

# Letters of Sidney and Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe



*Preparing for a Fancy Dress Ball (Charlotte and Mary William Wynn) by William Etty  
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## Introduction

The thirteen letters reproduced here were written by Charlotte and Sidney Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe and form part of the Milnes Coates Archive, gifted to the Borthwick Institute for Archives in 2013.<sup>1</sup> They represent the only known survivals of what was undoubtedly a longer and more comprehensive correspondence between the three women, who would have known each other from childhood and who shared family, friends and interests.

Covering just fourteen years in total, the letters nonetheless provide a fascinating insight into the lives of a circle of well educated and well travelled women in the first half of the nineteenth century. Famous names and occasions inevitably stand out. William Makepeace Thackeray and Jane Brookfield discussing the identity of ‘Currer Bell’, the author of *Shirley* and *Jane Eyre*; Richard Monckton Milnes and Jane Welsh Carlyle attempting to each out stay the other on an awkward morning visit; a much hoped for meeting with Elizabeth Barrett Browning; and the Tuileries Palace lit on a January evening in honour of the victorious Louis Napoleon Bonaparte.

But equally engaging are those on less ‘noteworthy’ subjects, the near disaster of Harriot Brooke’s wedding; the excitement shared between friends at the birth of a first child; the perils of a sea front cottage at Hastings in December; and amusing anecdotes carefully hoarded to pass on. From society marriages, to pregnancy, travel, religious controversy, political upheaval and literary gossip, the letters reflect the informal viewpoints of women whose social and family connections afforded them privileged access to the significant people and events of the day and the leisure and education to record them.

### *The Wynns and the Crewes*

Charlotte and Sidney Williams Wynn were born into one of the most prominent gentry families in nineteenth century Wales. Two of the four daughters of Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, the younger brother of the 5th Williams Wynn baronet, they could trace their paternal lineage back to Sir William Williams, Speaker of the House of Commons 1680-1681, and to the famous Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, antiquarian, MP, and member of the Council in the Marches of Wales in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> It was the marriage of Sir John’s great granddaughter Jane Thelwall of Plas y Ward, to Sir William Williams, 2nd

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<sup>1</sup> The archive was gifted by the Milnes Coates family of Helperby Hall and include 1,049 pieces of correspondence written either to or by Annabel Hungerford Milnes, née Crewe (1814-1874).

<sup>2</sup> Jones, E. D., & Roberts, B. F., ‘Wynn (family), Wynnstay’ in the *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* (2001). Retrieved 7 Apr 2019, from <https://biography.wales/article/s2-WYNN-WYN-1600>

Baronet, that marked the adoption of Williams Wynn as the family name and the union of the Williams lands with the Wynnstay estate in Denbighshire that was to become the family seat.<sup>3</sup>

It was through their mother however that Sidney and Charlotte were related to Annabel Crewe. In 1806 Charles married Mary Cunliffe, one of the daughters of Sir Foster Cunliffe, Baronet. Three years later Mary's brother, another Foster, married Annabel's aunt Elizabeth Emma Crewe, a gifted artist and the daughter of the 1st Baron Crewe and his wife Frances Anne Greville. On the death of the 1st Baron, 'Aunt Emma' (as she was known to Annabel) and her husband took in the then fifteen year old Annabel, and Annabel and her aunt remained devoted companions until Emma's death in February 1850.

Political and artistic interests ran strongly in both families. Annabel's grandfather John, 1st Baron Crewe, served as Whig MP for Cheshire for more than thirty years and was a close supporter of the politician Charles James Fox, while his wife was a noted wit and political hostess.<sup>4</sup> Similarly Charlotte and Sidney's grandfather, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, 4th baronet, had been MP for Denbighshire and Lord Lieutenant of Merionethshire, and their grandmother Charlotte was the daughter of George Grenville, the Whig Prime Minister between 1763-1765, and Elizabeth Wyndham, an artist and writer descended from the Dukes of Somerset. Wynnstay even had its own theatre by the end of the eighteenth century, commissioned by the 4th Baronet and built by Robert Adam, which could boast performances by the likes of David Garrick.<sup>5</sup> Their father Charles in turn served as MP for Denbighshire and was a friend and patron of the poet Robert Southey.<sup>6</sup>

It is perhaps unsurprising then, that the daughters of the two families should share these political and cultural inclinations. Writing of Charlotte in 1877, her sister Harriot Lindesay claimed that due to 'her father's position in public life, she was at a very early age thrown into political society, and learnt to take a keener interest in all the questions of the day than is usual for a girl of fifteen,' adding that their father's 'intimate friendship with Heber, with Southey, Hallam, Mackintosh, and others, added a strong literary element to that of politics in the society by which she was surrounded.'<sup>7</sup> There is no reason to suppose her sisters were not also subject to these same influences. In addition to her grandparents' prominent political roles, Annabel Crewe also grew up with a 'strong literary element' in her life, perhaps most

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Davis, R. (2004, September 23). Crewe, John, first Baron Crewe (1742–1829), politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 7 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-6691>.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, P. (2014, September 25). Wynn, Sir Watkin Williams, fourth baronet (1749–1789), patron of the arts and politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 7 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-88771>.

<sup>6</sup> Escott, M. (2009, May 21). Wynn, Charles Watkin Williams (1775–1850), politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 7 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30150>

<sup>7</sup> Harriot Lindesay, ed. *Memorials of Charlotte Williams Wynn - Edited by her sister* (London, 1877), p. vi.

notably in her grandfather's choice of the novelist Sarah Harriet Burney, the half sister of Frances D'Arblay, as a tutor for both her and her elder sister Henrietta.

All three remained unmarried until their thirties, and in Charlotte's case never married, giving them a degree of independence (bolstered by their wealth and social standing) that was not commonly enjoyed by women of the period. For Annabel her twenties and early thirties was spent with her aunt - in London, at Madeley Manor in Staffordshire, or travelling on the continent.<sup>8</sup> Her own letters prior to 1850 do not appear to have survived in any great number but it is clear from her later correspondence and from the letters written to her by her aunt, her sister Henrietta, and her many friends, that she was an enthusiastic amateur artist, read widely, and followed political and religious affairs. Her choice of husband would seem to support this. Following the death of her aunt in 1850 she married, at the age of thirty-six, Richard Monckton Milnes, the liberal politician and patron of the arts and thereafter acted as hostess to a wide circle of artists, writers, poets and politicians in London and at their Yorkshire estate of Fryston Hall.

Like Annabel, Sidney and Charlotte also divided their time between a number of family homes, including their parents' estate at Llangedwyn in Montgomeryshire; at Dropmore, the seat of their grand-uncle Lord Grenville, and at Thornes House, the home of their married sister Mary Milnes Gaskell. They also travelled abroad, visiting Wiesbaden and Frankfurt with their parents, and appear to have travelled together at home a great deal as the only two unmarried sisters remaining by the middle of the 1830s. Sidney's four letters to Annabel are too few to truly gauge her full range of interests and are certainly more concerned with family news than Charlotte's own, but it may be surmised they were not dissimilar to her sister's. Among the letters written by Charlotte and chosen by Harriot Lindesay for a published 'Memorial' to her sister in the 1870s, there are only a few references to Sidney, but it is evident Charlotte shared political news with her, and like Annabel Sidney chose a literary husband, marrying in 1844 Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, a lawyer and poet who was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford University in 1867. In his memoirs Doyle groups his wife and her sisters together as 'women of a very noble type', possessed of the virtues of frankness, generosity, sympathy, and what he refers to as 'loftiness of mind.'<sup>9</sup>

As Harriot Lindesay's earlier words suggest, Charlotte's letters are more overtly concerned with public affairs and the doings of the political and artistic circles in which she moved. It was in 1836 on a visit to Germany with her parents that she first met the Prussian diplomat Baron Karl August Varnhagen von Ense. Despite the significant age difference the two began a correspondence that would last for over twenty years. Among her other friends she counted the Carlyles, Thackeray, Richard Monckton Milnes (a relation by marriage through

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<sup>8</sup> Borthwick Institute for Archives, *Milnes Coates Archive*.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, *Reminiscences and opinions of Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, 1813-1885* (New York, 1887), pp.280-1.

her sister Mary), the French art writer Alexis-François Rio, and the theologian Frederick Denison Maurice.<sup>10</sup> Her letters to Annabel reflect this keen interest in current events, whether discussing the Mormon faith at a dinner party, commenting on the state of the Anglican church, or providing first hand accounts of the coup d'état of Louis Napoleon that brought an end to the Second French Republic in the winter of 1851-1852 and the system of oppressive 'espionage' she encountered in Berlin. To quote Harriet Blodgett in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Charlotte's personal writings 'reflect a woman of cultivated mind, well read in both English and foreign literature' and this is well evidenced in the nine of her letters transcribed here.<sup>11</sup>

Sidney, Charlotte and Annabel died within seven years of each other; Sidney first in 1867, then Charlotte in 1869 and finally Annabel in 1874. With the exception of the selective *Memorials* published by Harriot Lindesay, there are no published editions of their correspondence and their personal writings, where they have survived, have frequently been used to tell the story of other people; Annabel as a window on her husband and his famous circle, Charlotte to give insight into the life of Varnhagen and the Carlyles, Sidney as part of her husband's memoirs.<sup>12</sup> These letters, limited as they are in number and date, provide another perspective and one, it may be hoped, that will be added to in the future.

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<sup>10</sup> Blodgett, H. (2004, September 23). Wynn, Charlotte Williams- (1807–1869), letter-writer and diarist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 7 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30151>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Annabel's letters, including those now held at the Borthwick Institute, were used selectively in James Pope Hennessy's two volume biography of Richard Monckton Milnes, *Monckton Milnes: The Years of Promise, 1809-1851* and *Monckton Milnes: the flight of youth, 1851-1885*, published in 1949 and 1951. Charlotte appears in various biographies and published editions of the correspondence of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Baron Varnhagen von Ense, the latter drawing on the *Memorials* and Charlotte's letters in the Varnhagen Collection in the Jagiellonian Library in Krakow, Poland. Sidney is discussed in her husband's memoirs although her own writings do not, so far as I have been able to discover, appear anywhere in print.

## Timeline of the Letters

1807: Birth of Charlotte Williams Wynn.

1813: Birth of Sidney Williams Wynn

1814: Birth of Annabel Hungerford Crewe

1837: 20 June: Accession of Queen Victoria to the English throne. *[August/November]: Sidney writes to Annabel from Stowe to tell her of her recent stay at Wiesbaden for her mother's health (no. 1). 24/25 November: Sidney writes from Norton Priory, giving an account of the wedding of Harriot Brooke to Lord William Brabazon (no. 2).*

1838: 14 June: Death of Sidney and Charlotte's mother Mary Williams Wynn in London. *20 December: Sidney writes to Annabel from Hastings where she is likely staying with Charlotte (no. 3).*

1844: 27 June: Death of Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church, in America. 12 December: Marriage of Sidney Williams Wynn and Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, poet and 2nd Baronet. *21 December: Sidney, the new Lady Doyle, writes to Annabel from Grafton Street (no. 4).*

1846: 4 April: Birth of Francis Granville Doyle, eldest son of Sidney and Francis Hastings Doyle.

1848: 19 December: Death of Emily Brontë, author of Wuthering Heights who had published under the pseudonym Ellis Bell.

