

A Chronology of the Life of Howard Marryat

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Abstract: This paper presents the life of Howard Marryat (1871-1944), who founded Marryat & Place at the age of 20 and subsequently Marryat & Scott in 1919, which went on to become one of the most successful lift companies in the world and is now owned by KONE. He was also a founding partner with Dewhurst. His work rate and charitable giving were phenomenal, and this paper will demonstrate how his surname became synonymous with the lift industry.

1 INTRODUCTION

Howard Marryat was a hardworking and talented engineer, philanthropist, family man, watch expert and mentor. His effect on the lift industry in the UK is very much understated, and he can only be described as “a giant of the industry”.

Howard was a successful and well-liked businessman. His friends affectionately called him “HM”, and he had a great capacity for friendship. He worked fastidiously hard, creating what eventually became an electrical engineering company specialising in the design, manufacture and installation of lifts in buildings all over the world. He was a pioneer in the field of electrical engineering and wrote and lectured on the subject. His offices were in Hatton Garden, London.

His family life is of equal interest to his working life, with consistent themes of integrity, hard work and philanthropy. Unfortunately, it wasn't without tragedy along the way.

A portrait of Howard, which was painted by his daughter, was lost when his offices in London were damaged by bombs during the war. Of his four children, his youngest daughter (Mary Kent Harrison, nee Marryat) became an accomplished artist and exhibited at The Royal Academy [1] [2].



Figure 1 The lost portrait of Howard Marryat

2 UPBRINGING & EARLY YEARS

Howard was born on 26th August 1871 in Elham, a village in the district of Folkestone and Hythe, Kent. His parents were Charles and Jessie Marryat (nee Druary) from his birth certificate, although the family believe that Charles never married her and that Howard was an illegitimate son.

It seems Jessie was something of a mystery. She is missing from the census of 1871 [3] when Howard was born, and there is no evidence of a marriage other than the birth certificate where her surname is listed as Marryatt (with two T's) and formerly known as Druary. For some unknown reason she had several aliases, but Mootham is probably her real surname. Mant was also a surname that she used. The Moothams fell upon hard times financially [1], and this may be a reason for the different names used by the family. The matter was never discussed in the Marryat family. There is no evidence linking Jessie with a Charles Marryat, but Howard's son, Robert, recalled a conversation with Howard in which it was made clear that his father was a Marryat.

Jessie brought Howard up single-handedly and in great hardship. It was she who supported him through his early years, which must have been very hard financially. There was no state help for single mothers like there is nowadays. There was also no Marryat money to help. Jessie improved herself and, prior to Howard's birth, found friends among the upper echelons of Victorian society who helped her to educate herself and, in turn, educated Howard and sparked his interest in the finer things of life, such as art and opera [1]. It was a tough upbringing. Much was kept secret, and it seems there is no way of finding out much more. People took liberties with birth and death certificates and census returns in those days.

The hardship of Howard's early years resulted in Howard becoming very ambitious to better himself. It could easily have gone the other way, and Howard would have stayed poor. He was clearly very grateful for Jessie's endeavours in bringing him up. Howard had an impressive headstone with the word 'Angel' carved at the bottom of it under her name, which shows how much he was indebted to her [1].

He was educated privately at Richmond College, leaving there in the midsummer of 1887. This is not the same Richmond upon Thames College that exists today in Twickenham, which wasn't founded until 1937.

As a young man, Howard was a keen swimmer and cyclist. He once walked from Richmond to Exeter and back, accompanied by his dog. Richmond, it seems, provided the right environment where outdoor pursuits could be enjoyed, yet all the benefits of the capital city were within easy reach.

3 APPRENTICESHIP & EDUCATION

In 1886, at the age of 15, he started an apprenticeship at the Acton Electric Light and General Engineering Works, founded by Captain Ronald Augustus Scott. Scott was one of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Victorian members, and it is suspected that he was very influential in mentoring Howard to join such organisations, promote and work tirelessly for them. Scott's work during the latter years of the 19th century was at the forefront of technology in supplying arc searchlights, generators and switchboards for military and naval use. He later diversified into the novel field of the projection of advertisements onto the sides of buildings. Unfortunately, he became insolvent, and his business collapsed [4].

