

Family letters to Benjamin Hobson MD

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Regents Park May 2^d 1841.
James Church

1

Dear Brother
In looking back through a period of nearly two years to that when we had the pleasure and privilege of entertaining you and Mrs. Hobson at our house, then in the Gardens at Shefford - viewing the present moment with the one in question, they seem divided from each other by the lapse of a few weeks and it is only when we reflect on the mighty and unceasing current of events through which you have passed and the distance that intervenes between us that the mind is reconciled to the fact that you and your dear wife are in China. How much you must have necessarily felt in leaving in leaving your dear parents and relatives at home, was agitated or at least increased by the great delay and uncertainty connected with the postoffice arrangements and the arriving of your letter he hopes that this will now to a great extent be remedied by the better understanding and more certain intercourse between the Chinese Government and this Country. We have often waited and watched with interest the various despatches from the East and ^{any} intelligence from China especially was as you may easily suppose possessed of great interest.

With regard to ourselves ours has been a rather a changing scene since you left us I mention this not as an apology for our delay in writing to you but rather as a mitigating point in our

I had better say that all communications when times had better be addressed to me at Hackney - in case I should leave this place

Case with respect to this matter. We have often written
and purposed writing to you and the prospect of
Change immediately before us. Some how or other
induced delay and procrastination in order to be
able to write more fully. This is of course less reasoning
at ^{any} time and as we are now Circumstanced we hope
it is still less valid. Before this letter reach you
you will no doubt be aware of our recent change
I mean our coming to reside at the Regents Park
where I am now engaged laying out the new Garden
for the Royal Botanic Society of London. The site
is the Inner Circle which I dare say you will
remember; it is 18 Ac. in extent and will
be a very pretty place when finished.

You are also no doubt aware but I may
mention that we left Sheffield the Christmas after
you left England. I took a nursery at Huddersley
and after being there 12 months I engaged with
the Royal Society to lay out their Garden and
indeed as the Curator at a salary of £200. per
annum and in the mean time £60 per annum
in lieu of house rent &c.

I am allowed to practise as a Landscape
Gardener and to retain possession of the
nursery I therefore took a partner to manage
it and in the event of any thing occurring here
I have it to fall back upon. At present there is
however every appearance of its going on and
being successfully established. I mean the Garden on the Park

The nursery is likely to answer our purpose
after a time but requires of course both time
and exertion to establish it and fill it well with

with plants. Give my very best thanks to your dear wife
for her kind wishes to send me seeds and specimens. Whatever
she desires may be and I have no doubt to be very kind intention
she can have but little time for such occupations as gathering
seeds and flowers to send to England. In the event however
of my friend giving you either seeds or plants I have
taken the liberty of sending you some written directions
how you may ^{best} transport them to this Country, and I
shall only say should you be kind enough to forward
anything of this kind they would be highly acceptable
and a few new things from China obtained (especially
from a distance in the Interior) would be quite sufficient
to establish a nursery. All kinds of roots and seeds
travel well and especially Liliaceous plants of which there
are as I have been informed many and some most
beautiful ones. Also Tree Peonies. The directions to which
I refer have been kindly given to me by a person who
traveled in the East Indies as a Collector.

I will now tell you that this day week 17th April 1841. My
dear wife presented me with a dear and precious son.
a fine healthy boy. You have of course been informed
that that this is not the first. Our first born was a daughter
and a l. survived a few months. The short period which intervened
between the birth our first and second did not allow my
dear wife time to regain her strength and she had been
a great sufferer during the last six months. But we have
been highly favoured in her medical attendance who is not
only clever but is remarkably kind and attentive and
Mrs M. has improved in a remarkable manner since he attended
her and notwithstanding her great debility and weakness during
the latter period of her pregnancy she has had a most favourable
time and her D. says she could not be doing better and our dear
boy is such a good little fellow. It is Mrs Marmock's particular
wish that he should be named Benjamin Hobson Marmock and
thus commemorate the names of Grand Father & Aunt which will be
gratifying to us both but especially to Mr Marmock. Aunt has
been writing the above the post allowing of this has sent wife and child
continue to go on most favourably. These I shall have the gratification
of both hearing and seeing before me as I am going to see Mr Stratton & have
thought we have decided upon by which the child will be benefited.