1849: 28 May: Death of Anne Brontë, who had published her novels Agnes Grey and The Tenant of Wildfell Hall under the pseudonym Acton Bell. 12 October: Birth of Mary Annabel Doyle to Sidney and Francis Hastings Doyle. 26 October: Publication of the novel 'Shirley' by the surviving Brontë sister Charlotte, writing under the pseudonym Currer Bell. *[November/December]: Charlotte writes to Annabel from London, speculating on the identity of the author of 'Shirley' (no. 5). In a follow up letter she confirms the author to be Miss Brontë (no. 6).*

1850: 15 February: Death of Elizabeth Emma Cunliffe Offley, aunt to Annabel, Charlotte and Sidney. *[February/April]: Charlotte writes offering sympathy on Annabel's recent loss (no. 7). 1 May - birth of Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, to Queen Victoria and*

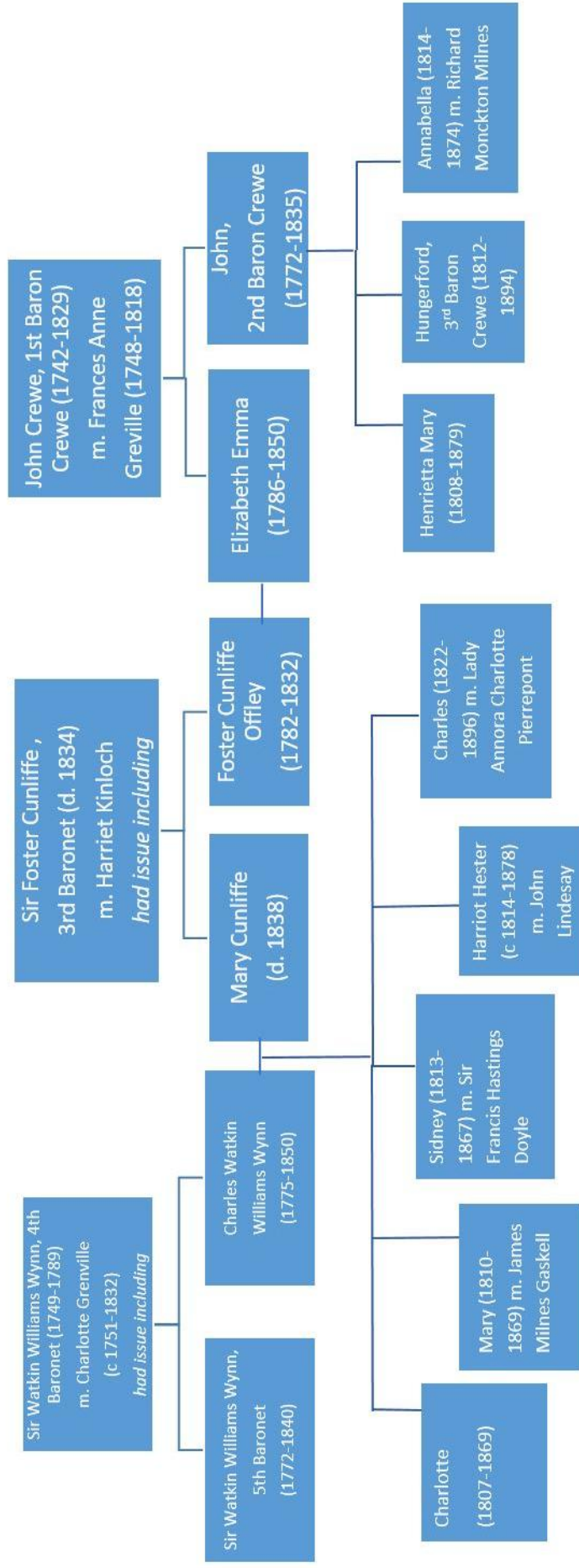
Prince Albert. *[April/May]: Charlotte writes to make arrangements to join Annabel at Tunbridge Wells (no. 8). 2-3 May: Charlotte writes of her tea at the home of Thomas and Jane Carlyle (no. 9). [June 1850]: Charlotte writes that Richard Monckton Milnes has left a book by Tennyson with her to give to Annabel (no. 10). 2 September: Death of Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, father of Sidney and Charlotte. 21 November: Charlotte writes to Annabel about the Roman Catholic controversy (no. 11).*

1851: 31 July: Marriage of Annabel Crewe and Richard Monckton Milnes. 2 December: Coup d'état by Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, President of the short lived Second Republic, which led to the re-establishment of the French Empire the following year.

1852: *1/4 January: Charlotte writes to Annabel from Paris to mark the first New Year of her married life and share news of the coup d'état of Louis Napoleon (no. 12). 9 February: Birth of Everard Hastings Doyle to Sidney and Francis Hastings Doyle. 3 August: birth of Annabel and Richard Monckton Milnes' first child, a daughter named Amicia Henrietta. October: Charlotte writes asking for news of Annabel's baby and discussing her recent trip to Berlin (no. 13).*



Genealogical chart showing the relationship between the Wynn and Crewe families.



## Editorial Note

The thirteen letters are presented in chronological order, as far as that may be determined. Many of the letters lack envelopes and postmarks and are not dated. Where an addressed envelope or postmark exist these have been noted at the beginning of the transcription. In the case of completely undated letters conjectural date has been given, with full explanation in a footnote. Each letter has been reproduced as faithfully as possible, with capitalisation, spelling, underlinings, punctuation and paragraph breaks copied from the original. Charlotte Williams Wynn frequently employed the use of abbreviations, particularly of the ends of words. While these have been extended in the transcriptions, the additional letters have been italicised to show where additions have been made. Words inserted above the line in the original have been brought down into the text. Some words have been enclosed in square brackets, indicating uncertainty.

For the purposes of this publication the letters have been assigned numbers from 1-13, indicating their chronological order. However the original catalogue reference is given in square brackets below each letter heading.

Errata: Please note that the year of birth for Emma Elizabeth Cunliffe Offley, née Crewe, should be 1780, and not 1786 as stated in the genealogical chart on the previous page.

## The Letters

### 1.

*Sidney Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>13</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 338]

Stowe  
Sunday  
Monday

My dear Annabel

It is too late now to begin & thank you for your nice long letter, but it was not worth making you pay for an answer from Wiesbaden when we were to return so soon, & really this is the first day I have had a moments respite from the Packums for the last 3 weeks during which time we have never been more than 3 days in any place. Before I proceed with my history however, I must just ask you whether you were much surprised by H. Brooke's marriage?<sup>14</sup> We were because not having heard of his proposal in London, we did not fancy that at all events it could be till the usual eventful hunting season in Cheshire & then as usual she might not be able to make up her mind to it. All that I know of Lord B is, thinking him very pleasant upon a very small acquaintance, perfect manners & very goodlooking, but of course he is every thing else; will not it be funny to see Harriot really in love after all? & now to return to our adventures.

Our whole stay at Wiesbaden answered perfectly, & was much pleasanter than last year. As to Mama she would have derived much greater benefit from the Waters if it had not been for that unfortunate Rib, which, from the waters being such great "dissolvers" got "unknit" over & over again. So she gave them up for a short time, bandaged herself till it was well, & then began again, when the same thing again happened however in spite of her having scarcely given them a fair trial, Mr White whom she saw the other day in London was enchanted with the improvement she had made & told me afterwards that nothing could be more satisfactory than her present state, or could have answered better to her than the whole excursion. This was the more liberal of him to allow, as in common with most other English *Doctors* he had no faith in any natural Waters before. I suppose you must have heard from

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<sup>13</sup> This letter may be conjecturally dated to between the wedding of Caroline Stapleton Cotton to Arthur Hill, Earl of Hillsborough, at Combermere on 23 August 1837, and Harriot Brooke's wedding on 23 November 1837. If the reference to their uncle's birthday celebrations at Wynnstay refer to Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, 5th Baronet, this would place the date of this letter in October, his birthday being the 25th of that month.

<sup>14</sup> Harriet Brooke (d. 1898), daughter of Sir Richard Brooke and Harriot Cunliffe, was married to Lord William Brabazon on 23 November 1837. William (1803-1887) succeeded his father as 11th Earl of Meath in 1851. Harriot Brooke was a relation of both the Wynn sisters and Annabel Crewe.

Casy Littleton by this time, they were at *Wiesbaden* for several days & I met them afterwards at Frankfort where Aunt Fanny took me to the Fair for a walk & they were a great addition to my pleasure; I dare say she gave you a history of our dinner at Baron Rothschild's to which I went uninvited. I do hope they will contrive to get to Italy for I am sure Edward Littleton is not fit for an English Winter, though I never saw him look so handsome, & you have no idea what an effect he created; Casy was much admired but when he came in to the dinners at the Table d'Hote both men & women used to sit staring at him in the funniest way. Mama & *Charlotte*<sup>15</sup> came to fetch me back from Frankfort when Aunt Fanny went on to Munich, & from that time we had the pleasantest society possible at *Wiesbaden* till we went, the Duchesse de Rauzan & her daughter who were delightful & who became our greatest friends, Lord & Lady Orford & all their family, & some very nice Germans; so that our little Balls twice a week were much pleasanter than any in London, & also our Table d'Hote, & when all our Party separated to go different ways, we could not bear to stay behind & set off also to Heidleberg, which certainly more than answered all our expectations. We then embarked at Manheim on the 30th & imagine our horror to find the Miss Blackburnes & their horrid friends Miss Storers again on board looking as if they had never stirred from the Steam Boat or washed themselves since we left them more than two months before. Fortunately however we had no want of other society, & we were not troubled with them. Of course it would have been unlike us to have performed a journey of 5 days without adventures such as sticking on land banks, Papa going on shore to see an old Church & the Steamboat setting off without him, & other things of the same sort. Our Passage from Rotterdam was excellent the sea like glass, & the weather so warm that we sat on deck till 10 at night. Among our fellow travellers were the 3 Lord Clintons who were not a little amused at hearing that their father had arrived at Combermere after the wedding, but could hardly be made to believe that he had danced.

Much against our wishes we were obliged to remain in London a whole week (with the dining room in its uncomfortable papered state which you know so well) to get rid in the first place of a servant who had been the plague of our lives abroad, & then our Maid came to tell us the day after our arrival that she *could* not possibly go with us into the Country as her Mother had had a Paralytic stroke & of course she must stay with her; all we could do therefore was to ask our old one who is at Oswestry to come back for the time we are in Wales & then trust to finding one. We came here from Dropmore on Saturday last, & must be at Wynnstay next Saturday on account of my Uncle's Birthday the following week. I hope we shall find *Harriot* & *Lindesay* there, but cannot be sure, as we had expected them here, but *Lindesay* somehow fancied he could not leave Ireland so soon, & put it off on account of business. *Mary's*<sup>16</sup> visit answered perfectly, I do not mean in the way of pleasure only, but of health, as she would never have recovered it so soon if she had remained at Thornes. Papa is with his yeomanry in *Montgomeryshire* & meets us at Wynnstay.

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<sup>15</sup> This is most likely Sidney's sister Charlotte Williams Wynn and not their brother Charles as Charlotte is noted as having travelled to *Wiesbaden* with her parents in 1836-1837 in her *Memorials*.

<sup>16</sup> Unless qualified in the text, 'Mary' should always be assumed to refer to Sidney and Charlotte's married sister Mary Milnes Gaskell.

Is there no chance of our seeing you in the Country? for it seems such a long time till February when I suppose you will be in London; have you the same house in Brook Street? pray write & tell me a great deal about yourself, & everything & everybody. I am called down to see some Pictures hung, & a door bored in a Wall! bitter cold work!

Adieu Yours most affectionately  
Sidney Williams Wynn

2.

*Sidney Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>17</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 345]

Norton Priory  
 Friday

My dear Annabel

Am I not an angel to sit down & write to you the very morning after the wedding? I begin at the beginning when we arrived here on *Saturday* & had two days quite alone with them to see *Harriot* in peace & make dear friends with *Lord B.* which we never could have done had we come at the same time as the whole storm of relations of which there were 40 alltogether. I think *Lord B* delightful, such perfect manners, & so much pleasanter than any other person I ever saw in the same situation, & taking us in the light of relations at once. I never fancied that *Harriot* could be so much in love as she is, & yet so quiet all the time minding nothing. On Sunday Mr Vesey (*Lord de Vesce's* son<sup>18</sup>) who was to be best man arrived, a nice pleasant person, but rather matter of fact, however he improved before his departure this morning.

On Monday the Glynnes, *Jessy Wilbraham, Lady & Charlotte Brooke* arrived, & on Tuesday *Lord & Lady Meath*<sup>19</sup> Mrs & Miss Parker, 10 Cunliffes, Arthur Lascelles, Henry Glynne, Robert Phillimore, & the other odds & ends. We all liked *Lady Meath* very much though she was rather formal at first & she seemed so fond of *Harriot* when she had her alone, *Lord M* did it all very well, with plenty of civil speeches, but I think he is rather a humbug, which is only for your information. They saw *Harriot* sadly to disadvantage at first, for the morning of their arrival we were all in the Hall after Breakfast, & *Harriot* standing by the door looking out when it suddenly burst open with the wind, & hit her on the temple with such force that she would have fallen if Uncle Brooke had not caught her, fortunately she was

<sup>17</sup> The description of *Harriot Brooke's* to Lord William Brabazon wedding, written the 'morning after', means this letter may be confidently dated to the 24 and 25 November 1837.

