrate Cutten.

Little was charged with keeping a brothel in Liverpool Street also with consorting with thieves and prostitutes; Ida Roach and Mabel Wilkinson, Smith, Lockett and Roach were charged with being idle and disorderly persons, in that they habitually consorted with thieves and prostitutes.

Lawyers Lundon and Singer, between them appeared for the

BEAUTIFUL BABES OF INNOCENCE

All denied the aspersions cast upon them.

Constable Potter, who must be a holy terror to the frolicsome hussies and gay Gerties of Mayor Gunson's city, said he knew all the accused and Margaret Little's home. It was No.35 Liverpool Street and witness, together with his "cobber cop" Wilson, had been paying a lot of attention to the place.

On the 9th of last month, the "cobber cops" looked through a window and saw a barney in progress. The language was lurid. At that time Smith, Roach, Little and another "liddy" were "at home". That evening witness saw a cove go to the house, come out a few minutes later with a woman called Young and go into a room under the house.

The evidence of the "cops" further related to what they had heard and seen on the nights of June 11 and 12 and 14 and other dates.

"Demon" Cummings said he knew the whole batch. The women were prostitutes. Lockett and Mrs. Little were living as man and wife. Lockett was a bludger. Smith appeared to be the runner for the house and was often seen carrying beer into the house. Mrs. Wilkinson he had seen going into the house twice. Roach, up to a month ago, had been working regularly and had been doing well, but it seemed that Lockett was keeping Mrs. Smith down as he was

THE LOWEST TYPE OF BLUDGER

Ida Lillian Roach, giving evidence in her own defence said she was before the court on May 13th and since then had lived in Hobson Street. Ida first met Mrs. Smith at the police station last Friday and had never seen her before. "Cop" Potter had warned her about Mrs. Smith being a "roughie", but Ida found nothing wrong and did sewing at her house. She had often been with Mrs. Smith and would speak with her again. Ida's "hubby" was away at Trentham.

Sub-Inspector Mc.Ilveney: "You had an affectionate farewell from your husband?" "Yes".

"The day before you left he gave you a black eye?" "I deserved it."

"You have not received any money from Trentham?" "No."

"Well, how much money did you have when arrested?" "A few shillings."

Joseph Roach said he had been working as a carter and previous to that had been working at the Clarendon Hotel. He had been boarding with Mrs. Little about four months and had not been aware that she had previously been in trouble. He had only once been in trouble and that was many years ago.

Sub-Inspector Mc. Ilveney: "Do you say that you could be living in the house without knowing the character of the house or the misconduct going on?" "I had no knowledge of it."

"Did you know anything of Mrs. Little's character?" "I made no inquiries."

Patrick Lockett said that since being convicted about four years ago, he had been away in the country contracting; earning at times £6 or £7 a week clear of expenses. He had never been in trouble but the once, when he was supposed to have snatched a "fiver" from a man's hand at the Thistle Hotel. He had come to the city at Exhibition time with a wad of £160 and had lived off this until March. The scar on his head was the result of being hit on the head by a stone when emptying a dray in Jermyn Street, and not by a blow on the head from a beer bottle.

Sub-Inspector Mc. Ilveney: "You have heard Inspector Cumming say that you are the man who is keeping Mrs. Little Down?" "Ask Mrs. Little."

"I am asking you." "It is not true."

Margaret Little said there was no truth in the statement that misconduct went on at her house. She had been before the court in connection with the women Winstone and Spencer. There was no truth in the statement that the injury to Lockett's head had been caused by her hitting him with a beer bottle. To Maggie's knowledge there had never been any immorality in the house. She had only known Mrs. Wilkinson about three months and had made her acquaintance through dealing with Mr. Wilkinson, who was a vegetable vendor. Previous to three months ago, Maggie knew nothing of Constance Wilkinson and knew little of her now.

Sub-Inspector Mc. Ilveney: "Were you living with Walter Duncan at Invercargill?" "Yes."

"Were you married to him?" "No."

"Did he desert you?" "No."

"Didn't you take out a warrant for his arrest?" "My mother did."

"Next you meet with a young man named Rogers?" "Yes."

"Did you know he had been in trouble?" "Not when I met him."

"Then you met Little?" "Yes."