The more duly favoured with the letters which you kindly
sent us and for which my dear wife and I beg to thank
you most kindly. We hope ere this you have received
one from my dear wife since last ~~letter~~ ^{letter} the ~~also~~
~~note to you from Melford in Decr 1850~~ ^{I had just told me}
~~the letter was from Melford~~ ^{and not completed and}
~~was not completed and~~ ^{was not completed and}

The directions with regard to the sending
home of seed plants &c I shall defer till next
month. which I shall take the liberty of forwarding
to you with some account how my dear wife and
and boy goes on. Our first baby was so exceedingly
delicate & that there was scarcely a hope even for ^{her}
this ~~its~~ life could be preserved and it is only now
that being blessed with a fine healthy son that I have
for the first time experienced feelings and emotion
which up to this time present period I was altogether
a stranger. The affections and sympathies which I feel
are by a benevolent Providence wisely implanted in the
bosom of every natural parent. Of course you
have been privileged to enjoy these happy feelings.
I hope your dear (first born) son will be spared to you.
It does not appear that under ordinary circumstances
there is some very delightful in being a parent. May
both you and I have given and melonous given us
to really understand our utmost abilities in this
respect that our offspring may grow up to call the
Lord blessed. My dear wife has an abundant
supply of milk for our darling boy.

Any thing as a parcel or package better be addressed
to me at Harkney - I have Marnock and Manley Messrs
Can I send you any seeds that would be of any value to you.
Please to present our united love to your dear wife. In my next I shall
write to her and thank her for all she has done for me and my dear wife.

My dear Sir

It is some time since I had the pleasure of addressing you: I therefore avail myself of an opportunity which presents itself of doing so. From time to time we have been favoured by seeing communications from you forwarded to us from Milford, and as a parcel is to be forwarded from there containing some books and papers it presents a favourable opportunity of forwarding this note together ^{with} a communication; with which I was some time ago intrusted and desired to transmit to you from the "Medico Botanical Society". I may also mention that in order to forward by the parcel in question dear Sir requested me to procure for you ~~two~~ numbers of the University Magazine conducted by its

Graduates. I sent and ~~sent~~
made enquiry and ascertained
that three numbers only had
been all that had been published
when it was given up. I obtained
the Regulations on the subject of
Examination for degrees in Medicine.

The last letter or two which have
reached us, from you, contained
intelligence of the unfavourable state
of your dear partner's health we sincerely
trust the proposed visit to Macao
may prove beneficial both to
her and the dear boy, and that
she may return fully restored to
her wonted health and strength.

Accounts from Hong Kong through
the medium of news papers & have
produced a most unfavourable
impression in this country.

as to the very unhealthy climate
of the new settlement (Hong-Kong),
your last letter would not lead
us to the conclusion that Hongkong
was what it has therefore been
represented and it would produce
those feelings less distressing or
rather correct the impression which
the reports referred ^{to} were certain
to give rise in the sensitive minds
of your dear parents and relatives
in this country. Knowing something
of the value and importance of faithful
trustworthy domestics we were
exceedingly glad ^{to} find in your
last letter that Mrs Marshall
was found to continue as valuable
as ever in the capacity which she
occupies. This was certainly a kind
and special arrangement of
Providence to provide a kind
and pious attendant for your

(4)
previous boy. The statements which
you gave respecting the prospects of
the mission in China and S. H.

Patterson's conduct in the matter
is for the present discouraging
sufficiently so to lead to the hope
that it would, or must provide
its own remedy without much delay.
No public notice has yet been
taken of it here. When known it
will occasion in the public mind
both surprise and disapprobation.

With regard to ourselves -
dear Anne is at present pretty
well and I am thankful to
say our dear boy for whom
we have had many fears owing
to his being so delicate, is passing
through the winter much better
than we had expected. Our
little daughter is very well
a precious healthy little dear.

I shall have pleasure in forwarding
the fruit trees which you mention
when the proper season arrives.

