

Elizabeth Parker was born in Lothersdale, and married an Embsay farmer, Thomas Greenwood, in 1854. As well as running their 100 acre farm, the couple also held The Mason's Arms pub in Eastby for many years. But it wasn't until after she was widowed in 1871 that Elizabeth began keeping a journal.

She led a very industrious life. By January 1881 at the age of 48, she had four surviving children: Annie aged 25, Richard 22, Sarah 19, and Tom 12. She not only ran the Mason's Arms pub, but also the farm with its sheep and cattle. She also had a milk-house, selling milk locally, and kept a well-stocked vegetable garden.

This is her entry for '**New Years Day**' Saturday 1st January 1881:

"Soft wet day. All very quiet indeed, all of us in good health except that I am troubled with Rheumatic pains. A tea meeting at the Church Institute, Sarah & I went. We baked them 140 Tarts & cheesecakes and about 300 Queens cakes &c., &c. They took us two days to bake them. I likewise gave them 3 pints of Cream and two Quarts of new milk.

Sarah & Maggie Metcalfe presided at a tray. I cut all the Beef & Ham up, Tom & Polly Metcalfe assisted. The Revd J T D Kidd was Chairman of the evening entertainment. He gave a capital address. Mr Mattock and Mr Wilkinson also addressed the meeting and Mr Kidd's son gave some Capital advice, he is a Dr in Carlisle. All passed off Capitally, there was also some good singing."

[William Mattock was a grocer and corn merchant who had a successful business based in Skipton; J R Wilkinson, owner of Primrose Mill; Maggie & Mary (aka Polly) Metcalfe (aged 15 & 12) lived at the Elm Tree pub, and were the daughters of Jane (nee Morphett) Metcalfe, a widow who had since married innkeeper William Turpin Chippindale].

By 1891, aged 59, she had moved to Cononley where her son Richard had taken over a dairy farm, and she died there in 1909. She is buried at Kildwick Church.

Her personal diaries are now in the possession of a descendant, who lives in Scotland, and who has very kindly given us permission to transcribe them, a huge task being undertaken by David Turner, a member of Embsay-with-Eastby History Research Group. There are 28 volumes, covering the years 1872 to 1904, providing a wonderful insight into local life and characters. Eventually they will be made available for everyone to read. In the meantime, we hope to provide the occasional little extract from them for you all to enjoy.

