

Reverend Francis John Eld (1830-1922)

Life History

4 August 1830, born in Foleshill, Warwick.

1851 Census, unmarried bible clerk, St. Mary Magdalene, Oxford.

1860, Appointed as Headmaster of Worcester Grammar School.

1861 Census, unmarried lodger living at Britannia Square, Claines, Worcestershire.

25 February 1865, appointed as honorary chaplain to the 13th Worcestershire Rifle Volunteer Corps.

29 December 1869, marriage to Elizabeth Odell, took place at Holy Trinity Church, Coventry.

1871 Census, living in Whistones, Worcestershire, age 40.

8 November 1871, Eld founded 'Worcester Rugby Football Club', initial match played against 'Artillery' (disbanded in 1896, but revived in 1908).

1874, appointed as honorary chaplain to the 2nd Administrative Battalion Worcestershire Rifle Volunteers.

1881 Census, Rector of Spetchley & Warndon, Headmaster of Worcester Grammar School, M. A. Oxford (St. Johns), age 50.

1890, original member of the British Astronomical Association (proposer and seconder not required).

1891 Census, unable to locate.

1892, appointed as acting chaplain to the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, The Worcestershire Regiment.

1893, retired from Headmaster of Worcester Grammar School.

11 May 1894, elected as a Fellow of Royal Astronomical Society [RAS].

1895, presented with the living of Polstead, Suffolk by his old college (St. John's College Oxford).

1899, elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (of London).

1901 Census, living in Polstead, Suffolk.

3 August 1902, Held first open air 'Gospel Oak' service.

20 January 1909, Joined the British Numismatic Society.

1911 Census, living in Polstead, Suffolk, age 80.

1921, Retired from ecclesiastical duties.

13 February 1922, Died at Lowestoft, Suffolk. [aged 91½]

Also a member of the 'Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies'.

From the Proceedings of the *Suffolk Institute of Archæology*

vol. 11, (1902) pt. 2, p. 220-24, "Polstead Church"

vol. 15, (1914) pt. 2, p. 225, "Reticulated stones at Stutton"

vol. 18 (1922), pt. 1, p. 79, Obituary (reproduced below).

OBITUARY

The Society experienced a great loss when, on the 13th February, 1922, there passed away at Lowestoft, at the age of 91½ year, the Rev. Francis John Eld, M.A., F.S.A., who was formerly Head Master of the Grammar School at Worcester, and in 1895 accepted from his College (St. John's, Oxford) the living of Polstead in this county, where he remained till a few months before his death. He took a great interest in all things both antiquarian and archæological and made a transcript of the registers of his Parish, as well as those of the Parish of Semer, together with sixteen Court Rolls, the property being then in his possession.

He also purchased the site of the ancient castle of Nesta de Cockfield at Lindsey, intending thereon to make excavations, which age and infirmities alone prevented. He was a member of the Council of the Society, and until later years regularly attended at Meetings.

A very full obituary, from the pen of an old friend, appeared in the columns of the East Anglian Daily Times on March 11th 1922.

E.F.
[E. Farrer]

Astronomy

Memoirs of the British Astronomical Association [BAA], vol. 2, pt. 3, p. 54 and vol. 3, pt. 3, p. 50, solar observing during 1892 and 1893 from Worcester, 8½" spec. [see note below]

Journal of the BAA, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 186-7

Note on the Sunspot of December 24-26, 1892

The Rev. F. J. Eld, also writes, "I had also noted that sunspot of December 26, as being very remarkable. It struck me not only from the intense whiteness (a dead whiteness) its surroundings, but also from a piece of a thin brilliant facula lying apparently at the bottom of the crater. It certainly looked as if the centre of the spot was a depression, the walls round it being the penumbra, the detached piece of facula looked just as the terraced falls appear in lunar craters, where they seem to have slipped and to be lying in ledges inside the crater and on its bottom."

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 3, pt. 3, p. 76, Report of the Solar Section, May 9 1893, Penumbra chiefly to the N. and very transparent, only the outline pronounced. (The Rev. F. J. Eld says, "Has every appearance of being a depression.")

Monthly Notices of the RAS vol.54, p.285, 11 May 1894, elected as a Fellow of Royal Astronomical Society, proposed on 9 March 1894, by Captain W. de W. Abney (RAS President, 1893-1895). Address given as 'Whiteladies, Worcester'.

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 4, pt. 3, p. 78, Report of the Solar Section, 18 May 1894, two or three little spots (only observed by the Rev. F. J. Eld).

Monthly Notices of the RAS vol.55, p.51, R.A.S. meeting of 14 December 1894, candidates proposed for election as Fellows:-

C. W. D. Perrins, Davenham Bank, Malvern (proposed by the Rev. F. J. Eld) [Also reported in '*The Observatory*', vol. 18, p. 44. Charles William Dyson Perrins (1864-1958) grandson of one of the originators of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce]

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 4, pt. 3, p. 43, 1896, Report of the Solar Section, The Rev. F. J. Eld and Mr. J. S. Townsend have furnished diagrams of position as before,...