The plants which you kindly
mentioned having sent by a private
hand will no doubt be forth-
coming in due course. Mr.
G. Staunton promised me some
~~the~~ seeds on Saturday last which
he had rec^d. from Mrs. Morrison
of Louisa from China.

We were sorry to learn
the sad end of the George Wallace
and more especially as he
contained the instruments which
to you would have been so
valuable. By this vessel we
sent a copy of Horner's prize
work on Missions. which we
hoped would have been
acceptable to you had it reach
you. My dear wife desires

me to convey to you ~~her~~ and
dear Jane and your dear son ^{her kindest love}
for ~~the letter~~ ^{the letter} she has added to the
parcel a little book of John
She begs his acceptance and
hopes it may afford him some
amusement as well as
instruction. Accept and
present to your dear wife
the sincere love of dear
Sir yours very
Affectionately

Chumock
Royal Botanic Garden
Kew's Park.
29th July 1844 }

I have forgotten to thank you
for your last kind letter of July 31st
which I have received.

apparently written ^{3/1}
to Dr. Benjamin Hobson
whose 1st wife was a
Miss Atlay.

Dear Sir

It is now rather long
since I wrote to you, but I consider it
my duty to add one more letter to the
number you have had from me, else
I fancy I have nothing new worth your
notice to tell you of, we are all going
on much as usual, Thomas at his farm-
ing at Hunday Field & attending to
his Stewardship at Kirby Hall, there is
a great amount of business to do as he
goes there five days a week & it is about
three miles distance, he for the most
part walks it & I am glad he does as he
is inclined to get stout, he is I consider
a good farmer both in growing corn &
in managing stock, he tells me he has
on the Turnips 460 Sheep, besides he is
feeding 26 Beasts partly on Turnips

and partly upon Oil Cake, this article is produced from pressing the Oil out of Linseed, & is considered more feeding than grinded Beans, the Cakes are beaten in pieces & then given to the Beasts, the Oil is used in painting. Son William is employed in building Ships & I hope succeeds very well, I know only by his selling them as soon as built, but Ship building is in an awkward state in this Town the Ship Carpenters (said to be fourteen Hundred in number) called a meeting amongst themselves & fixed their wages at Six Shillings per day, many of them are now unemployed & their families suffering from their conduct. My Son in law Mr. Thackray I hope is now doing well he is employed in selling Timber for many ~~that~~ Timber Merchants in different parts of the Country, he has

a per Centage upon the amount of the
Timber sold, I am sorry to hear the complaint
of people in Trade as there seems a dullness
in almost every thing, it is said to arise
from the scarcity of money, but it is not
easy to account for as the greatest part of
money in Trade is carried on by Bills of
Exchange. & it is as easy to write Thous-
-ands as Hundreds, I believe it is caused
by too much being made or manufactured
of almost all kinds of wearing apparel,
every thing is done by machinery, the
Westriding of Yorkshire & Lancashire
could clothe all China if you would
find them plenty of money, we have in
this Island great cause for thankfulness
to the Almighty, the last Harvest in most
parts of the Country was fine the Crops
generally good & well got in so that our
Bread is very good, & the Animal food
is most fine, great improvements

have taken place in rearing Cattle
both Sheep & Beasts are made fat &
fit for Market much sooner than
they used to be, & this perhaps is part
of the Cause of the plenty of every thing
but farmers have no reason to complain
prices of every thing the Land produces
are good. We heard of your sad state
of things at Canton, we feared there
would be a scarcity of Tea but prices
of Tea (so far as I know) have kept much
the same as usual, it is most astonishing
how China can grow Tea for all the World
I have neglected to mention my Daughter
Mary, she married a Mr Pratt a respectable
young man, she has become Mother of a
fine little Boy a few weeks since, I hope
she is comfortably circumstanced.
Religion seems going on in a quiet way,
we seldom hear of the conversion of precious
souls, I feel for ministers, why so few seem
to be awakened by their preaching seems
a cause for much Grief & sorrow, I think