Howard studied at Finsbury Technical College, which was formally opened on 19th February 1893 and is now recognised as having been the first technical college in England. The College was set up as a result of a meeting of 16 of the City of London's livery companies held in 1876, where it was agreed to form the City and Guilds of London Institute for the Advancement of Technical Education (CGLI). The aim of the CGLI was to improve the training of craftsmen, and the two main strategies devised were to create a Central Institution in London, and to conduct a system of qualifying examinations in technical subjects. No single site could be found immediately for this Central Institution, so evening classes were held at a school in Cowper Street, off City Road, enabling instruction in chemistry and physics to be provided to those who wished to continue their education after working during the day. The school proved such a success that new premises had to be found in nearby Leonard Street, which became Finsbury Technical College in 1893. Its purpose was to be a 'model trade school for the instruction of artisans and other persons preparing for intermediate posts in industrial works'. The college offered opportunities for daytime and evening study, and subjects included building, design, drawing, engineering, mathematics and science. In 1926, Finsbury Technical College closed and was incorporated into Imperial College.

4 MARRYAT & PLACE

In 1891, Howard, at the age of only 20, established the firm of Marryat and Place, who were an industrial electrification and maintenance contractor. It is rumoured, and requires further investigation, that there was no "Mr Place" and Howard alluded to this in his application to a professional engineering institution in later years.

In the 1891 census, it appears that Howard was living at 102 Sea Road, Boscombe, Dorset and stated his profession as being a "private secretary". Interestingly, his name is spelt with two "T's" on the census, suggesting that it wasn't he who created the entry.

The head of the household was Alice Helena Thompson (widow), who is listed as a boarding house manageress, so it may be that Howard was lodging there for work. Although, his soon-to-be wife, Maude, lived nearby.

In 1910, Marryat and Place acquired lift manufacturers Joseph Richmond and Co, who had installed a 134 ft travel hydraulic lift in the Columbus Monument in Barcelona in 1876 [5].

Marryat and Place were based at 28 and 29 Hatton Garden, London [6]. During 1926, these properties were being partially rebuilt, and the offices were relocated to 40 Hatton Garden, London EC1. Howard co-authored "The romance of Hatton Garden" [6] with Una Broadbent (published 1930), and within that book there is a reference to floor levels changing. In the book, there are sketches of the streetscape of Hatton Garden.



Figure 2 View showing 28 & 29 Hatton Garden from Howard's book.



Figure 3 28 Hatton Garden in December 2024

Sadly, 40-42 Hatton Garden has been demolished and replaced with a modern building.

In 1930, Marryat and Place Ltd was converted into a private limited company and operated alongside Marryat & Scott (a company founded by Howard in 1919 and the subject of a separate chapter in this paper).

5 MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

On 5th August 1899, at the age of 28, Howard married his cousin, Maude Mootham, in Richmond, Surrey. They remained married until his death in 1944. Marrying a cousin was quite common in those days, and Howard knew the implications of what he was doing by marrying a cousin.

Maude was born in Bournemouth on 2nd July 1869 to Orby & Caroline Mootham (nee Bradfield) who married in Marylebone on 27th October 1868. Orby and Jessie were siblings.

Howard and Maude had four children, two girls and two boys, these being Cecily (1903), John (1907), Robert (1910) and Mary (1915).

In the 1911 census, he is listed as an electrical engineer and married to Maude with children Mary Cecily (8), John (4) and Robert (7 months). Mary Cecily must have been the child known as Cecily, as Mary wasn't born until 1915. Their address was listed as Thames Dene, Hartington Road, Chiswick.

On 29th December 1915, his daughter Mary Marryat (who became Mary Kent Harrison) was born and subsequently became an artist. At the time, Howard was 44 and Maude 46.

Howard's life was not without pain, and his beloved eldest daughter, Cecily, had a tragic early death from Hodgkin's disease, having been born in 1903 in Hammersmith and passing away

on 28th July 1935 at the age of just 32. She is buried in Petersham in the same grave as her mother and father. Mary gave the name Cecily to her first daughter [1].

