

AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT

FREDERICK EDELSTEN

Diary, 1867-68

Reel M837

**Mr C.B. Edelsten
71A Gladstone Avenue
Whitton
Twickenham, Middlesex**

**National Library of Australia
State Library of New South Wales**

Filmed: 1972

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Frederick A. Edelsten (1848-1915) was born in Edgbaston, Warwickshire, the son of Peter Edelsten, a pin manufacturer, and his wife Jane. His family had connections with the Adelaide firm of Edelsten, Kingsborough and Pearson, wholesale drapers and warehousemen, which later became Edelsten & Co. In 1867 he sailed to Adelaide on the clipper *City of Adelaide* and, a month after his arrival, he was presented to Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was visiting Adelaide. In 1868 he made a trip to the south-east of South Australia and then travelled to Albany and Perth. Soon afterwards, he sailed to Ceylon and France on the SS *Bombay* and SS *Mooltan*.

Edelsten returned to Australia in 1869 and was involved in the business of Edelsten and Co. In 1871 he purchased a property in Howard Springs in the Northern Territory, which remained in the family for over a century. By 1876 he was back in England where he married Maria Morgan. For the rest of his life he lived in London and Enfield and worked as a mercantile clerk and later as a merchant. With his two sons he formed the London firm of F.A. Edelsten & Co., Australian and general commission merchants. He made a final visit to Australia with his youngest son in 1906.

FREDERICK EDELSTEN

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Diary kept by Frederick Edelsten on the voyage from London to Adelaide, while travelling in South Australia and Western Australia, and on the return journey from Adelaide to London, July 1867 – October 1868.

Note: The pages were filmed from right to left on the reel, with the title page and the first page of the diary appearing at the end of the reel.

The diary is divided into four parts, describing four journeys made by Edelsten, and his signature appears at the end of the each part. With the exception of the first part, there are very few precise dates and it is likely that Edelsten wrote these accounts retrospectively. This is certainly true of the third section in which the diary entries are interspersed with photographs.

The first part describes the voyage from London to Adelaide on the clipper *City of Adelaide* (Capt. David Bruce), 24 July 1867 – 3 October 1868. There are references to the weather and the seas, sea sickness, sightings of other ships, church services, games, sightings of Madeira, flying fish, porpoises, albatrosses and Cape pigeons, meetings of the Adelaide Reading Society, the death and funeral of a female passenger, rough seas in the Indian Ocean, the sighting of Kangaroo Island, and the arrival at Adelaide.

Following this section is a photograph of the warehouse of Edelston & Co. in Pirie Street, Adelaide.

The second section describes a journey that Edelsten and others made to the south-east of South Australia. They travelled by coach and on horseback from Adelaide to Mount Lofty, Milang, Lake Albert, the Coorong, Lacedpede Bay, Robe, Mount Gambier, Penola, Naracoorte and back to Adelaide. There are references to the landscape, geological features, flora, fishes, Australian Aborigines, accidents, pubs, sheep stations, impressions of Mount Gambier and the Blue Lake. The start of the journey is not dated and Edelsten refers to days of the week rather than dates, but it appears that the journey ended on 22 May 1868.

The third part is an account of a voyage from Adelaide to King George's Sound on the SS *Alexandra*, travels in the south-west of Western Australia, and the return voyage from King George's Sound to Adelaide on the mail steamer, 25 May – 20 July 1868. It refers to Edelsten's impressions of Albany, Perth, Fremantle and Guildford, rides in the Albany district, Western Australian flowers, plant collecting, kangaroo shooting, a meeting with the Governor, John Hampton, meetings with Perth residents, the Swan River, sea shells, trees and timber, and convict gangs. The most detailed section of the diary describes the journey back to Albany in wet weather, following bad roads and camping in the bush. There are several photographs in this section, including scenes of Albany, Perth, Fremantle and Guildford, a sheep station, and Aborigines.

The final section of the diary records the journey from Adelaide to London, 17 August – 3 October 1868. It describes the short voyage from Adelaide to King George's Sound on the mail steamer, the transfer to SS *Bombay* and the voyage to Ceylon, impressions of Galle and walks around the town,

the transfer to SS *Mooltan* and the voyage to Aden, Alexandria and Marseilles, sight-seeing in Egypt, and the rail journey across France to Boulogne. More of the entries are dated in this section, but others just refer vaguely to the day of the week. There are two maps.