There is a want of something more
rousing, people go & come as I have
heard it compared to Solomon's Door on
it's hinges, if a Whitfield could be raised
up I fancy even his preaching would not
produce the same effect now as it did
when he preached; people are in a dif-
-ferent state of information now to what
they were then. We shall be glad to
receive a letter from you informing us of
the state of the people of China, my eyes
are tired my sight is weak, & my hearing
is such as that I can get very little from
preaching, I read very little but the
Scriptures, please let us hear from
you the state you are in both as relates
to your worldly comforts & the prospects
of your doing good to the souls of the people
believe me I remain

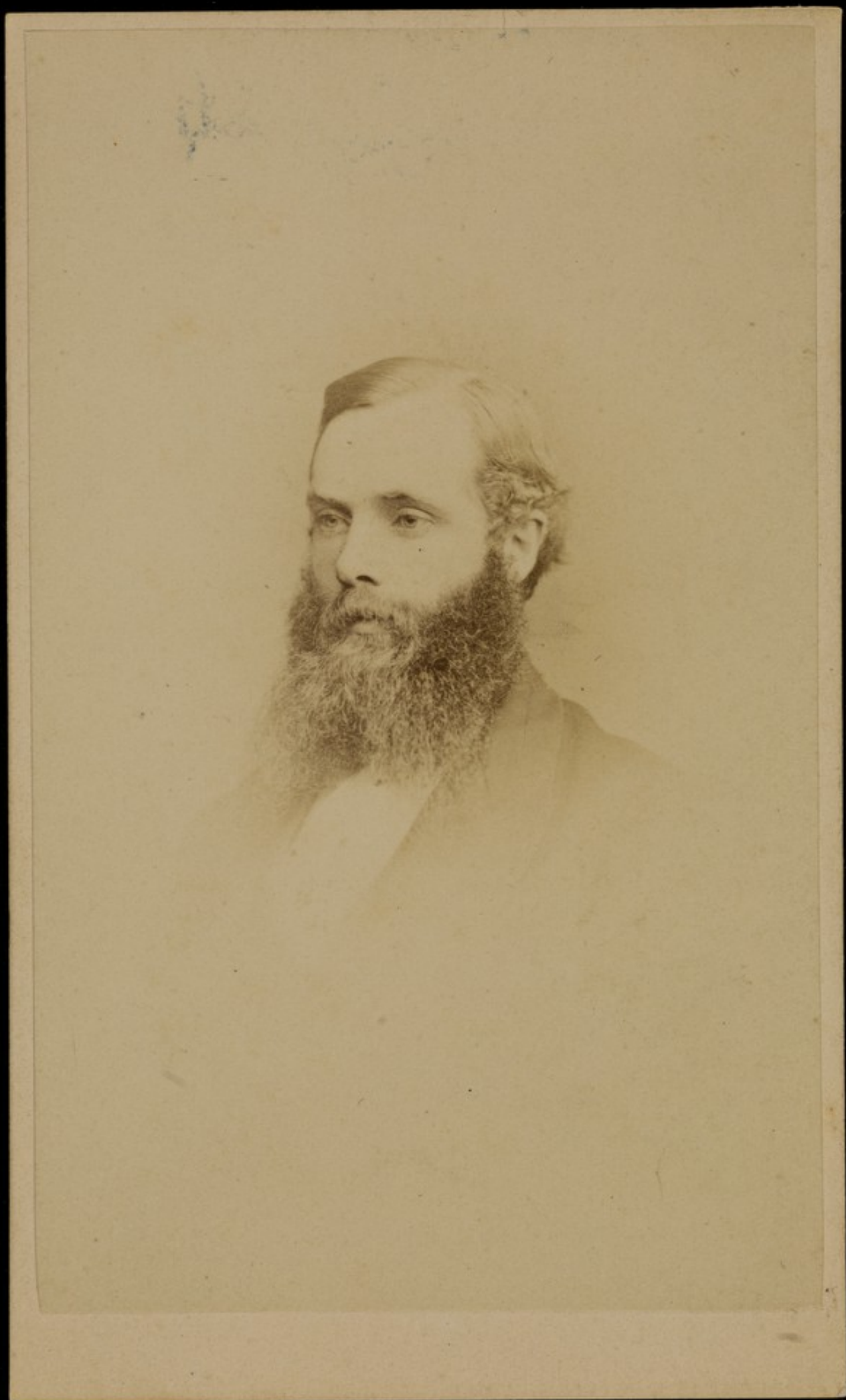
Feb 9th 20th 1857.