<sup>18</sup> John Vesey, 2nd Viscount de Vesce (1771–1855) was an Anglo-Irish politician and peer.

<sup>19</sup> John Chambre Brabazon, 10th Earl of Meath (1772 – 1851) was an Anglo-Irish peer and the father of 'Lord B'.

only stunned at first for a minute or two; & then grew faint, but by putting her to bed & keeping her quiet for the whole day she recovered perfectly, & next morning came down as well as ever. You may imagine however how dreadfully frightened we all were at the moment thinking that even without any serious injury the wedding would very probably have to be put off. It made the dinner too very melancholy, to see the large party assembled, & the cause of it all shut up in her own room. However Lord & Lady Meath went to see her afterwards in her dressing room, as they thought the excitement of seeing them would not be so bad for her, as the expectation of the first meeting. The next day she looked beautiful again, & having got over the fright, made it much less dismal than it has hitherto been the day before. One thing was, that Harriot herself, in spite of the sorrow at leaving her father, was so much in love & so perfectly happy that nobody could wear a long face. Poor Uncle Brooke bore up beautifully altogether, though at times it was too much for him. It was a great improvement, her coming down to Breakfast naturally on the morning instead of having it in her own room with her sisters or friends, as the others all did, & which gave no one any chance of being any thing but miserable. The Luncheon also was put off till after the Wedding instead of making a dismal scene before. Her dress was white satin with a flounce of Brussels lace, a wreath of Orange flowers, & a long scarf instead of Veil, which I am not sure was quite so pretty, but they said that it was less expensive & of more use to her afterwards. The Bridesmaids were Clare, our 2 selves, the 2 Glynnes, Miss Parker, & the 2 Brooke Cunliffes all in White & Blue. You may imagine how lovely Harriot looked, during the ceremony she kept in her fears, though I never saw such complete woe on any ones face, & at one time she tottered so much that I thought she would fall, & so did Lord B. Afterwards in the Vestry she was able to give way, but we sent them off as soon as possible for her parting with Uncle Brooke was too sad to see. They went to Hawarden (Lady Glynne having moved to the Rectory) & we are in hopes of hearing from her today.<sup>20</sup>

How odd it will be? Harriot Brabazon. They stay there about a fortnight, & after having taken Clare to Mrs Scott go straight to Ireland.<sup>21</sup> At least it is so settled now unless the death of Mrs Scott's sister makes any difference, which would be much better for I think that they would all like to keep Clare at home now, & it certainly would be better that she should get into her fathers habits at once, particularly as M. Warburton remains here for the Winter, & would look after her! The whole party are gone today except J. Willbraham, Mrs & Miss Parker & Aunts C & E. Cunliffe, & they go tomorrow, we remain till Monday. The Glynnes are gone to London for 2 or 3 days in their way to Cambridge.

Saturday. I doubt whether you can make out what I have written yesterday but I had Alice begging me to amuse her all the time, & I was obliged to break off to hold her hand for her to write a letter to "amuse Aunt Haddy & Uncle Brabazon!!"

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<sup>20</sup> Hawarden was the ancestral home of the Glynne family in Flintshire, Wales. Catherine Glynne married William Ewart Gladstone in 1839.

<sup>21</sup> 'Clare' is likely to be Harriot's younger sister Clare Emily Brooke who married Sir Frederick Hervey-Bathurst in 1845.

We go from here to Acton & Pantyochin for a week<sup>22</sup> & then quietly to Llangedwin till after Christmas.<sup>23</sup> We have had Harriot Lindesay with us here, while Lindesay has been at Llangedwin with William Conway, Hugh Cholmondeley & a party to shoot.<sup>24</sup> William Conway & Hugh go to London next week to fetch C. Rowley who arrives from Paris, & they bring her down after a little time to see her Mother when Mr Rowley goes to Scotland to see his sister. Do let me hear from you, & how you are, & what you have been doing. Papa is in London of course, therefore I shall send this to your brother,<sup>25</sup> as it is not much round.

Ever *your affectionate*  
Sidney Williams Wynn

### 3.

#### *Sidney Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, 20 December 1838*

[Catalogue: letter 350]

*Address on envelope:* Ruabon December twenty two 1838/ The Honourable Annabel Crewe/ Madely Manor/ Newcastle/ Staffordshire/ Charles Williams Wynn<sup>26</sup>

Hastings  
December 20th

My dear Annabel

Are you not rather astonished at the day of this? I got your letter only 2 days before we left Stowe where we remained only 10 days in all, & I must own that we were very glad to leave it, for the Duke having just had an attack of Gout was very low, & it is rather hard work to have to keep up other people's spirits.<sup>27</sup> Papa was also very Rheumatic the whole time, indeed lately it has gone to be very much more merely Rheumatism, his general health

<sup>22</sup> Now known as Pant-yr-Ochain Hall between Gresford and Wrexham in Denbighshire, North Wales. Between 1708 and 1921 the Hall was part of the Acton Hall Estate. It was purchased by Sir Foster Cunliffe in 1785 and after his death in 1834 it was occupied by his two daughters, Emma and Charlotte Cunliffe, Sidney and Charlotte's maternal aunts. One of the Cunliffe sisters' neighbours at Gresford was Miss Anne Hayman, former governess to Princess Charlotte and the author of two letters to Annabel Crewe in the Milnes Coates Archive. C. Williams, 'Pant-yr-Ochain: the chief house in Gresford' in *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 51 (2002).

<sup>23</sup> Llangedwyn Hall in Powys was the home of Sidney's parents Charles Watkin Williams Wynn and his wife Mary, née Cunliffe.

<sup>24</sup> Harriot Lindesay was the sister of Charlotte and Sidney.

<sup>25</sup> Hungerford Crewe, 3rd Baron Crewe (1812-1894).

<sup>26</sup> Charles Williams Wynn's name on the envelope indicates the letter was franked by him, a privilege he could exercise as a Member of Parliament.

<sup>27</sup> Stowe House was the home of Richard Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville, 1st Duke of Buckingham, the nephew of Charlotte Grenville, Sidney and Charlotte's grandmother. The Duke died in January 1839.

is certainly better (& every *Doctor* says so) than it has been for some years, but his Arms & Legs are as stiff as they well can be. We had no one at Stowe but Vicomte Chabot (father of *your* friend) who is delightful, & Mr & Mrs Grenville Pigott, I liked her, she is so quiet & inoffensive now that she is separated from her mischiefmaking Mother & Sister.

We went up to London, with the intention of not staying more than 3 days, but Papa having caught cold we remained a week till we *could* turn him out well. He went down to Wynnstay, when we came here on the 17th, in spite of what every *Doctor* could say to make him come here, but he thought the Dullness of it would do him more harm in the end, than the warmth *could* do him good; & he has turned out to be right, for it is bitter cold, the first 2 nights we *could* not sleep for cold, & we are obliged to go out with twice as many wraps, as elsewhere. But they tell us that it is very extraordinary weather & will soon end.

It was rather forlorn coming here to settle ourselves, we 2 alone, but it was better than letting him take this long crampy journey, & back when he did not mean to stay.<sup>28</sup> We are very snug however now, & you would laugh to see us in a tiny cottage on the beach so near the sea, that when we look out of bed in the *morning* it is just like the cabin of a ship. Our only annoyance is that we have a Blacksmiths shop fastened to our backs, & the noise is incessant till 9 o'clock at night; however the man has very magnanimously said that we may move at the end of the week if we do not get used to it, so we mean to hunt for another.

We did not see many people as we passed thro' London except Uncle Tom (who goes on giving dinners to the same people, as usual) the Phillimores, & Lady Mcdonald. She (Lady M.) had been very goodnatured in writing to Apothecaries [down] here, & hunting for houses for us; we found her in perfect happiness at the thoughts of marrying her daughter, it is to be the end of the first week in January, first at home, & then at church, she to be dressed in White Velvet trimmed with Point Lace, Veil &c!! The Trousseau sounds magnificent, every thing by Maradan & Devy, he is very particular about dress & sends for beautiful things from Paris for her, but none of the presents on her side seemed to me otherwise than poor. When she is to wear all these magnificencies, I cannot guess, for they go to Tunbridge for the Honey, & from there, without coming near London, go to Amport, a place of Lord Winchesters which he has taken for 7 years, & there they remain quietly till August when they go to Scotland, & there is even a doubt of their going to Town the year after.

We did not see Julia but poor Henrietta was there & I fear she cannot live many months, she is much altered since last spring, & looks so dreadfully ill, & wasted, that it quite haunted me for the rest of the day. At the same time I think that her sister's marriage may rouse her, & make her feel that she has no one to depend on. The only bit of news she told us, was that Lord Loftus was gone that very day to Vienna. Will that interest you?

We were very glad to come here & be settled at once, but at the same time I should like to have remained in London. There was greater pleasure in feeling oneself back again in that dear old house, than in anything else, & I think that changing to another one, as many people have wished us to do, *would* make me miserable. Charles is just gone to meet Papa at

---

<sup>28</sup> Although not stated, it is likely her companion on this trip was Charlotte as her mother was in poor health and her other sisters were married.



Wynnstay where they stay till the 3rd or 4th & then go into *Yorkshire* to Mary for a month, before the meeting of *Parliament*. The Lindesays will also go to Thornes from Wynnstay the end of this month, but they are rather unhappy for he is to be Sheriff this next year, it deranges all their plans sadly, for they had intended to go to Ireland only for 2 months, & the beginning of May, go to Ems or Schwalbach to strengthen her, then meet us at Wiesbaden later in the summer, & settle themselves at Frankfort or some such place for the Winter. But all this is put an end to if he cannot get off. We have tried hard to make Mary come here, for she had one of her worst Quinsey sore throats about 5 weeks ago, & though she is now well, she does not recover her strength as she ought to do; & though Sea might not do her the good which Steel Waters would, still it might prevent her having another. As to the little plan for Miss Percy at the *Birthday* it went on very well as far as taking her in to dinner, Sir John taking long walks every morning with her, & the Bishop, & other little attentions of that sort, but that was all & we must trust to London to finish it.

You have no idea how much [Harriot] WW. is improved both in manner & everything else, & she is grown more popular than any body by her kindness & attention to all the neighbours.<sup>29</sup> They have a large party on the 14th of *January* & she says that she knows it is of no use asking Aunt Cunliffe, who will not visit in Wales, but she wishes to know whether you ever visit about alone, & whether you would go to Wynnstay. I pass the invitation on to you, but told her at once that I did not think there was a chance of your doing it.

Pray is the Miss Sneyd who you say was supposed to marry Sir W. Boothby any relation to my [Tutur]? as in that case I shall make a point of being interested, immediately; otherwise I think I shall just let it alone.

I see Mr Vivian has published another set of sketches in Portugal, has he presented them to you? If so I shall consider it very suspicious indeed when I was so long without hearing from you (before your last letter) I had settled that you were only too shy to announce your marriage, & I was preparing to indite a note of congrats. to save your delicacy, when your letter blew away all my castles. We were blessed with a sight of Lebzelter on our road down here, he was riding as hard as he could to Chevening I suppose, with saddle bags behind him. Of all extraordinary people who are going to be married what do you think of Southey (who is not yet out of mourning for his first wife) to Miss Bowles, a small poetess who writes sonnets! He dined with us in London but was too shy to mention it then.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> The identity of Harriot WW is unclear. The eldest daughter of Sir Watkin William Wynn, 5th Baronet, was named Henrietta Charlotte, and as Harriet/Harriot was often used as an informal version of the name (Annabel's sister Henrietta was often called Harriet by Sarah Harriet Burney for example) Charlotte may be referring to her cousin here.

<sup>30</sup> The poet laureate Robert Southey married Caroline Anne Bowles on 4 June 1839. Bowles was already the author of five volumes of poetry at the time of their marriage. Blain, V. (2004, September 23). Southey, Caroline Anne Bowles (1786–1854), poet and writer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 7 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-26054>.

