

**SIR MORTON PETO;  
A  
MEMORIAL SKETCH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649705337

Sir Morton Peto; A Memorial Sketch by Henry Peto

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**HENRY PETO**

**SIR MORTON PETO;  
A  
MEMORIAL SKETCH**





L. Weston Esq

# SIR MORTON PETO

A Memorial Sketch.

*PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.*

*Ad finem fideliz.*



LONDON:  
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.  
1893.

1-7-53 7W

5622

NOTE.

THE materials for the following brief sketch of the career of Sir Morton Peto have been very scanty. He left no papers for reference. His letters before his stay at Pesh were written hastily on his journeys, and sometimes between Board meetings. He dictated some notes as to his early days, of which use has been made so far as possible. In his business and Parliamentary career newspaper reports of meetings and works, and 'Hansard's Debates,' have been the chief sources of information. To Mr. Forrest I am greatly indebted for access to the Library at the Institution of Civil Engineers, and to Messrs. Curry and Lankester for information kindly given as to railway and other works. The two portraits facing title-page and at page 112 represent Sir Morton respectively in middle age and in his closing years.

H. P.

## CONTENTS.

---

|                              | PAGE |
|------------------------------|------|
| I. EARLY DAYS . . . . .      | 1    |
| II. IN BUSINESS . . . . .    | 11   |
| III. IN PARLIAMENT . . . . . | 55   |
| IV. PERSONAL . . . . .       | 73   |
| V. APPENDIX . . . . .        | 116  |



## I.

### EARLY DAYS.

SAMUEL MORTON PETO (better remembered as Sir Morton Peto) was born on August 4, 1809, at Whitmore House, Sutton, in the parish of Woking. The house was then a farmhouse, on a farm which his father, William Peto, rented from the then owner of Sutton Place, Mr. Weston. Charles Peto, a brother of William, was a tenant of another farm on the estate, known as Lady Place. Whitmore House has by the removal of the farm buildings, which were between the road and dwelling, been much changed in surroundings; but the house remains much the same as it was originally, and on a visit in September, 1879, Sir Morton pointed out the room in which he was born. In the parish of Cobham resided his grandparents, James Peto and wife, and an uncle of the same name, who lived to be the patriarch of the family and a very

keen sportsman, as a portrait of him on his pony with a pack of harriers, in the family, shows.

At the age of six the subject of our memoir went to Cobham till his grandfather's death, in 1816, and attended a school kept by a Mr. Fletcher in a house which stood by the lichgate, at the north-east corner of the churchyard. After that period his parents removed to Low Grounds, near Great Marlow. Up to twelve years of age he daily went to a school at Marlow kept by a Mr. Field. When travelling in the United States, in 1865, Sir Morton was asked by a gray-headed man at St. Louis if he remembered 'James,' who had been a servant at Low Grounds, and Sir Morton reminded him of the duty 'James' had fulfilled of seeing him safe at the school-house. Long after the school-days were over, and having to be near Marlow on business, and hearing that his old schoolmaster was ill, he went to pay him a visit. Mr. Field was very pleased, and told him he was 'the only boy he ever had who wrote entire copies without the pen being made, and with the last line as good as the first.' At twelve years Samuel went to a boarding-school kept by a Mr. Alexander Jardine, at the top of Brixton Hill. The schoolmaster was an Independent. The school

had a very good reputation, and numbered about thirty boarders and some day-scholars. The terms were about thirty pounds per annum (without extras, *e.g.*, drawing, music, and fencing), and the education was at that time deemed sufficient for lads destined to a business career. The boy who could not end his schooling at fourteen was deemed 'a stupid lout;' so the new pupil was told; but while at Mr. Jardine's he showed there was no fear of the term being applied to him. He made rapid progress in drawing, as is shown by two water-colour drawings which remain—of a girl feeding pigs and a boy mending a net. The drawing-master was a Mr. Lee. Mrs. Jardine and Mrs. Lee were sisters. Mrs. Lee kept a young ladies' boarding-school a little way down the hill, and the boys went there for their drawing lessons, which were given in a room divided by a movable partition from the girls' music-room, and while the drawing went on the young ladies hammered away at the 'Battle of Prague' and the 'Siege of Paris.'

Samuel was taught Latin, French, simple mathematics, and algebra. In modern languages the education he received was mediocre; he felt this afterwards. Writing from Pesth, in 1869, he said: 'I am very much impressed while here with