Yours very truly
John Abba

Mr. Atkey

May 9th 1856

From a member of
Grandfather
1st family



Mr. Richard Atby

3/3



BY APPOINTMENT
TO
HER MAJESTY

HILLS & SAUNDERS

OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE

ALSO AT ETON HARROW & LONDON

All communications respecting this
Photograph to be addressed to
OXFORD



P.P. SKEOLAN

HARROGATE

3/4
Mr. Thomas Abbey

MINIATURE
PAINTER

W. Keolam
P.
P.

ARROGATE

Amoy 18 Dec. 1857

My dear Doctor,

I am now waiting
for the arrival of the
mail to go to Foochow.

I am much disap-
pointed by the ar-
rangement which obliges
me to go there, as I hoped
to have had 2 or 3
months this winter at

Shanghai & Ningpo.
However I expect to
see you when I am
on my way to Peking,
whither Ld Elgin pro-
mised (as far as he
was able to do so) to
take me.

Many thanks for your
kind note by hand
of Dr Lockhart, & for

the look at Foochow.
I have here a Chin
ese acquaintance, an
old gentleman, who
is a great cultivator
of the medical art,
& who read your other
works with delight.
His name is enclosed.
He is ^(Vinty con) Commodore at
Yang Chow near Nankin,
but being old, & pre

ferring the "toga" to the
"arme" he remains at
home on permanent sick
leave. He is very
anxious for some vac-
cine matter, which I
will try to get from
Hongkong. Perhaps you
can send me some.
If you want any Chinese
medical works (from
which you might extract

2/
nomenclature & such like)
I ~~visited~~⁴¹² this old gentleman
has a tolerably
large library, & I will
send you the names
of his books; & he will
let you have any which
you might like.

I was astonished
to see Lockhart; & not
a bit older looking nor
altered from what he
was 13 years ago, Jan²⁴/45
when I was at Shanghai.

with Thom.

I expect Canton
is now in our hands.

I am sorry to ~~see~~
hear of poor Johnny,
but I hope he may
become acclimatized.
You should run over
to Ningbo in the spring.
I hope the second
winter may agree with
Lester better than

the first. I trust
Jenny, Ben & Robert
are quite well,
& Robert growing into
a young man. He
had better come
with me to Peking.
Give my love to them
all, & wish them
a Merry Christmas
and happy new year.

for me. I am

Your affectionate
brother

W. L. Garrison

Excuse scrawl. I am
overwhelmed with
work of a disagreea-
ble sort - police cases
& trials. James Lunt is
going to Shanghai. I will
tell him to go & see you
M. M.

Crofton

413

Dec 5/57



B. Hobson Esq^r M.D.

Shanghai

孫雲鴻

5

Brighton, Feb 7 1st 1868.

My dear Dr. Atwood,

I have often been inclined to write to you and Mary - but I have been cautioned so much not to use my brain,! - & I stand in such dread of fainting, that I hardly venture to scrawl even a short note to any one.

About 3 or 4 weeks ago I was very ill - I took cold, it became a sort of influenza & I had to stay in bed more than a week, thoroughly ill. But I have got over that now, and people say

I look very well. I do
not feel ill, any more
than what belongs to August.
Dr. King comes to see us
every few days - & he advised
me to drink The Pyrmont
Spa water - It is made in
Brighton & we get it in pint-
bottles. I drink it every
morning while dressing - it
is a mild form of steel, &
especially made to strengthen
nerves & digestion. I think
I am already better for it.
But I fainted one day lately,
which you must not allude
to, as Mamma does not
know of it. - Dr. King said
it was no use to tell her, she
is nervous enough already, -