Charlotte Rowley is quite quiet at Bodryddan,<sup>31</sup> indeed she could not well be otherwise, for she says that she is so immense that she can hardly turn in bed, & has constantly the fear of Twins before her eyes, however a very short time must settle the matter. Hugh Cholmondeley is at last better, he left London only about 3 weeks ago, having been obliged to remain in or near it since the beginning of October to be under Key. He is not yet strong, but can go out shooting a little. I have only read the first number of Nickleby, which I delighted in, but have never had the opportunity of reading the others. I think that I have now given you a full family history. As for my own health I mean it to be excellent during the time I am here. The fuss of that one week in London gave me those restless nights again, but I slept perfectly last night & I make no doubt that the quiet here will do me more good than anything

When do you think of going to London?

Is not Aunt C better there?

Believe me

Ever Yours

Sidney Williams Wynn

#### 4.

### *Sidney Doyle to Annabel Crewe, 21 December 1844*

[Catalogue: letter 344]

*Address on envelope:* Honourable Annabel Crewe/ Madeley Manor/ Newcastle/ Staffordshire

*Postmarks:* DE 21 1844 / DEC 22 1844

Grafton Street

Saturday

Lady Doyle<sup>32</sup> returns her best thanks for the pleasing Epistle of this morning - which completely fulfilled her expectations, she having exclaimed on Saturday while waiting for the Rail-road "If Aunt Cunliffe could but see us, would not she say "how like them".

Thanks dear Annie, we really did arrive safe on Thursday & very glad I was to get back again, it seemed to me above a month since I left them all. I am quite well from my

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<sup>31</sup> Bodryddan Hall in Rhuddlan, Denbighshire. Charlotte Rowley was another Wynn relation, the daughter of William Shipley of Bodryddan and Charlotte, only daughter of the first marriage of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, 4th baronet, to Lady Henrietta Somerset.

<sup>32</sup> Sidney Williams Wynn had married Sir Francis Hastings Doyle (1810-1888) on 12 December, becoming Lady Doyle.

little cold, so did not think it advisable to get up a Whist party at Dropmore, though *Lady Grenville* wrote to beg we would stay, as it really could not signify to the *Phillimores* whether we saw them at dinner or not, as there were plenty of sitting rooms for the morning — Only conceive *Roberts* face, if he had been greeted on his arrival by a note from me to say that we would not see him that evening - but next morning hoped to meet at breakfast! I think *Charlotte* much better both in looks & spirits, though she is much teased by weakness of her Chest, she cannot talk at all without pain or at least tiring herself, however that I hope will soon go off for I think it has more to do with general debility than any evil there, particularly as *Ferguson* yesterday rather eschewed any country for her at present, unless she would go to Brighton which he thought would answer; but it really would be too wretched in this weather for her, & I don't think he very much cared for it.

I feel as if I had a great deal to tell you, but don't quite know what; I did nothing at Dropmore but try to rest, you may think that, that *Saturdays* work nearly killed me, I really did not believe I should ever get to the end of the journey, I was so wretched. Frank is quite well but not yet quite strong,<sup>33</sup> so that he will be much the better for a little more quiet. We therefore stay here till *Thursday* & then go to Osberton in *Nottinghamshire*<sup>34</sup> which Mr *Foljambe* has very kindly offered for as long as we like, I had rather hoped to go & peep at you, & pay a little visit in Wales but since we are going to this place, it would not be acting like Ministers of Finance to trot across the country afterwards, so I suppose it will end in our going to Thornes for a bit, as we shall be within 4 hours of it, but we must be back here by *February* as our object must be now to get parliamentary business, succeeding is quite another thing.

Adieu dear Annie I am rather in a hurry which makes me end abruptly, Frank would send you many messages were he here, but he is not

Ever your affectionate  
Sidney Doyle

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<sup>33</sup> Frank is Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, Sidney's husband.

<sup>34</sup> Osberton Hall belonging to the Foljambe family.

## 5.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, partial, undated*<sup>35</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 133]

Thursday Evening

Dearest Annabel

I have had some Tea, and feel quite a different creature, What did our forefathers do before they knew the comforts of that Cup? —

After rather a hard battle — fought entirely by Charles, for I declined engaging in it, and waited the result in the next room where I could hear — Papa has acceded to the change of Room with more willingness where it was proposed to him to sleep in his Library, and to still keep the dining, as a sitting, & eating room —

It seemed quite a relief to him, and I think there was a sort of morbid feeling that he must be much worse to be put into the dining Room to sleep - so tomorrow we shall prepare all the matters, & move his Bed the minute he is up — He was quite pleased at the thoughts of the Carrot Poultrice which they never broached to him and when he said rather dolefully to me, “I don’t think Mr Hawkins seems to be able to suggest any thing new” and I answered “not new why what do you say to a Carrot Poultrice the newest thing I ever heard of” he brightened up amazingly. It is not to be put on until tomorrow morning by Tegart —

My dinner yesterday was a very pleasant one - only the Hosts, & Mr H. Hallam; plenty of talk, & they were very merry. I was astonished to see how much less Mrs B<sup>36</sup> minded her Husband’s jokes than she did a year ago. She defended her own opinions quite as obstinately as any Wife I ever heard, and seems no longer afraid of him which is a great relief to the sitters-by — They were talking of Shirley and it’s Author— Mr Foster of the Examiner<sup>37</sup> told Thackeray yesterday that there was no doubt it is written by a Miss Brodie or some name like that (Mrs Brookfield stupidly forgot it) a Scotchwoman — there were originally three Sisters, each of whom wrote; and two died, the third still goes on. The other

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<sup>35</sup> This letter may be tentatively dated to November or December 1849. *Shirley* by Charlotte Brontë had been published on the 26 October 1849 and Thackeray met Brontë for the first time at a dinner on 4 December, fully aware of her identity as Currer Bell. In a letter of Mrs Gaskell to Anne Shaen, dated around the 20 December, Gaskell writes that although Miss Brontë keeps her identity a profound secret, ‘Thackeray does not’, indicating he had been less than discreet with the information, Juliet Barker, *The Brontës* (London, 2010), p.1110.

<sup>36</sup> Jane Octavia Brookfield, née Elton (1821-1896), an author who maintained an influential literary salon and was known for her platonic friendship with Thackeray. She married the Reverend William Henry Brookfield, twelve years her senior, in 1841. Taylor, D. (2012, October 04). Brookfield [née Elton], Jane Octavia (1821–1896), literary hostess and writer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 8 Apr. 2019, from

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-56277>.

<sup>37</sup> Charlotte has very clearly written Foster but the name of the editor of *The Examiner* in 1849 was in fact John Forster, Barker, *The Brontës*, p. 734.

two I should think must be but just dead for Wuthering Heights was after Jane Eyer, I think —

Whether this is one more of the numerous lies about these mysterious Bells remains doubtful but Mr Foster spoke as if he knew.<sup>38</sup>

Mrs *Brookfield* had to get a Lodging for her Brother & Sister the other day, she found a very tolerable one, engaged it, & then, on looking round the Bed room, said “There must be two tubs for the Lady & another in the dressing Room.” “Indeed, maam! that will make some difference in the rent - you see we have been used to let our room to very quiet people who don’t think of washing their feet above once a Week”!!

This is literal

Mr Brookfield wanted to persuade me to go & see M’cready in Hamlet<sup>39</sup> - she said he would not be the ideal Hamlet, & then we fell into a long discussion as to what the ideal Hamlet was—

I was amused at seeing Mr *Brookfield* jump up & show me how, “to be, or not to be” ought naturally to be spoken—

“A Man would be staring into the fire, sitting in his Arm Chair, or with his Head between his hands while such cogitations passed through his Brain—

“It would never be while he stood up like a Poker in one spot as our Hamlets chuse to do!” —

His way of reciting the very few Lines he gave as a specimen showed me what an actor he could be!

Friday. I had hoped to send this early this morning but some how found myself so tired that I ended last night without coming to the end of my Note—

Now I enclose Mary’s, perhaps I ought to copy it for you but it is so long; therefore if there is any thing in it that makes against her in ~~away~~ any way, remember that it is my fault — I never know what impression a Letter may produce upon one to whom it is not written for I have seen such curious results from passing on the most innocent Correspondence that I have now a dread of it.

There is some mesmeric or magnetic influence that seems to hover along one’s friend’s Letter to oneself, and cause one to share the feeling’s under which it is written; for certainly the same friend’s Letter to another does not produce the same affect - The sympathetic [fluid] no longer is there — Well this is a long disquisition & I

*[letter ends]*

<sup>38</sup> The Brontë sisters initially published under the pseudonyms of Acton, Ellis and Currer Bell.

<sup>39</sup> William Charles Macready (1793-1873), actor and theatre manager who played Hamlet in 1849 in Britain and the United States. Charlotte Brontë saw him perform twice during her visit to London in November-December 1849, Barker, *The Brontës*, p.730.

## 6.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>40</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 132]

Saturday

It is indeed by no means pleasant not to see you for two days. - for we have so much talk accumulating that no moderate lengthed visit will suffice to discharge it—

As to Miss Tollet<sup>41</sup> you are a very foolish girl not to know better what will amuse people but otherwise I have not a choice, which I was rather pleased to feel as it could only be vanity that would make me grudge her, or any one else, seeing what I know was just a very dull Letter - but you have a turn for seeing the best of every thing; and in every one —

I hope I may hear of a better day today — The Calomel was I fear sure to produce great disturbance of the whole system which will only right itself by degrees— You will come tomorrow — Mr Hawkins has fixed 3, for his visit - thereby entirely extinguishing a faint intention I had of taking a scamper off to hear Maurice at Lincoln's Inn - It is a curious fact that if you ever give a medical man any choice he will inevitably fix an hour which just prevents your going to Church - but still more than that, I think one always perceives a sort of antipathy between the Professors of divinity, and Physic, which it is difficult to account for, though I have a theory on the matter which is much too long to detail here—

Harriot writes word that Sid has been out once, and enjoyed it greatly, her Nurse is gone and she says that now Sid can hardly manage by herself which I am sure is the case.<sup>42</sup> She has no Maid she can thoroughly trust & is not strong enough to look after it herself so poor Haddy is rather pulled in pieces not knowing where she is most wanted — Here she *would* not be so for me, I mean to help me as there is literally nothing to be done, but it is for Papa who asks after her, & I don't think he will be content left only with me — for a week — but we must see.

He had a stronger Opiate last night, & I think seems rather better to day - the foot decidedly so; and the Room was so pleasant this morning it was quite a different sensation on going into it.

Just as we expected, Mr Elton (Mrs Brookfields Brother) announces he has engaged a House at dover so there is an end of my hope of letting Sidney's —

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<sup>40</sup> This letter can be conjecturally dated to November or December 1849, following on from the previous letter [catalogue: letter 133] as Charlotte corrects her previous error regarding the surname of Charlotte Brontë, which had been incorrectly reported as Brodie by Mrs Brookfield.

<sup>41</sup> Either Georgina or Ellen Tollet of Betley Hall, friends and correspondents of Annabel. See Mavis and Peter Smith, eds. *Letters from Ellen Tollet to Annabel Crewe* (Betley, 2019) for full transcriptions of the eighty eight letters from Ellen to Annabel which survive in the Milnes Coates Archive.

<sup>42</sup> Sidney and Francis' daughter Mary Annabel Doyle was born on the 10 October 1849.

Then I am engaged in negotiating that Mr Thackeray should take Clarke - He wants a Housemaid to look after his two Girls, & told Mrs *Brookfield* what he cared most about were good principles, for he had been unfortunate in those he had before. I described "Gummidge" precisely with all her characteristics, & said that I thought he might like to have her to draw from both ~~mentally & bodily~~ in mind & body— In short that she would be a decided acquisition to him both as an Author & a Man — It will be a great job of [love], for Mrs *Brookfield* recommends her for love of me, & he will take her for love of Mrs Brookfield!