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 4, pt. 3, p. 44 and vol. 5, pt. 4, p. 84, solar observing during 1894 and 1895 from Polstead Rectory, 8½" spec. [see note below]

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 6, pt. 5, p. 157, 12-14 January 1896, 'Sunspot Ledger' a very small spot in the eastern hemisphere. Observed only by Rev. F. J. Eld and Mr. Hadden.

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 6, pt. 5, p. 144 and vol. 7, pt. 2, p. 18, solar position observing during 1896 and 1897 from Polstead Rectory, 8½" spec. [see note below]

Journal of the BAA, vol. 6, p. 305, 29 April 1896, proposed for membership of the BAA Thomas Arthur Dickson and Mrs. Mary Francis Dickson both of Squell Hall, Northampton (seconded, G. Napier Clark). Election confirmed on vol. 6, p. 346 (where location is given as Sywell Hall)

Journal of the BAA, vol. 6, p. 326, report of a meeting held on 29 April 1896.

Mr. Schooling read a note by the Rev. F. J. Eld, M.A., F.R.A.S., on "A Remarkable Facula."

The President said that the facula to which Mr. Eld alluded was recorded on the Greenwich photographs. It was very close to the limb of the sun and the photograph there was very faint the sun having been in mist when photographed, so that the facula itself would not bear an enlargement or copying. But the appearance which Mr. Eld described was shown distinctly enough on the photograph when viewed directly, and it certainly had a very remarkable appearance. It looked exactly like a white mountain projected upon the black

background of the spot. Whether it really was a great elevation or not he could not say. The spot was about 20 seconds from the limb, and was seen almost as a dark line, and projected into the umbra of the dark line was a bright triangular shaped marking very much like a steep mountain. [Also recorded in *'The Observatory'* vol. 19, p. 225]

Journal of the BAA, vol. 6, p. 338-9

Correspondence

A Remarkable Facula.

Monday, April 13, 1896. 4.0. p.m. P $-26^{\circ} 17'$ D $-5^{\circ} 33'$.
L. $320^{\circ} 16'$.

The group of spots which was now (on Monday) very close upon the limb of the Sun, I had noted on previous days as being approximately in Longitude from 40° to 30° and in Latitude from 15° to 18° .

Closely following this group, brilliant white faculæ seemed piled up into a peaked mountain of prodigious height, which partly intercepted the view of the umbra of the preceding spot, which seemed to lie in a depression. From this facula two straight streams of faculæ radiated for a considerable length, just as on the Moon, rays radiate from Tycho, Archimedes, &c. The facula itself looked like a snow-clad Alp seen from a distance. It reminded me of Mont Blanc as seen from the Eggisch-Horn, or like one of those mountains which can be seen just on the edge of the Moon, Leibnitz or Doerfel.

I have never previously seen so evident a mountain. I could fancy that I saw the slopes of the mountain side and their different angles.

F. J. ELD.

Journal of the BAA, vol. 6, p. 392

Correspondence

A Remarkable Facula.

I should like to say a few words with regard to the Rev F. Eld's letter in the last number of the *Journal* respecting a remarkable facula closely following a group of spots on April 13.

Although the spots themselves did not reappear after rotation, I observed some unusually long streamers of faculæ in the same latitude on April 29 and 30 and May 1, stretching longitudinally in three sections, and visible when far from the sun's E. limb. They were also seen again when nearing the W. limb on May the 8th,

and extended at that time from 0° to 25° N., and on this date two very small spots could be distinguished in the midst of them.

I find also, on referring to Mr. J. S. Townsend's notes, that on May the 8th he recorded a striking range of prominences in the same neighbourhood, so that this disturbance was probably more lasting than might appear at first sight.

E. BROWN.

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 8, pt. 2, p. 26, solar position and tracing observing during 1898 from Polstead Rectory, 8½" spec. [see note below]

Memoirs of the BAA, vol. 42, pt. 1, p. 66 "The British Astronomical Association, The First Fifty Years"

SOLAR SECTION

Directors:

Miss Elizabeth Brown 1890-1899

A. L. Cortie 1899-1910

By the end of the first Session, in 1891 October, there were 34 members, and fourteen had sent in drawings. J. Bartlett, H. Corder, J. S. Townsend, and W. R. Waugh, as well as Miss Brown herself, continued to observe regularly during her years of directorship; and F. J. Eld who joined in 1892, J. de Moreas Pereira (of the Azores) in 1893, David E. Hadden (of U. S. A.) in 1896, and J. H. Astbury in 1898 were also regular contributors and continued their work under the next director.

Note: '8½" spec.' means 8½ inch (216mm) aperture reflecting telescope, probably f/8 to f/10, which would make it 5 foot 8 inches to 7 foot 1 inch long (1.7m to 2.2m long)