"Don't you know he is a convicted thief?" "No."

"You know a man named Tobin?" "He was a boarder at my house."

"Did you know that he was a thief?" "No."

"You are unfortunate in your associates. Did you not know that Lockett and Roach had convictions against them?" "I never inquired into their characters."

"Lockett had £160 when he met you?" "Yes."

"And he got through it in four months?" "So he said. He was always running to the post office."

"You and he had a fast time?" "No. My husband was at home then."

His Worship said the first thing he had to decide was if the house was a brothel and he had not the slightest hesitation in deciding that it was. All the accused would be committed. The difficulty was what to do with them.

Sub-Inspector Mc. Ilveney put in a good word for Smith. He said that he was a man of weak character with not will power enough to break away from his associates.

In sorting them out, His Worship said that he had given the case a good deal of thought. Mabel Constance Wilkinson was, he thought, a married woman of weak character, and as much sinned against as sinning. She was convicted and ordered to come up for sentencing if called upon, on the distinct understanding that she left the town for twelve months. Margaret Little, it seemed, had been led into the life, but she seemed about as bad as could be found. On the charge of keeping a brothel, she was sentenced to two months imprisonment and convicted and ordered to come up for sentence when ordered on the other charge. Ida Roach had given a lot of trouble and seemed to be generally bad, but His Worship thought it would be as well to make inquiries and see if the Salvation Army authorities would take her.

Ida: "I will go to gaol before I go to a home."

Mr. Cutten: "That's just what I thought." Ida was sentenced to two months imprisonment.

Joseph Roach was convicted, ordered to come up for sentence and prohibited, he being given to understand that this was his last chance.

John Laing Smith was sentenced to three months hard labour and Lockett was given three months and prohibition.

A "bludger" was someone living off the immoral earnings of another. Being "ordered to come up for sentence," was similar to being put on a good behaviour bond, where you could be sentenced for your previous crime if you came before the court again on another charge, or were seen to be continuing on in the manner which got you into trouble in the first place. Being "prohibited" meant that you were forbidden from associating with certain known criminals. Being ordered to leave the city for a specified period of time, was similar to a device used in Australia, whereby a person of dubious character and associations, would be "rusticated", meaning that they would be forced to go and live away from any major city for a period of time. For someone who made their living from ducking and diving in the urban underworld, rustication could be worse than imprisonment, where they had no choice for survival but to get a proper job, most likely of a menial, agricultural labouring sort.

Daphne and her husband, William Clarke, did not have any children. At some point, they moved a little further up the south west coast of the North Island, from Wanganui to a small town called Patea.

It was probably in 1920, that Daphne left her husband and moved to Masterton. She was, no doubt, tired of being married to William Otago Clarke and might have used her father's deteriorating health, from bronchitis, as an excuse to leave him.

Edward Towsey died in Masterton on May 12th, 1920, at 71 years of age.

One year later, we see that Daphne is still living in Masterton, when the tobacconist shop in which she is working, is raided by the police. Her employer was fined £50 for running a common gaming house. Charges against Daphne, of being found on the premises of a common gaming house, were dismissed.

In November, 1922, William Clarke was granted a divorce from Daphne, on the grounds of desertion. In 1923 she married John Cornelius Leary, a 42 year-old train examiner, from Wellington.

It seems that she also had no children with Leary and I have not found any further records of Daphne. Leary died in 1958.

The movements of Mabel Constance Wilkinson, after her brush with the law in 1915, are unclear.

We know though, that she died from a heart attack seven years later, in Masterton, at just 48 years of age, in 1922.

At the time of her death, Mabel was using the name Mabel Constance Grattan, claiming to be married to fifty year-old Oswald Archibald Grattan. Grattan had certainly been married and there is no official record of the death of either his wife or of Mabel's husband, up to that time, so it would appear that she had just left her old life in Auckland behind and moved to Masterton, where she lived with Grattan and took his name.

Also at the time of her death, it is stated that she had just one child still living. That would have been George William Wilkinson, then twenty years old. We know that her daughter, Mabel, had died in 1917 at just sixteen years of age and must assume that her other sons, Edward William and Ivan, had also died before 1922.

We cannot be certain of this though, as some of the details on Mabel's death certificate are clearly incorrect.