Miss Bronte wrote Shirley —

Oh! Mrs Brookfield has been seeing a good deal of the Frederic Elliots; she does pick up the oddest people; who were very good-natured

Just interrupted by a long visit from Mrs Carlyle who was very full of mysterious stories of mysterious Loves of which she was the confidant.<sup>43</sup> Then she has been greatly worried by a scrape Miss Martineau got her into<sup>44</sup> — (what could she expect else, I said) — and which has involved her in explanations with half the literary World, in spite of Carlyle's most wise & characteristic advice — "My dear, don't enter into all that fending, & proving and enquiry who is right, & who wrong, it is like trying to better the foundation of an old House, you are sure to be choked with the dust before you can get to it, & you'll rouse all sorts of bats & Owls flying round your ears!" —

However Miss Martineau has declared she never meant to say any thing & can't remember whether she did say, or not—

Nothing can be more affectionate than Mrs C is but I no sooner get to her than I feel as though I were transplanted into another world, far more full of confusions, & difficulties & doubts, than my every day one — There is something very new in it too. Questions which to my older-world-knowledg admit but of one answer, that of duty or not duty, seem to be discussed still open to discussion in this younger one—

Just had dinner, & received a Letter from Varnhagen<sup>45</sup> to beg I will translate, & get inserted into the Atheneum, a contradiction in the most immeasured terms of the truth of the facts detailed in the Novel, I think, I mentioned to you— I knew they were false but how on earth am I to get any thing inserted in the Atheneum it is quite out of my line. — ! He tells me he has written to Mr Milnes<sup>46</sup> about it but he may be away & never get the Letter. Perhaps Charles can manage it who is gone off to the Play with Mr [Boothby].—

Varnhagen tells me that Mr de Humboldt was delighted by my criticism of his Book. This pleases me not a little, because when I ventured to say what I thought of it to Robert Phillimore, & some others like him, they quite pooh- poohed me; "My dear Charlotte, You can't think so, every body delights in the subjects he describes," & so on —

<sup>43</sup> Jane Welsh Carlyle (1801-1866), the writer and wife of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881).

<sup>44</sup> The author Harriet Martineau (1802-1876).

<sup>45</sup> Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (1785-1858), diplomat and soldier. He and Charlotte met in Germany in 1836 and corresponded regularly until his death.

<sup>46</sup> Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-1885).

So it was some triumph to hear that the Author was better satisfied with the sort of effect it produced upon me than with all he had heard from others. Now having plumed myself sufficiently I end. — best love to the dear sick one after whom Papa enquires regularly every day!!

Ever your affectionate  
Charlotte

## 7.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>47</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 307]

Saturday

My dearest Annabel

Our Letters must have crossed on the road — sad as your's was, I had felt so certainly that you were going through all that you so touchingly describe, that it seemed to me like a twice told tale; you know I have some strange theories of occult sympathies and certainly what I felt that *Wednesday* does not disprove them. It was much as though you had magnetised me and I was bound to suffer with you. Well! I was very willing to do so! I can so perfectly sympathise in your present state - it is indeed a new Life, and You will feel for very long like the emigrant who, however much he has contrived to surround himself with objects he is used to - cannot realise a Home feeling out in his exile — Long after the first bitterness of desolation is passed, this must be the case. You feel amongst the kindest strangers!<sup>48</sup>

Your poor Head! I hope, (and feel no foreboding of the contrary,) that this fresh Weather has relieved it, but you must have had much rain - Too damp for donkey chair I should say. —

I did not pay my visits with impunity, & was disappointed at finding my Pain bad at night on *Thursday* it continued slightly all *yesterday* so I did not stir, & today am well of it, but weak, & good for nothing —

*Harriot* is still fighting off her cold, and I do not expect it will be bad though she is so decidedly below par that I was tempted to send her off with Robert Phillimore to Brighton, whither he goes to day, however of course she would not hear of it - Robert was full of Gorham,<sup>49</sup> - and talked of “that old heretic at Lambeth”! He (R.P.) wrote to his brother in

<sup>47</sup> This letter may be conjecturally dated to the period between the death of Charlotte and Annabel's Aunt Emma on 15 February 1850 and the death of the Gladstones' daughter on 9 April 1850.

<sup>48</sup> Charlotte is referring to the recent death of their aunt Elizabeth Emma Cunliffe Offley with whom Annabel had lived.

<sup>49</sup> George Cornelius Gorham (1787-1857) was a Church of England clergyman who brought a legal case in a secular court against the decision of the Bishop of Exeter to oppose his appointment to the vicarage of Brampton



Law, the Bishop of Salisbury to beg that he would bestir himself, and persuade his Episcopal Brethren to speak out boldly at once, and tell their Flocks what they were to believe, saying very justly that if the officers would not take the lead they must not be astonished if the common soldiers assumed their places, but they did not chuse to go against the Archbishop, or none of them would come forward! — The result has been that there are meetings every where of Clergy. Gladstone he tells me believes that Gorham got puzzled at the B. of Exeter's questions, and said more than he really holds, in short that he was forced to go beyond his intention, for that his Heresy is so uncommon a one in these days, so peculiar too, that it looks more like that than like a deliberate [avowal]

The poor Gladstones have a child dying of 5 years old, and she is very wretched.<sup>50</sup>

Since writing this, I have settled that Harriot is to go down to Sandgate where the Gaskell Girls are, on *Tuesday*! They write to press me to go there, which is quite impossible, but it struck me it was the very thing for Haddy who is one night taking Syrrup of Poppies, & the next Blue Pill, and I fear will be quite laid up if she cannot cut short this attack. Charles will take her place with Papa.

The Nurse goes on Monday, it being impossible to keep her, & the man together for they almost fight over Papa's Foot, & till she is gone I have no idea whether he will answer or not.

Sid: hopes to come up on *Wednesday* — It is a great relief to me not to think of you in Mount Edgecombe House for that mouldy smell encreases terribly at times, & Mrs Taylor complained greatly of it last summer. In Somerville - where do you sit? There are but 2 sitting rooms I think? Have you a large Bed-room?

I hope you have tried to read a foolish Book! do!

I shall not go to Church to morrow, actually decided beforehand so you see how prudent I have become!

When you feel much better tell me, till then I should not like you to write a single Note —

Ever my dearest Annabel Your truly affectionate and-very-grateful-for the pleasant-words-you-say-to me (though I don't believe them)—

Charlotte Williams Wynn

do remember me to Mrs Blackburne,<sup>51</sup> not a way of talking but I would rather be remembered by her.

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Speke on account of his views on the efficacy of infant baptism. The case caused great controversy and was viewed as a secular encroachment on the authority of the church to rule on doctrinal matters. Wolffe, J. (2004, September 23). Gorham, George Cornelius (1787–1857), Church of England clergyman. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 8 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-11099>.

<sup>50</sup> Catherine Jessie Gladstone (27 July 1845 – 9 April 1850) was the daughter of William Ewart Gladstone and Catherine Glynne.

<sup>51</sup> Emma Anne Blackburne, née Hesketh (1795-1886), an older relation of the Crewes who came to stay with Annabel following the loss of her aunt.

## 8.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>52</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 308]

Grafton Street  
Wednesday

It was very good of you, dearest Annabel to let me see that beautiful Prayer — I call it beautiful because it is so real, it is so evidently a Prayer to be prayed not to be read, my whole heart went along with each Line - it is indeed the cry of a humble sinner, who will not lie to God, will not talk of “longing to  dwell with Christ” when the longing is in truth to dwell with the loved one who is gone. How well I know the struggle to believe that 2nd Causes have naught to do with one’s loss! Sometimes so difficult to our “little Faith” and yet in all cases equally the truth.—

The whole, dearest, shows a thorough earnestness of devotion which must be very comforting to you to ponder over, knowing, as you do that this very earnestness, this longing to believe could only arise by means of the indwelling of that Holy Spirit for whose mediation one so humbly prays!

I will pass it on, but you will not mind my taking a Copy.

Now to less exciting matters. You have taken great trouble to discover a Lodging for me - but I could not think of your Landlord’s. Three guineas, or even two is impossible to my conscience, and I find the best, & easiest way of looking at expences is that when there is no necessity in the case, no illness, (there throw away all idea of cost) it is far shorter work to consider a proposal which entails undue expence, as one should a proposal to walk up stairs when one has just broken one’s Leg.—

Now two or three *Guineas* would be that having dropmore where I might go, but so infinitely prefer our original plan, that though I am loth to put more upon you, perhaps [Maskell] could potter about, & see if there is not a less ambitious Lodging to be got upon the Mount, I know I could get it below. There used to be Rooms very near the Ephraim Hotel but I think the other side of it, in a row of Houses with some Poplars in front small shops. We went into one next to ~~near~~ the Butcher at the turn to the London Road that was then in September 2 *Guineas* & now if vacant could not be more than 1 *Guinea* & ½ I think. I know how nearly impossible it is at Tunbridge to find any tiny Lodging, so that I do doubt whether the thing is feasible, but I fancy the best chance is between you, & the London Road. I am

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<sup>52</sup> This letter may be tentatively dated to April or early May 1850 based on the reference to Miss Richards’ marriage which took place in May of that year and to Charles, Charlotte’s brother, planning to join his Yeomanry for three weeks of May.

not afraid of walking so might be a little distance off. And I do feel with you that a few days sojourn would do me no good so that if I could arrange it I should look to a fortnight if Harriot can do alone all that time. It is very dear of you to say “the Lady won’t want dining Room”, & if you are not ruined by it, & are a willing victim I will dine with you every day !!! I *should* have my Luncheon from my Maid’s [dinner] then sit quiet a bit write my Letters, & then what nice talks we shall have! Not that I mean to defer them till after Luncheon for we shall saunter about in the morning.

If there were two Bedrooms, mine rather airy, and a place where the Maid could eat below, I am too much used to Foreign customs to care a bit about a Sitting Room seeing I am not going to receive visitors.

There was too a sort of a Cottage all over Creepers like an Owl in an Ivy Bush at which you got by a narrow passage that ran (I think) close down by Ephraim Lodge through a little Wicket, it lay more behind than the one you describe - but I would prefer if not let, any Room that looked full on the Heath - And I care not how ignominious it’s approach & Furniture may be - My Maid would do all for me in the way of waiting.—

Now please! don’t trouble yourself about this - I have given you my ideas in full & it remains to be seen whether they are in the least practicable—

If this East Wind goes as is likely about next *Wednesday* or *Thursday* I thought of coming, having a sort of foreboding that if put off long it will like our other plans not come to pass.—

I grieve to say that Charles has to go down to his Yeomanry for three weeks of May so that Harriot will be quite alone but Mary & Sidney will take their turn in coming here. The former is a little knocked up - she seems to have seen more of French Society than people who pass 6 months there.—

Charles has just told me that Miss Richards’s Marriage is announced to Cabrèra the Spanish Carlist Guerilla Chief!<sup>53</sup> A complete brigand they say but she is determined, and has only given way so far as to allow that her Money should be tied up, & settled on herself but he, having already shot 35 Women, of course will make nothing of shooting a 36th if she does not draw a draft large enough, & often enough to suit him— She has her 9000£ per *Annum* — And has no relation that can prevent it.

Ever dearest *Annabel*

your very affectionate

Charlotte Williams Wynn

Mary has come in to Luncheon which is the reason of my ending this abruptly. I shall write a little more on Friday, & hope to be less egotistical than I have been today, but I meant to give you plenty more after I had finished Lodging House talk!

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<sup>53</sup> Ramon Cabrera y Griñó (1806–1877), Count of Morella, married Miss Marianne Catherine Richards (c.1821-c.1914) in May 1850. Joan Wintour, ‘The Count and Countess of Morella’ (2008)

<http://personal.rhul.ac.uk/uhyl/007/morellaol.htm>

## 9.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, 2-3 May 1850*

No. 9 [Letter 312]

*Address on envelope:* Honourable/ Annabel Crewe/ Somerville House/ Tunbridge Wells*Postmarks:* MY 3 1850

Grafton Street

Thursday

sent Friday

My dearest Annabel

I never intended to answer your Letter through another person, and was greatly astonished on coming back from my Walk to find that Harriot had done so—

How much trouble you have taken for me! although you won't allow me to grudge it to you I may at least thank you!— I dare say Harriot told you how I sent for Dr Holland meaning to abide entirely by his advice. It was very decided as to the non-advisability of Tunbridge in this cold - he had never seemed to fear it for me before but recommended Dropmore in preference now. I really believe now that he was right, & that I should have been merely a burden to you, & myself by coming. until I am more hardened to cold or that there is less of it to be encountered.

