



Simon Frederick EVERY

In the year 1849 the terrible sufferings endured by children through the method of cleaning chimneys in vogue at that time – the climbing boy system – was brought to the notice of Simon Frederick Every of Derby, England, and he began a crusade to outlaw the evil practice.

His first step was to spend much time and money in trying to put into the market machines which were already invented for the cleaning of chimneys, but none of them did the job properly.

England was a land of a very great number of chimneys, commercial buildings and private houses all had many chimneys, all of which needed regular cleaning to remove soot and thus prevent the soot catching fire.

So Every invented a machine himself. He says “Numberless were the trials and failures before I succeeded.” The result was the invention of the “Patent Vulcan Machine for Cleansing Chimneys.” It was a telescopic brushing machine, patented by Every, which though improved on since, has been almost universally adopted. In 1850 advertisements

appeared showing the brush in use in a chimney alongside a climbing boy working in a chimney.

A large committee of noblemen, the Climbing Boys Committee, was formed with Lord Shaftesbury as the chairman and Every as the secretary. They lobbied for improvements and enforcement of the 1840 statute which already outlawed the use of climbing boys.

Every came to Dunedin in 1857. He married Mary Eliza Borton in 1858 at his residence "Silveracres", Andersons Bay. They had one child, John. He was active in local affairs and Every Street is named after him. He died in 1888 and is buried in Dunedin's Andersons Bay Cemetery.