Mary Marryat, Howard's daughter, grew up in Richmond at the family house at 1 The Terrace. Mary had her first romantic attachment with a local curate, but the relationship ended because of his insistence that Mary should abandon any artistic career. Howard sought to help heal the emotional wounds by sending her off on a tour of the Middle East in 1936. In 1939, she married George Kent Harrison, a Canadian, just before the outbreak of war, at St Matthias Church, followed by an impressive wedding reception in the garden at The Terrace [1].

John Marryat, Howard & Maude's youngest son, passed away in 1965.

Mary Kent Harrison (nee Marryat) passed away on 25th May 1983 in London at the age of 67. Her ashes were scattered in the churchyard of St Mathias Church in Richmond, Surrey [2].

6 MID CAREER STAGE & INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

In 1903, at the age of 32, he founded the "Electrical Contractor Magazine", a publication. It became the official journal of the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) in the following year, and Howard acted as its Honorary Editor for some 25 years.

In 1904, aged 33, Marryat was an indefatigable worker in any cause likely to benefit the electrical industry. He was a founding member of the aforementioned Electrical Contractors' Association, serving on its Council from its inception in 1904 until the time of his death, and was twice elected President in 1922/3 and 1934/5.

In 1905, he joined The Royal Institution as an Associate Member and was elected a full member in 1907.

In 1912, at the age of 41, his passion for sharing information came to the fore again when he founded his own house journal, "The Engineering Gazette".

On 12th July 1917, at the age of 46, he was made a member of the IMechE, being proposed by a Mr. James Garratt (of Singapore) and Mr. Arthur Patey (London), plus three supporters, Thomas Rice, Hugh Seabrook and Horace Darwin. He gave his address as 28 Hatton Garden and his birthday as 26th August 1870 (it is not known who entered this record, as all other documents suggest that Howard was born in 1871). He described his subsequent career post-Scott's as follows:

"I am the sole proprietor and manager of Marryat & Place, having no partner. The business, in normal times, is principally concerned in lift making, together with self-delivering hoists and allied machinery. We also construct lifting magnets. We have some connection in the optical trade and make various patterns of lens surfacing and grinding machines. We are sole agents for the Reid Gear Co, of Linwood, which is rather more than a buying and selling agency, as we undertake to get out schemes of gearing and the erection of same. During the war, we have been principally engaged in factory equipment and millwrighting, for munition works, such as R & J Beck Ltd., G R Watts & Sons Ltd etc. We have also done a considerable amount of engineering for the London Electron Works, a German concern now taken over by the New London Electron Works, which is a British company, the business of which is to recover tin and solder etc, from old tin cans; a very interesting proposition and one containing many novel problems. With regard to the staff, we are now employing about 104, of which some 46 are skilled fitters and electrical fitters. Normally, we employ five draughtsmen, but at the moment

these are reduced to three.” 1891-1917 (he was still employed; this was just the date of the application)

As previously mentioned, his reference to being the sole proprietor is of interest, as rumour has it that there was never anyone called Place, and the business was solely Howard's.

As part of his work with the IEE, Howard served on the Council from 1927 to 1930 and on the Benevolent Fund Committee from 1938 to 1941.

7 MARRYAT & SCOTT

In 1919, at the age of 48, a private company called Marryat and Scott was formed by Howard Marryat and Murray D. Scott to acquire the lift and hoist business of Marryat and Place. Little is known of Murray Scott, but he is not believed to be linked to the Scott under which Howard served his apprenticeship.

Howard was dedicated to the training of young engineers, and Marryat & Scott were responsible for the training of many well-known industry names.

In 1927, a co-operative agreement between Marryat and Scott and competitor John Bennie was signed. The original Bennie business was formed in 1865 by John Bennie (1849-1906), and in 1890 they fitted passenger and luggage lifts at the South Station Hotel in Glasgow. In 1899, a local building firm led by Archibald Fergusson constructed an outside lift shaft at Strachur Manor House for the Plowden family. Bennie was engaged to supply the lift machinery, but due to an untimely death in the Plowden family, the job was abandoned. Whether the lift was installed and subsequently taken out again, or whether it was never installed at all, is unclear. Eventually, floors and ceilings were made in the shaft on each floor so that it became a stack of walk-in cupboards. In the early years of this century, the doors and door frames were removed, and the openings were bricked up so that there is now no access to the shaft. It stands empty, still in place at the back of the house to this day.