Also I suspect I am not quite in the same state I was a month ago, not a bit worse but with more of a tangible complaint which is rather a satisfaction to me.

In consequence of my ignorance, I begged Mr Tegart to be more particular in his visits, and the result is that he says there is considerable irritation of that mucus membrane which must be watched; As this was only ascertained yesterday I have not see Dr Holland since but suppose I must before taking his Tonic.

I have felt ~~so~~ sure for some time that my food did not nourish me, and this sort of irritation explains it all, and now by healing things I shall soon get it right again but I can't think that Steel would answer just now—

What a detailed account of myself! To conclude, I look most certainly to coming down to Tunbridge when it is warm, & genial, and three weeks hence would suit me better inasmuch as Charles would then be returned from Wales where he is to go next saturday. Do you look to staying through May? I hope so.

Your bulletin of yourself is very pleasant to me as far as it goes but I had rather you would not encounter the trials, and exertion of Madeley for some time longer.—

If you are nearly as cold as we are here you must be wrapped in Fur - I never felt such marrowpiercing Weather & Mary drives in an open Carriage! — She has got all her children

about her again, and is busy getting a Tutor for Carlo, Madame [Puzze] for Cecil, Signor .... for Isabel<sup>54</sup> and I know not who for little Gerald. In short she is educating all day long, & has Dr Hook to Luncheon in the Middle.—

Our theological strifes are rather encreasing than subsiding - It will soon be a proud distinction not to have written a Pamphlet, or a Letter in the Papers & one which very few will claim.

The Booksellers ~~sh~~ Counters are heaped with “fugitive pieces” of the sort. I went for a Letter of Maurice’s yesterday<sup>55</sup> & the man offered me three new expressions of opinion just out. The Archbishop’s appointing to this sinecure Registrarship of Canterbury has given great cause for scandal & no wonder, for it was a shameless thing to do, knowing as he did that his predecessor, Howley, refused to nominate any one. In former days he might have trusted that no one would find it out but now that half the Members of the House do nothing but [pick] out abuses he was very sure that some Sir Benjamin Hall would discover it.

To my mind one such fact as this coming out, is far more condemnatory of our Church discipline than is her not being able [distinctly] to exclude those who hold low Baptismal views from her Communion. Mr Sumner however has lost all chance of his 12,000£ per annum—<sup>56</sup>

I must just mention that Maurice’s Letter is but to vindicate himself, & them, from accusations brought against the Professors of the Queen’s College in the last Quarterly (the women’s) of teaching “modified Pantheism” in their public Lectures.<sup>57</sup> The article is written with much bitterness, & some unfairness but I must own that some passages out of Mr Kingsley’s Lectures, & others are open to the charge - not of Pantheism which no one understands, but of a sort of hazy sentimentality and self contemplation which I do not think wholesome for Governess Life or any other Life. Maurice writes very well, & thoroughly in earnest. If you see the Quarterly I must bring or send you the answer! —

Oh! I asked Mr Milnes the only referee I knew - who wrote the article in the Edinburgh but he did not know. He has been very full of his Bill for the punishment of juvenile criminals & much discippointed that it was thrown out. He called one day when Mr Carlyle happened to be here so the two had a regular discussion on the aspect of things in general while I sat by greatly amused. The throwing out of Mr Fox’s Bill for Secular

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<sup>54</sup> The ellipsis is present in the original letter. Charlotte was perhaps using it to indicate she did not know the name of the tutor.

<sup>55</sup> John Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872), an Anglican theologian and social reformer greatly admired by Charlotte and Annabel.

<sup>56</sup> The Registrarship of Canterbury, worth some £12,000 per annum, was in the gift of the Archbishop of Canterbury and had been granted to Mr Sumner, the Archbishop’s son. Sir Benjamin Hall raised the matter in Parliament: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1850/apr/30/registrars-of-the-prerogative-court> Archbishop Sumner had also opposed the Bishop of Exeter in the Gorham case.

<sup>57</sup> Queen’s College for Women was founded in London by J. F. D. Maurice to provide education to young women aged between 16 and 20. Professors included Maurice himself for ecclesiastical history and Charles Kingsley, social reformer author of *The Water Babies*, for English Literature. The college was regarded with suspicion by many and the charge of teaching ‘modified Pantheism’ to impressionable young women was brought by the *Quarterly Review* in 1850. Jan M. I. Klaver, *The Apostle of the Flesh: A Critical Life of Charles Kingsley* (Brill, 2006) pp.148-9.

Education excited also their high indignation - Mr M. said both Mr Stafford's & Lord Arundel's speeches were what might have been spoken about 200 years ago, so bigotted & narrow minded, so fearful least knowledge should destroy *Christianity*.

The difference between the characters of my two visitors showed itself broadly. Carlyle saying, "but Milnes Why do you associate with such miserable creatures, wretched sneaks with no truth in them, No honest man should speak one word in the presence of such miserable cant." "Oh dear! he is a good fellow, means no harm, breakfasted with me just now" was the answer!

I am going to drink Tea at the Carlyles tonight, and as is invariably the case, would give much to be off - as I am particularly tired. — Then on *Saturday* I am to dine with the Probys, poor Lady Fanny being worse than ever owing to a hot air Bath which a new *Doctor* prescribed. It has just struck me that perhaps I may hear something amusing tonight - one of Mrs Carlyle's wondrous stories of "real Life" so I will keep this until tomorrow for the chance-

Mr Tighe tells you more news than I ever hear, though I fancy Mrs Maude had not such suffering as you hint at. Her Mother says all was very prosperous though she was ill for 21 hours.

I suppose the *Duke* of Wellington will be Godfather to the new Prince, born on his Birthday.<sup>58</sup> There is something poetical in the idea of those two Birthdays & I hope Frank will throw it into an Ode.<sup>59</sup> He seemed inclined to it when I mentioned it this morning. Adieu for today, I shall go & lie down a bit —

Friday. By postponing the sending of my letter I have the benefit of seeing your's to Harriot of this morning. It tells me what I wished to know of your own plans, I am as determined to come to Tunbridge as I can be of any thing. By the 17th of May the Weather must be warmer and that would give me ten days of you at least, nor should I mind leaving Harriot 3 days before Charles's return. At present I cannot follow Dr Hollands advice of dropmore as I should not like to travel for the next ten days, and indeed I have so much dull pain in my inside that I have no turn for leaving one's own home.

Therefore dearest let us live in hope that we may yet wander over the [Furzery<sup>60</sup>] Common together. It would be very pleasant!

I have but little to relate of my Tea last night excepting that it was very pleasant. I found two long-haired dirtyish looking men sitting there to whom I was not introduced, in the course of time they talked well, & cleverly, one turned out to be a Mr M'cCall whom I had rather wished to see, inasmuch as ~~we~~ I had read a half metaphysical Book of his with some very striking writing in it. He too was the hero of a long tale of Mrs *Carlyle's* which I think

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<sup>58</sup> Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, was born on 1 May 1850, to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

<sup>59</sup> This is probably a reference to Sidney's husband Francis Hastings Doyle, a published poet.

<sup>60</sup> The word 'furzery' appears in the Oxford English Dictionary as a noun meaning a mass of furze [gorse], or furze collectively.

you saw once, how she thought he had committed Suicide and going to condole with his Wife found the dead man alive.

The other “Man of Genius” was a Unitarian Minister who having got he told us into Theological difficulties at Glasgow, set off with his Wife & Children to America there to enjoy religious freedom; going down the Mississippi the steamer got upon a hidden Trunk of a tree and the 400 passengers had just time to land in the Forest ~~wh~~ before she sunk, and all his Property, & Papers on religious subjects which he assured me he valued more than all (I took the liberty of doubting it). After this misfortune he lived among the Mormons for some Months, & a most curious account he gave of their patriarchal Life & their thorough faith in Joe Smith their Prophet.<sup>61</sup> He evidently sympathised with them considerably, and gave one to understand that the want of Morality of which they have been accused is not true.

Carlyle was very eloquent upon Modern History, the topic I like best to get him upon, he understands it so thoroughly and one always takes something home to think over. I should never end my letter however if I give you his theories, & must keep them till we meet. After all, I must own, an Evening of that sort produces just the effect of a Glass of Brandy on one, and is as dangerous when made into a daily practice.

Charles is very gay but has taken it easily from having hurt his foot. He talks much of the beauty of the new young Ladies far beyond the usual average but I trust he is heartproof to their fascinations.—

I am reading Barnaby Rudge for the first time!<sup>62</sup> How very much better than his later works it is! there is none of the exaggeration which is so prevalent in every word he now writes. It is very interesting.—

Now I must end — though I could meander on for ever in small talk.

Lady de Tabley is to be at Tunbridge this month & Dr H. wants to find her society there. I do not wish to help to make it up, for she always bored me exceedingly.

Oh! Mary went with Mrs S. Herbert to the Emigrants’ Home yesterday, & amused me exceedingly by her account of it.<sup>63</sup> She came in for a scene, a Husband having come to claim his Wife who had entered the Home as an unmarried Girl. He abused them all so that they had to end with a Policeman but she said Mrs Herbert’s ideas of Law were singularly indefinite. That she had no notion that she, Mrs H, could not keep the Wife away from the Husband, “could not we just go at once to the Magistrate & swear the peace against that Man”

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<sup>61</sup> Joseph Smith (1805-1844) was the founder of Mormonism, more correctly known as the Church of Jesus Christ and his Latter Day Saints.

<sup>62</sup> Barnaby Rudge was an 1841 serialisation and novel by Charles Dickens.

<sup>63</sup> In January 1850 Sidney Herbert placed a notice in the *Morning Post* to publicise a ‘Fund for Promoting Female Emigration’ to the colonies. The subcommittee appointed to consider the best way of carrying out the scheme recommended the establishment of an Emigrants’ Home where the women could reside prior to embarkation. Herbert’s wife Elizabeth, a Mrs Kinnaird, and a Mrs Wortley were appointed to oversee the Home. ‘Fund for Promoting Female Emigrations’ in *The Morning Post* (London, England), Monday, January 21, 1850; pg. 2; Issue 23751. *British Library Newspapers, Part II: 1800-1900*.

“Oh no, the Wife must swear the peace we have nothing to do with it” — At last by dint of Police they quieted the Man but it was rather fortunate that so very practical a Woman as Mary was there, for poor Mrs H was quite in a flutter near her confinement, & all.—

Mary says they (the Ladies) are very good, & eager about it, but that really the business is less than what a common every day school of a hundred children would bring with it.

Mrs Herbert showed her all the Books, & they went over them. In saying all this she was very anxious not to detract from their excellent intentions, but the account she gave me was very funny.

Write soon again  
ever your very affectionate  
Charlotte

## 10.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, undated*<sup>64</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 114]

*Address on folded paper [no envelope]: Honourable A Crewe*

Dearest Annabel

I am sorry our drive cannot take place but if you will come and see me the best part I still have.

Mary has no Carriage, & if she had, I should not drive with her but if you can, & will come, towards ¼ after 3 so as to be clear of Mr Hawkins's visit, I shall then be in the sitting Room for the day, and so glad to have you a bit in peace.

A tolerable night & Tegart (whose visit has forced me to keep [T...<sup>65</sup>] some little time) gives as good a report as one could expect though it is still a very guarded one.—

Now, I meant to write to you this *morning* seeing we had settled not to talk in the Carriage in order to tell you what a tiring day *yesterday* was to me—

~~At~~ It was 1 by the time I returned from you, so I threw off my Bonnet & waited for Luncheon. In 5 minutes the door was thrown open & in walked Mrs Carlyle & Miss Jewsbury fresh from their Breakfast with Mr Milnes. We talked as well as we could for ½ an

<sup>64</sup> This letter can be tentatively dated to June 1850. Annabel spent May in Tunbridge Wells but had returned to London sometime after 2 June but left London for Madeley Manor in either late June or early July. She refers to Richard Monckton Milnes having sent her a book through Charlotte in a letter which makes mention of the ‘beautiful June weather’ [letter 485].