As she thought I stopped in bed
for a bad headache - it happened
before I got up, last Friday week.
I as neither Mr. Bramwell nor
Dr. King could account for it, I
went up with Mr. Bramwell on
Wednesday last to Dr. Full - and
we came back no wiser than
we went, for he also only
said I was delicate and must
not tire myself. I do not like
Dr. Full at all - & he is not a
good manager, for although he
made the app't for eleven &
knew I was not strong & had
to come from Brighton, he
kept us an hour in the waiting
room while he saw other people.
The doctors in whom I do just-
trust for myself are you & Dr.
King - and when it is con-
venient for you to have me &

Convenient for me to go, perhaps
in April, I think not before, I
hope to pay you a visit -

Froze leaves us on Wednesday
next - on the whole, ^{he} is pretty well
& better fitted for the voyage than
if he had gone in the autumn -

I think Mamma will write in
a day or two about Jane coming
here - I believe she will enjoy
herself, & I have some very
nice girl friends who will
walk with her & play & sing
together & all that, if I happen
to be ill for a day now & then.

Mr. Brannell is going to write
to you medically about Dr. Full.

He likes him I do not, & when
you hear my account I know
you will agree with me.

With united best-love to Mary
ever yours affectately Hannah C. M.
We are smooth at present with servants
etc -

June 10
July 19 -
1863

P. Stevenson Esq.
Pawtucket

Thirsk. Gakkin

My dear Papa.

I am afraid you have thought that I have neglected to write to you for a long time, in spite of a reminder in the shape of a letter, I can give no excuse. My late removal to Pawtucket but I am afraid the reason is in my will, or rather the want of will to set about it. I left Hunter's Hall on Friday, very sorry to part with my kind friends there, & reached Thirsk without any mishap. Peter was on the lookout for me. As soon as we recognised each other we were quite at home, the drive of 6 miles was soon performed with a good trotter in the dog-cart and a kindly welcome

awaited me here. Of course I did not find any change in Mary & Annie whom I had recently seen in Sunderland, the other members of the family I should not have recognised. I fancy Uncle S has grown stouter since we were over.

Saturday afternoon Janet, Peter & I took a long country walk. The corn & barley looked very fine & seem to flourish this dry weather altho' a little steady rain would do the garden good. I fancy we had a little wet yesterday but of very short duration. In the morning Annie & Anne Janet & me to Church while Mary, I Gannett (the young lady staying here) & Peter walked. We passed the pedestrians & were going along very nicely when suddenly we heard screams behind us. We looked round & saw

Mary & S. G. running after us & calling to us to get out of the carriage immediately, we also saw a horse & bolting with an overturned dogcart, without delay we all jumped out. I doing so while the vehicle was in motion & of course fell flat on the road in consequence, however we were all on the bank & our carriage on one side. When the horse came rushing past us with the vehicle righted, no one was holding Bobbie at the time so he started off to keep company but Nick did not go very far before he was stopped & brought back to us. We were very silly to get out, our best plan would have been to have kept our seats & pulled to one side of the road. I believe no one was hurt altho' several much frightened. The churches that

we attended Morning & evening
both held very high doctrines
the Topliff Church clergyman has
not held any heterodoc. doctrines
views but he too fond of out-
ward forms & ceremonies.
I hope Maria & the boys con-
tinue to like Burdett. I
have not heard from her for
some time past but this is
easily accounted for. She does
not know my present address
I don't like being so completely
in the country as this house
is. I think to have
a house situated like Hunter
Hall within walking distance
of a large town.

My cousins here are thorough
house keepers they are as much
at home in the kitchen as
they are with their needles,
would you not like me to
improve them? Mary will make
a capital wife for a colonist.

Sarah. June, July 29th
 Last Sunday evening we
 attended the same High Church
 place where we heard a
 sermon about the Sister
 hood at East Grinstead,
 (in Essex, I believe) these
 sisters give themselves up
 to visit the sick & distressed,
 there is no deceased hands
 but they will not enter
 minister to the wants of
 the distressed; this Sister
 hood was established by
 Mrs. Heil, a clergyman, author
 of "Jerusalem the Golden".
 There was a collection for
 this society but I could not
 contribute. If I had had my
 five pence, I think it is a very
 principle it seems as if we
 were going back to the days
 of convents & nun.
 * And expect no remuneration
 in return