NALM (National Association of Lift Makers) was formed in 1932 [7], and Marryat & Scott were founder members with Howard representing them.

In 1934, Messrs. Marryat, Scott and Fletcher formed John Bennie Ltd to acquire that lift business following the 1927 co-operative agreement mentioned earlier.

In 1950, a private company was incorporated to acquire Marryat and Scott Ltd (which also owned John Bennie Ltd) and Marryat and Place Ltd (industrial electrification and maintenance contractors) and was converted into a public company.

In 1979, the Marryat & Scott name was changed to “Kone, Marryat & Scott” when it was acquired by the KONE Corporation from Finland. The names Marryat & Scott no longer feature in the UK market but still remain strong in Kenya.

8 DEWHURST & PARTNER

1919 was a busy year for Howard. Dewhurst and Partner (note the singular) of Hounslow, Middlesex, was formed with Melbourne Dewhurst being the Managing Director and Howard Marryat the Chairman. Melbourne Dewhurst was thought to be a former apprentice of Marryat and Place [8]. In 2019, Dewhurst published a book commemorating their 100 years in business. Within the book, it is stated that Melbourne placed an advertisement in the national press for a business partner and as a result became in touch with Howard, who had already formed several

companies. The book names both Marryat & Place and Marryat & Scott, but doesn't mention others. The nominal share value of Dewhurst & Partners was £5000 (Calculated as £379,000 in 2024). What took longer to agree on was the name of the business. Howard proposed Marryat & Dewhurst; however, this was rejected as one of Howard's companies had gone into liquidation recently. They toyed with the idea of Marrydew as a name, but eventually settled on Dewhurst & Partner. The formal agreement was signed on the 3rd of November 1919, and the company was formally incorporated 2 days later. Howard remained on the Board until his death in 1944.

In 1922, Dewhurst & Partner moved to Inverness Road in Hounslow, and Murray Scott also joined as director and shareholder.

9 1 THE TERRACE, 134 RICHMOND HILL

In 1923, Howard and Maude moved into 1 The Terrace, 134 Richmond Hill, Richmond, Surrey.



Figure 4: Howard with his daughter, Mary, at the front door of 1 The Terrace.

The house at 1 The Terrace was full of valuable and delicate objects. A family member recalls two suits of armour in the drawing room that were 'never to be touched'. Such reverence for the collections would have tempered the tone of the house for its occupants, especially one with small children. They also recall further that Howard had a very large telescope on the landing that must have been particularly vulnerable. It was no ordinary telescope. It was one of five telescopes made by William Herschel (1738–1822). Howard Marryat bought it in 1927, but presented it to Robert Whipple in 1944, after Whipple's gift of 2000 scientific instruments and books to the University of Cambridge. It is currently on display at the Whipple Museum of the History of Science in Cambridge. One cannot imagine how panic-stricken the relative must have been when, after playing with it, a part came off and the boy was called to see Howard in his study the next day to 'discuss' the matter!

Thanks to Howard's business acumen, the family were able to live relatively comfortably, at least in the period before the Second World War. They had a staff room in the basement and a huge Aga in the kitchen. There was a live-in maid called Beatrice, and a chauffeur and gardener who were not in permanent residence.

It is said that the house was usually fairly sombre and strict. Everyone was expected to dress formally for the evening meal, and they were served by Beatrice (the maid), who went around the long dining room table, starting with Maude and finishing with Howard. There were fun and games, but only at specific times and in the right place, and such humorous moments would have complemented other times of intense study and reverence. There was a handsome hand-

painted rocking horse in the ballroom, on the first floor. It was set up by the window with a view over the River Thames. The rocking horse also featured in a painting by Mary Kent Harrison.