<sup>65</sup> This word is unclear. Tentative suggestions include Tom or Ton.



hour when in came Mr Milnes himself. I never saw people more bored at meeting again than all 3 looked, they having evidently said all their say before but it was not my fault.

Well they staid & staid each wishing to outstay the other but they little knew that when Mr M: means to do anything, no power on earth will prevent him from carrying it out: He fidgetted to that degree walking about the room & trying each Armchair in turn that at last I could not help saying “Mr Milnes pray sit quiet”—

At last Mrs C & Miss Jewsbury seeing there was no hope set off & I was so pleased for I was faint for my Luncheon, & knew I must go through the other visit first. He was very nice however said he had called upon you & intended if he found you at home to have given you the enclosed copy of Tennyson’s Elegies upon Arthur Hallam’s death - He left it with me to keep it, or give it you but as I have no turn for ~~homages~~ attentions that were not intended for me I pass it on particularly as there is beautiful Poetry in it & there was something touching in his thoughts of its suiting you just now.<sup>66</sup>

At last he went at ½ past 2, then came Lord Wenlock & then Luncheon.

I must end & can’t finish all I have to say

Harriot means to try & see you about 11 for the chance of your being at home then

Everyour  
Charlotte

## 11.

### *Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Crewe, 21 November 1850*

[Catalogue: letter 113]

*Address on envelope:* Honourable Annabel Crewe/ Madeley Manor/ Newcastle/ Staffordshire  
*Postmarks:* NO21 1850 / NO22 1850

Thornes House  
Wednesday

Dearest Annabel,

Here we are back again, and not sorry to be so, our Torquay was so bitter cold that although very wholesome it was far beyond pleasure. The good however, that I have derived from my month there is much greater than I could have hoped. I come down, like a *Christian*, of a morning to Breakfast without an aching Back or the feeling of being thoroughly knocked up, of course one cannot help finding a difference between that bracing

<sup>66</sup> Annabel mentions this gift twice, in letter 485 (mentioned in a previous footnote) and in an undated letter to her sister Henrietta (Letter 484), written after her arrival at Madeley Manor in either late June or July 1850: ‘Mr Milnes has shown great kindness of heart & this event seems to have roused his old affectionate feeling. He called in Hill St & then left a book for me with Charlotte’.

sea-air, & the wet foggy days which we have had since our return & must expect during *November*

I shall not be in London before you certainly, as by degrees the time slips on - and when I leave here my intention is to pay a visit at the Proby's (at Elton<sup>67</sup>) on the road — Poor Lady Fanny is suffering sadly, & would like a little cheering so that one shall have the satisfaction of feeling one's visit is not for one's own convenience, but does give pleasure. Her Sister seems also low about her — after a week or ten days there I shall go on, but end in Grosvenor St not at my own house. It is as well, if possible, not to untidy it again as it has been got as comfortable as it can be for Letting, & Mary having in her House a Woman who can cook a mutton chop it is better than Grafton Street where there is but a Housemaid.

I begin to doubt whether *Harriot* will come up with me; they wish her much to remain here, & join me later at Panty; as Elton will not be gay for her, & it is not much use that she should undergo the long journey unless there is business to be done in packing up her Books &c, in London, which, until there is something more decided than these endless nibbles, (of which you also have experience) is not necessary.

One merit of *Grosvenor Street* is that it is decidedly nearer to *Brook Street*. We shall have more talks for I shall eschew staying at home by myself — I can sympathise fully in your distaste to the idea of a visit at Serlby, or elsewhere<sup>68</sup> — still I do hope you will not slip out of it — remember the effort must be made sooner or later, & the longer delayed it is, the more irksome it will become — You know I have very strong opinions as to the duty we owe to Society, a duty not so easily fulfilled as people are apt to think and one which is often too much ignored by holy [minds] but I will not preach further.—

Besides, I think any one in earnest would be very good for that liberal, tolerating, set!!!

I foresee Mr Milnes will at once talk of the Archbishop of Westminster by way of courtesey which will provoke me!

To be sure we have at last raised the Protestant cry, and although I sympathise with them, it does amuse me, there is some thing so thoroughly John Bull in the sudden intenseness of their indignation & the vagueness of their declamation. Something is to be done against the Pope but no one seems to have discovered what it is to be or what it can be.

The Tractarians must, I think, either leave the Church or put away their ceremonies now — Their doctrines none have a right to meddle with, but the Bishops having at last spoken nearly unanimously against the foolish attempt to copy Rome's magnificent Ritual they are left no choice but to abandon it or leave the Church if they hold such to be vital to religion. — May I venture to say that I thought *Lord John's* allusion to the Puseyites wholly uncalled for, & impertinent?<sup>69</sup> As Prime Minister he ought to have confined himself to his intentions towards Rome, & his opinion upon her aggression. The denunciation of a sect in the church however well deserved seems to me illjudged.— It was assuming to himself the

<sup>67</sup> Elton Hall in Cambridgeshire was the home of the Proby family.

<sup>68</sup> Annabel had been invited to Serlby by Richard Monckton Milnes' sister Henrietta Monckton Arundell, Viscountess Galway.

<sup>69</sup> Lord John Russell, Prime Minister between 1846 and 1852.

authority which belongs to the head of the Church not of the State. However he is very generally Canonized for it, so it answered.

Will not Miss Crewe be very eager just now?<sup>70</sup> There is just enough persecution to enable the *Roman Catholics* to talk of Martyrdom &c &c — Lord Nugent is dying - I hope it will not be another hang to her - I wonder whether he will profess himself a Romanist on his death Bed! I believe he is one. By the bye, at Scarborough there was a handsome, fly away Miss duncombe always to be seen on the most frequented Walk & somewhat disliked — Her Father & Mother also appeared at times, & I was told, “that was the Man who was mad as soon as he got into the Pulpit but charming out of it.” did you ever hear it supposed he preached oddly?

Remembering all Lord Crewe’s anxiety to give his Living to a fit person it made me sorry to hear this but perhaps it was only a way of talking.<sup>71</sup>

Thursday. Milnes has been away for the last fortnight & returned yesterday after a visit to Willey where all the smart people in the Land seem to have been gathered. He says it is certain that there was a gathering of Official people at Woburn, & they had settled to take no steps as to the Pope’s Bull, but see what *would* come of it, when the Queen wrote to Lord John, (I think it was) to say she insisted upon a manifeste being issued from her Government as she would not put up with the insult — Lord John’s Letter then was written in answer to the Bishop’s.

If you have the Bishop of Exeter’s Answer to the Archdeaconry of Exeter in today’s Paper - read it, coming from him it is singular for its calmness - but I think it proves very distinctly that this is but a continuation of the course Rome has been allowed to adopt for some time. She began with the Colonies, in vain the church there [petitioned], the Roman Bishops were permitted to assume Protestant Sees, & here we have the results!—

Dr Wiseman’s Letter which Milnes read to us last night, is wonderfully clever & cunning, and I cannot help believing it will produce a great effect

But I must end dearest, ever your affectionate  
Charlotte.

## 12.

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<sup>70</sup> A reference to Annabel’s elder sister Henrietta Crewe who had converted to Roman Catholicism in the 1830s. Although Henrietta and Annabel were devoted correspondents throughout their lives, Henrietta’s faith frequently attracted veiled criticism from Annabel’s friends.

<sup>71</sup> Charlotte is likely referring to the Reverend Edward Duncombe, Rector of Barthomley, Cheshire, which was in the gift of Annabel’s brother Hungerford, Lord Crewe. Duncombe succeeded Reverend Edward Hinchliffe in 1850 and proved a somewhat controversial figure. According to Ian Bailey’s 2014 unpublished PhD thesis *Unifiers and Dividers in a North Staffordshire Parish: Audley, 1840-1939*, Duncombe had a disagreement with the incumbent of a nearby chapel of ease, had a popular inn and shop demolished to extend the churchyard, and may even have had a disagreement with Lord Crewe himself.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Milnes, undated*<sup>72</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 131]

4 Rue du Colisée  
Champs Elysées  
Paris

begun on New Year's day  
sent 4th January

My dearest Annabel I cannot let the first new Year of your Married Life dawn upon you without wishing you many happy ones to follow it, each more thoroughly comfortable than the one preceeding it — You have borne your year of anxiety, & your year of sorrow; may all the coming ones be years of consolation and of hopes fulfilled!—

Now I ought to make many excuses for not answering your former Letter — I hope, & indeed believed that you were too pleasantly taken up to miss it — At first writing to any but my Sisters, & Charles (all apart) was impossible; my day was taken up with answering their entreaties to come over as fast as possible; besides this, people called to ask of those who knew less than they did themselves what was best to be done — Well! that is all over - but you can imagine how very exciting it was to me who had never seen such a people in such a state!

One cannot help sympathising with the Nation amongst whom one is living but such a want of moral courage as citizens & such hopeless selfishness I could not have imagined.

Sunday *January 3rd*. So far I got when visitors came in and since then I have passed two days in bed being quite too poorly to fight against it any longer, the *Doctor* has however patched me up a little, and I shall do — meanwhile a Letter from Sidney written on new Year's day has told me a secret which has given me such pleasure!! How well I remember your saying one *Evening* [that] we were talking over the [Fire] - "If I had but some nice little Nephews & Nieces to love I should be more content with my lone state". And the prayer which I then put up that you might soon have something nearer to love than Nephews & Nieces is about to be granted!<sup>73</sup> Now, dearest, do take care of yourself, and do not try yourself too much. I am sure Mrs Blackburne would preach a little quiet, let Mr Milnes go off by himself to console Statesmen, and you remain behind. He will not thank me for this advice but I am sure it would be wiser - Sid gives me a charming account of you & says you are to dine on your return from Broadlands with her - how I should like to transport myself to make a 5th!!!

<sup>72</sup> This letter may be confidently dated to 1-4 January 1852 given Charlotte's reference to the first New Year of Annabel's married life. She married Richard Monckton Milnes in 1851.

<sup>73</sup> Annabel had become pregnant with her first child.

I was too unwell to go to Notre Dame even had we intended it but people are so decidedly advised not to be present at any great gathering just now that we felt it would be unwise.

All seems smooth externally but the *President* is going too fast, and will be stopped the sooner!<sup>74</sup> There is something so ludicrous in a man's putting 60 men to work at 6 o'clock in the morning to pull down a Statue of Liberty two days after he is appointed Ruler of the Country, that one can hardly believe it. But the idea is that he is thinking of attacking England which seems too crazy to credit. M. de Montalembert<sup>75</sup> talked much of Lord Palmerston's resignation and appeared more convinced of the ill will of England than from such Papers as we are allowed to see I could understand. We had a long talk, ~~and~~ he was very good humoured and he struck me as a well intentioned, clever, narrow minded Statesman— I see a good many queer people, but as to society there is none at all — the Salons of the faubourg St Germain are to be entirely closed — old friendships are broken up and Montalembert was requested not to come again to a House where he was in the habit of passing 2 Evenings in the Week. He did not however tell me this — Madame de Rauzan's is the only great Lady I have been to, and any thing so forlorn, I never saw - You would be amused at seeing me there taking my place as "mademoiselle" - not opening my Lips. There is no other woman there but 7 or 8 Men who come in like the Statue in don Juan not saying a word until they have taken their places, & then the nouvelles of the day are discussed with a vain attempt at [point], & lightness — The truth is they are all too deeply interested to be able to keep up the persiflage which is so wearying but they try to do so with a constancy worthy of a better cause.