Please
 Thank
 Mary
 for her letter
 forwarded
 by Aunt &
 remain
 your affec
 Jane Hobson

July 28/63
 My dear Papa.
 Will you kindly leave
 the enclosed at St. Mar-
 garet's Terrace when you
 have left it
 open for you to read.
 I have thought the most
 suitable present I could
 give Mary was a nice
 pocket handkerchief, if
 Mamma would kindly
 choose one when she
 returns home, the price
 from eighteen pence to
 two shillings or more

I have it nicely marked
with "Mary" by Mrs H
I should like some
pretty design round the
name - say orange blossom,
when finished would
Mamma kindly forward
to me a Rainton as
she thinks best if to the
latter place it must be
directed to Mary.

They are all very kind
here but I must not
stay longer than next
Monday because of harvest
in fact when Richard and
Anne Abbey were here
last week it was settled
that I should go to Sunday

Field then with some of
my cousins to spend the
day there, after a weeks
sojourn I am to proceed
to Knarobio then stay a
week & then return to H. F.
when the busiest part
of harvest will be over
Yesterday we went to
Boscar, Uncle's second
farm & while there Janet
& I walked over to Sarah
Kay's house, she nursed
me when a child, un-
fortunately she was at
Harrogate but I saw her
father, a nice old man
who seemed delighted
to see me & continually
lamented the absence

Strelna Cottage
High Street
Aug: 7th

My dear Father

I found your letter
at Mr. Davis' yesterday evening.
I have read it today: it is
full of loving and Fatherly
counsel. I feel that personal
religion is a necessary thing
in order to gain eternal
happiness, but that is all.
I don't feel repentance for my
sins. I hope I shall get some
light some day. I've been
reading a portion of scripture

almost every day while I've
been here and hope to
continue the practice.

I've been enjoying myself
well down here, and
should like to know how
much longer I may stop.

I've money enough to last
me till the 18th and to
bring me home.

Mr. Lance is down here
with all his youngsters.

Mrs. Davie has been kept
to her bedroom ever since
last Tuesday night with a

bad bilious attack.

Mr. Greeth-the brother-in-law
of Mrs. Davies-and his wife
~~Mr. Greeth~~ came down last night
from Wolverhampton.

I've had a few good walks
here, and learned something
of the Geology of the place.

On Friday P.M. I walked to
the blasted monument over-
against Godshill, and had
a splendid panoramic view
of the island. Yesterday

I walked to Blackgang and
back, and saw the rocks
crop out which are a great

way below the surface
at Ventura. Mr. Freeth
and I are going to bathe
before breakfast to-morrow;
after that I shall probably
go with ^{the} Davies people to
Shanklin. I shall go round
the island on Tuesday.

Hoping this will find
you all well,

I remain

your affect. Son

John, M. Hobson

To
Benj^{mn} Hobson Esq^r M.B.

8/2





Dr Hobson

20 Braithwaite Road

Birmingham

Bath Hotel. Bournemouth.

Sunday.

My dear Dr. Hobson

As my Mother has always
expressed the desire to be buried
with my dear sister at Ave,
and as it appears there is only
room in that place for one other
coffin, I have decided that
the funeral shall be here
at 11 o'clock on Wednesday -

Y

If you wish to come it would be
advisable that you telegraph to
the Proprietor to have a room
for you here on Tuesday night.

I shall go back to Kimfield
tomorrow morning, & come back here
on Tuesday -

I shall write now to the Manager
of the Normans Hotel to say that
as Executor I will go on Thursday

on Friday to settle the accounts
and remove the effects.

I have just fixed upon a very
nice site in the Church yard here
and shall hear this evening or early
tomorrow whether we can have
it. But I presume this is a
matter of course -

I write at the same time that I
did to Henry & George's agents
enclosing letter to be forwarded to
him - I have not yet heard anything
from

from him - I suppose we don't
know his address.

I hope that you will be able to
come - I am sure that you would
like to do so.

With my best love to Mary
I remain yours truly

Robert Morrison.

son of Dr. Robert
Morrison by his 2^d wife

Dr.
wife of Dr. Benjamin Hobson &
daughter of Dr. Robert Morrison
by his first wife