No. 1 The Terrace (134 Richmond Hill) was considerably larger during Howard's tenancy and was made up of two internally joined properties. The house, with an annexe added over the carriageway on the left-hand side in the late 19th Century, was sold to developers in 1953, and four flats were made in the right-hand one. Intriguingly, the two front doors of the original 18th-century buildings were retained when rebuilt in 1873. This is verified in a painting by Leonard Knyff in the Museum of Richmond. Howard did not own the freehold according to the current owner (2024), who advises that it would have been very gloomy and cold, especially during wartime, as there is very little daylight, and the obsolete central heating system relied on a coal-fed boiler in the basement. The Aga cooker was on the ground floor and was converted to oil, kept in one of two large coal cellars under the road.

Maude was very supportive of her husband's career, and she took a keen interest in the welfare of the firm's employees. She arranged Christmas parties in the house for Howard's staff and their families. She also supported the staff on a personal level in times of need or distress. Their home was certainly large enough for such entertaining.

In the 1939 census [2], he is listed as being at 134 Richmond Hill (Also known as 1 The Terrace), and by this time, it was only their son Robert who was still living at home.

10 TRAFFIC ANALYSIS FOR LIFTS

In 1924, Howard presented a paper to the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) [9] that included a more substantive glimpse into the lift industry's approach to traffic analysis, from the British perspective. For this, he was awarded The Paris Premium, which was set up to commemorate the Paris Electrical Exhibition of 1881. In 1924, it was listed as a premium of £10 for a paper published in the IEE Journal on any subject. Dr Gina Barney referenced this paper in her paper entitled "My Story of Lift Traffic Analysis, Design and Control 1960 – 2020", presented to the annual Lift Symposium in Northampton in 2017 [10].

In the paper [9], Howard claimed that "given the necessary particulars of a building, the lift engineer will be able to calculate the probable traffic". However, he also noted: "It must be admitted ... that the lift engineer himself does not usually employ any scientific method in arriving at the number of passengers per minute which will require lift service on each particular floor during the busy part of the day". Instead of relying on a "scientific method" the typical lift engineer drew "upon his own experience and home-made formulae". At this point Howard opined that, if the various "home-made formulae" used by British lift manufacturers "could be collated, the general advantage would be served and many mistakes avoided". In his paper Howard reported that the "only English pronouncement" he could find on lift traffic was found in "a paper read recently by Mr. C.H.J. Day [11] before the Association of Engineers-in-Charge, in which he says ... that in buildings where tests have been made, the rate of traffic flow at the busiest time of the day has been found to be such as to include the equivalent of the entire population of the building in 45 minutes, and that the passenger traffic can be predetermined by allowing for a period of rush from 15 to 20 minutes, during which time a number equal to one-third of the population of the building is dealt with". While Howard stated that his observations did not align with Day's, he also noted that "although I have been investigating the subject for some considerable time I have not yet amassed sufficient data to permit of my making an authoritative pronouncement" Howard's paper (the first draft was

completed in July 1923), addressed a wide range of topics concerning electric lifts and in his introduction he noted that it was “remarkable that so little has been written or published upon the subject in this country, although there are a large number of works dealing with cranes, conveyers, etc.” In 1923, British engineer Ronald Grierson (1886-1955) published *Electrical Lift Equipment for Modern Buildings* [12]. Howard's comment on lift publications reflected his lack of awareness of Grierson's forthcoming book. However, had he known, he might have questioned the decidedly American bias reflected in much of the book's content.

Such was Howard's interest in lift passenger traffic analysis that he invented the lift calculating rule, which took the form of a slide rule. An original example can be found in the archives of the Science Museum in London.



Figure 5 Howard's lift calculating rule.

11 THE HOROLOGIST

On 12th October 1936, Howard received the Freedom of the City of London and took the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers on the same day. It is not known who Howard's sponsors were, but the typical steps of becoming a Liveryman are Sponsorship (where a candidate typically needs to be sponsored by two or more Liverymen). This is followed by the application process, and once the application is approved by the Court, the candidate receives the Freedom of the Company. This then allows the candidate to apply for the Freedom of the City of London. The Freedom of the City is received in one of three ways: Servitude, Patronage and Redemption. Servitude is when you have served as an apprentice under a Freeman of the City (it is not known if Ronald Scott was a Freeman). Patronage is when your father is a Freeman of the City, and Redemption is when you essentially pay to become a Freeman. Once you have obtained the Freedom of the City, you are entitled to become a Liveryman of your Company.