Do you know Lady Elgin? She has taken a fancy to me, and is odd enough to amuse me. She receives regularly a medley of Professors, & very 2nd rate English but with them I do not trouble myself

The Brownings are close by us,<sup>76</sup> and you know of old my admiration for her Poetry — unfortunately her health prevents me seeing as much as I should like of her - he is greatly changed since the time when Mr Milnes introduced him to me at Mrs Procter's. His chains, his azure Waistcoat, his curled Hair, his eye "in frenzy rolling" have all subsided, & he is quieted down into a straightforward Man devoted to his Wife & Child. There is something touching in the way in which he admires her, and she is the most perfectly simple Woman I ever met, which is just what she ought to be. Altogether I am leading a pleasantish, intellectual Life seeing Men I should not easily get at elsewhere, they are glad to find any one to listen to their theories, which it is a difficult thing to secure in this talking Country —

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<sup>74</sup> The President of France, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (1808-1873), had seized power in a coup d'état in December 1851. He became Emperor Napoleon III the following year.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Forbes René de Montalembert (15 April 1810 in London – 13 March 1870 in Paris) was a French publicist, historian and Count of Montalembert, Deux-Sèvres, and a prominent representative of Liberal Catholicism. A Montalembert is mentioned in Charlotte's memoirs.

<sup>76</sup> The poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. A letter from Barrett Browning to Charlotte in Paris in February 1852 has been transcribed as part of an online edition of the Brownings' correspondence:

<https://www.browningscorrespondence.com/correspondence/3301/?rsId=151450&returnPage=2>

The state of the R.C. Church<sup>77</sup> interests me exceedingly and the result one comes to from reading their own Polemics on the subject is a very different one from what we believe in England — ~~that~~ The foundations of it are crumbling away, while the exterior ornaments of the fabric look just as usual. They are divided among themselves quite as much as is our Church, only among us the warfare is respecting matters that signify not a bit, while among the Romanists it is upon questions that affect the vital principles of their Faith. — It is very curious to me to find that they have now recourse to the old scholastic Theology in order to try thereby to stem the [infidelity] they cannot meet by argument —

One can fancy oneself back in the middle Ages when one hears men arguing upon Nominalism, & Realism as eagerly as our [Curates] do upon the Black & White surplice Question —

The President is supposed to be wholly in the hands of the Jesuits, that is, as much as a Man can be who takes no advice from any one. Rio is here now,<sup>78</sup> & I see is rather low but before I end my Letter I shall get the latest views of his side as there is to be a great meeting to discuss today —

They evidently expect him to be crowned before the 3 Weeks which I fancied it would take. Rio said just now, “the sooner it is done the better, then the thing is settled, & there can be no more encroachment which irritates the people who only want quiet” — Whether the powers of Europe will, or indeed can stand by & see a new dynasty usurping rule in France in spite of Treaties most distinct — seems to me very doubtful—

He begged me to say all that was most affectionate to you both, fortunately we have a spare Room & can take him in when he likes.

8 o'clock. I have been out, & come in so tired that I fear this must be too late for the Post.

Now I am going to answer your Letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> - better late, than never!

I did get your ~~joint~~ Letters from Stuttgard & Augsburg, and duly answered them to Vienna telling you of our Munich Life, and our Professor acquaintances the most remarkable of whom was döllinger.<sup>79</sup> Your Mr Thompson I know not, nor his Book.—

Have you quite given up all idea of coming here in February? We should be so snug, and one long journey would not be more tiring than 50 short ones!

Many thanks to Mr Milnes for his offers of Letters to Guizot, & Tocqueville,<sup>80</sup> I should greatly like to know them if it gave him no trouble, & he thought it would not be a great bore to them. - When your Letter arrived, it was impossible to take advantage of his kindness as every one was in a state of anxiety that precluded their seeing strangers, but now it is different.

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<sup>77</sup> The Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>78</sup> Alexis-François Rio (20 May 1797 – 17 June 1874) was a French writer on art. Many of Charlotte's letters to him have been reproduced in the *Memorials* edited by her sister H. Lindsey.

<sup>79</sup> Professor Dollinger is mentioned in a letter of 20 September 1851 in the *Memorials*.

<sup>80</sup> Likely this is the French historian and statesman François Guizot, Charlotte mentions meeting French diplomat Alexis De Tocqueville and Guizot in Paris in the *Memorials*.

Rio has returned, & says there is something going wrong with the President. He has only seen donoso Cortes,<sup>81</sup> Montalembert being ill in Bed, but they are very blank, and seem to know more than they will say—

They talk of his rashness and his determination to take no advice even from his best friends, which belongs to his fatalism, and has been encreasing on him lately. How can Montalembert expect that he will keep more faith with him than with others!

As Harriot came home this Evening she saw the Tuileries magnificently lighted up for his first dinner there, and I saw the bald pedestal in the Place Bourbon where Liberty had been. There were a few gazers staring as if they were trying to settle what it meant, & at least three soldiers to each starrer, observing them

You can have no idea of the control put upon the Citizen here nor does he seem to mind it; Men are taken up at once for exclaiming “vive la republique democratique” it being supposed a highly seditious expression.

By the bye — Mrs Grote has been here,<sup>82</sup> & I have been using all my endeavours to prevent her getting hold of Miss Stewart Mackenzie who is much too handsome, & too young to be taken about by her. You know she is never happy without an interesting female to protect, and as she prefers dancers, & singers she is seldom without one, but now she was alone, Mrs S Mackenzie was too ill to know any thing about her daughter, & Mrs Grote was devoted to her — she, greatly flattered would have been a willing slave but for me — but I did, as I would have been done by, at her age & when she found she was to go shares with “Cruvelli” in Mrs G’s ~~her~~ intimacy, she drew back. All the time I should have been charmed to know Mrs Grote but that was a very different thing.

The Embassy is in great dis-favour, Lord Normanby shocking the moral French, & Lady N. affronting them.<sup>83</sup> The worst I know of them is that they have contrived to make a feud in our church, and Roman Catholics have the edifying spectacle of the Ambassador opening his Ball-room for Service, and sending for the Communion Plate from the regular Church saying it belonged to the *Government* because he had a spite against the Clergyman. — In vain the Archbishop writes to remonstrate, *Lord Normanby* cares little.

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<sup>81</sup> Juan Donoso Cortés, marqués de Valdegamas (6 May 1809 – 3 May 1853) was a Spanish author, Catholic political theorist, and diplomat.

<sup>82</sup> Almost certainly Harriet Lewin Grote (1792-1878), an English biographer and patron of singers and musicians including Jenny Lind. Her husband George Grote was a Radical politician and historian. Harriet was visiting Paris during the winter of 1851-2 and took a keen interest in the political developments there. Sarah Richardson, ‘A Regular Politician in Breeches: The Life and Work of Harriet Lewin Grote’ in Kyriakos N. Demetriou, ed. Brill’s *Companion to George Grote and the Classical Tradition* (2014).

<sup>83</sup> Constantine Phipps, 1st Marquess of Normanby, was British Ambassador to France between 1846 and 1852. His wife, Maria Liddell, partly inspired the character of Berengaria, Lady Montfort, in Disraeli’s novel *Endymion*. Davenport-Hines, R. (2008, January 03). Phipps, Constantine Henry, first marquess of Normanby (1797–1863), politician and diplomatist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. Retrieved 8 Apr. 2019, from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-22187>.

We are settled here, I suppose, till March, but I feel we can depend on nothing — If they talk much more of War, we shall set off, all the more that this man will ~~do~~ settle upon a measure & carry it out in two days, so that one should not have the warning which with another sort of Government is sure to be given —

People are prepared to set off to Brussels but that I do not believe would be at all easier of attainment than England.

Adieu now dearest Annabel You will hardly I fear be able to decypher the first sheet of my Letter but I must trust to your cleverness which I remember of old. — I was to have seen La Cordaire today but actually declined, a Monk in a little drawing-room looks so out of place & I really had nothing to say to him<sup>84</sup>—

All sorts of happiness go with you dearest

Ever your affectionate

Charlotte Williams Wynn

### 13.

*Charlotte Williams Wynn to Annabel Milnes, undated*<sup>85</sup>

[Catalogue: letter 117]

12 Stratford Place

London

Friday

My dearest Annabel

The delightful part of coming back to England is the renewed communication with all one loves, — and now I long to hear from you, how you are, how Baby is, and in short every sort of particular respecting you both... I cannot quite picture you to myself with a child on your Knee.<sup>86</sup> Your [line<sup>87</sup>] has been [so] different a one, but I shall never forget the expression of your face when, once in your desolation, you said to me, “If I had but some little nephews & nieces to love as others have”! From my heart was the Prayer I then breathed - that you might have something nearer, & dearer than nephews & nieces to cherish, and God has granted that Prayer — ! May that young Thing be a comfort, and a blessing to you both!

<sup>84</sup> Likely to be Jean-Baptiste Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (12 May 1802 – 21 November 1861), often styled Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, a French ecclesiastic, preacher, journalist, theologian and political activist who re-established the Dominican Order in post-Revolutionary France.

<sup>85</sup> The letter can be conjecturally dated to October 1852 based on the reference to the death of Betha Phillimore, who died on 10 October 1852.

<sup>86</sup> Annabel and Richard Monckton Milnes’ first child, a daughter named Amicia Henrietta, had been born on 3 August 1852.

<sup>87</sup> This word is unclear, tentative suggestions include ‘line’ or ‘live’.



What coloured eyes has it? my admiration of Babies generally stops at their eyes, just as a Woman cares for nothing about a Horse but it's long Tail! Your real understander of babies says their eyes signify not a bit, there are 50 other points more important!

When do you think of coming up? I fear not for the meeting, for which I grieve, but cannot advise otherwise. The Fog is so dense that it makes one's throat smart, & the Sun is a red Ball of Fire, the most depressing looking object you can conceive —

There must be great advantages in a Country to reconcile one to such a climate.—

do not however imagine that I am not more than reconciled to breathe the mass of soot, & coal dust which we here call air, for I am heartily tired of moving about, and long to lead a respectable English Life with a reputation to keep up, and household Bills to keep down—

In consequence, we are really over head in the business of House-hunting, pass our days in going from one cold place to another - The *House* agents entreat one to make an offer, and if it were not for Harriot's warning face I feel I should get into a scrape, & make one before I leave the shop.

We are tempted by one in St James's Place but it must be put into complete repair first, and though it is cheap I think it too large for us; 17, the one the Lytteltons had, also the drains are not safe — then if we can persuade Charles we should like Manchester Square decidedly better as being nearer our own people, (just between Sid: & Mary) and more airy and sunny.— However till he comes we cannot decide.

Our journey home was very tiring from the intense cold of the Weather. Berlin I liked much, and did not find the Aesthetic Teas as formidable as I expected - but it is saddening to see the state of society there, the inanity of the gossip, more like that of a "petite ville" than any thing else, and this in a great measure caused by the system of "espionage", no one cares to speak upon any matter that may be misconstrued before his neighbour. The general discontent & indignation seems to me far more dangerous now, when it's ~~entirely~~ utterance is entirely suppressed than it ever was before — Speak with whom you will; [Innkeepers] Language teachers, Professors, they all express a detestation of their rulers which, well founded, or not, must sooner or later burst out.

Carlyle arrived the day after I went away but was, I suspect, too thoroughly engrossed by the badness & shortness of his Bed to have produced a very favorable impression on the idealists by whom he was surrounded. One writes, "Englishmen do not generally think so much of their bodily comforts or at least don't talk so much of them"

I found *Sidney* looking much the worse for all she has gone through in consequence of the sudden death of poor *Betha* *Phillimore* which happened while she was at *Dropmore*.<sup>88</sup> *Lady Grenville's* despair has been terrible, and *Sidney* as usual has had much to do for the Parents also. Poor *Lady G* at 80 to lose her companion is sad!

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<sup>88</sup> Jackson's *Oxford Journal* lists the death of Elizabeth Anne *Phillimore* at 'Lady Grenville's seat' at *Dropmore* on 10 October 1852. She was the daughter of Joseph *Phillimore*, esq, and his wife Elizabeth, and was known as 'Betha' to her family and friends. She never married and lived as companion and friend to Anne, Lady Grenville. See the entry for Anne Lady Grenville on The National Archives' Discovery catalogue: <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/d86f2087-b51d-4286-8c91-3732e51ca112>

Adieu dearest Annabel

Harriot sends her best love —

My warmest greeting to Mr Milnes - and to Mrs Blackburne wherever she may be - I think you do her the greater credit!!!

Ever your affectionate

*Charlotte Williams Wynn*

You will with difficulty read this but it is not my fault that the Pen does not chuse to mark & I have to re write half the Words.

We are here till the end of next Week & then shall find a Lodging near our future home so as to superintend the moving furniture &c