Howard loved watches and was a collector. In 1938, he authored a book entitled “Watches – Henlein to Tompion” [13]. In March 1944, he delivered a lecture on the evolution of watchmaking before the Royal Institution. He was also an enthusiastic collector of Faraday "relics," including a Bible with marginal annotations in Faraday's hand. He presented to The Royal Institution the portrait of Dr. S. Z. de Ferranti, which hangs in the Lecture Theatre there.

His watch collection was left to one of his sons and often appears on auction sites such as Sotheby's.

12 DEATH

Howard Marryat died on the 22nd of June 1944 [14], at the age of 72, while on his way from London to attend a meeting of the Devon and Cornwall Sub-Centre in Exeter, at which he was to have read his paper on "Standardization of Motor Dimensions." According to reports, he suffered a heart attack at Waterloo Station. His death certificate [2] cites the cause of death as cardiac failure due to arteriosclerotic hypertension and states that he died on the way to St Thomas's Hospital. He is buried in St Peter's Church, Petersham, Surrey, in the same grave as his wife Maude and daughter Cecily.

Registration District LAMBETH.									
1944. DEATHS in the Sub-District of LAMBETH NORTH in the Metropolitan Borough of LAMBETH.									
Columns:— 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.									
No.	When and Where Died.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Age.	Rank or Profession.	Cause of Death.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.
88	Twenty-second June 1944 On the way to St. Thomas's Hospital	Howard Marryat	Male	72 Years	of 1 The Terrace Richmond, Surrey a chartered Electrical Engineer	Cardiac failure due to arteriosclerotic hypertension aggravated by rest. Deputy Engineer for London after 1928- Modern without request	R. A. Marryat Son 25 Fris Drive, Wanford, Middlesex	Twenty-third June 1944	R. Hargreaves Inspector Registrar

Figure 6 Death certificate of Howard Marryat

His estate was valued at £269,452 (which would be £14,974,518 by 2025 standards)



Figure 7 Final resting place for Howard, Maude & Cecily Marryat.

13 LIFEBOAT LEGACY

The legacy of Howard was to live on, though. In 1957, a lifeboat was provided out of a legacy left by Howard and a gift from his son, Mr. Robert Anthony Marryat, of London. The boat, named "Howard Marryat", was a 46 ft 9 Watson class lifeboat and was built in the same year. She served at Fishguard from 1957 to 1981 and then at Barrow from 1982 to 1986 and thereafter at Moelfre on Anglesey, where she then served as a relief boat until 1989. She is no longer registered as the Howard Marryat; her name is now Jozef de Waey and lies at Blankenburg in Belgium.

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BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS



David Cooper MBE is the CEO of UK based consultants LECS (UK) Ltd and LECS (UAE). He has been in the lift and escalator industry since 1980. He holds a Master of Philosophy Degree following a 5 year research project into accidents on escalators, a Master of Science Degree in Lift Engineering as well as a Bachelor of Science Honours degree, Higher National Certificate and a Continuing Education Certificate in Lift Engineering.

He is the co-author of "The Elevator & Escalator Micropedia" and "Elevator & Escalator Accident Investigation & Litigation" as well as being a contributor to a number of other books including CIBSE Guide D. He is also the founder of the Elevator Academy which provides free training for apprentices and trainees and is a Founding Trustee of the UK's Lift Industry Charity.

In 2012 David was awarded a CIBSE silver medal for services to the Institution, in 2021 he was awarded the Sir Moir Lockhead award for 30 years dedication to safety in the lift & escalator industry and in 2023 he was awarded an MBE for services to lift & escalator engineering.

He is a member of the CIBSE Lifts Group Committee. He also serves on the Board of CIBSE and is currently Vice President. He is also an Honorary Visiting Professor at The University of Northampton.

