

## Dinton - Dalwood Letters

'Dinton' 7th December, 1831. Bryanston,

My dear George,

Your letter by the Lady Harewood, dated Sydney, June 4th, reached me yesterday, and was most acceptable, as your letter to Charlotte of a later date arrived a fortnight ago. Your draft on Messrs. Drummond had been presented, and your father has given instructions it may be duly honoured when due, and I will take care to repay him from the money I have promised to advance to you as soon as I get my affairs in a little train. I have been rather disappointed in my expectations in coming into my property to find that I have no control of the principal, which is still to remain in the hands of trustees, subject to my disposal by will. I am to have the enjoyment of the income arising from this fund from time to time. I hope it is all for the best, though it subjects me to some little inconvenience at the present moment for my not having rightly understood the provisions of my father's will. In consequence of this difficulty I have been under the necessity of applying to the trustees to beg they will allow me part of the principal to be placed at my disposal to enable me to perform my promise to you. Mr. Popham sees the reasonableness of my request, and has promised his consent, provided it can be done without risk to the trustees. We are now waiting for Sandys, whom we expect here to inform us how it is to be accomplished, without infringing the intentions of the will. As soon as this can be accomplished I will arrange with Messrs. Harries, Farquehar, and Co. to transmit the money to you. I wish you had named the sum required and the mode in which the interest is to be remitted, and the security you mean to give for the sum advanced, all of which I shall be expected to state to the trustees. I think of sending you £2,500 in addition to the £500 to be paid by Messrs. Drummond, making the whole £3,000. This will dip into your little patrimony, my dear child, and I trust you will take care what you do with it. This caution is doubly necessary in these days of panic and speculation. I know not whether you have more confidence in the Australian Bank than the Bank of England, but I fear if the one fails the other will not be very firm. Land is therefore the best security after all; I mean not uncultivated wilds, but good productive land, on a well-secured mortgage. This, however, must be left to your own judgement, as under your circumstances you would know what would be beneficial to yourself and family. I am sorry to find from some of your letters that you still busy your head on political subjects. I agree pretty much with Dr. Johnson, that it signifies little what Government a private individual lives under, provided he is protected, and I verily believe if our Government, as composed of King, lords and Commons, were men but tolerable, is very near perfection, and very far superior to any republic that ever existed. The question is, not how cheaply a Government can be carried on, but how well, the end of all civil government being the protection of persons and property. Property must be respected, or the social compact must be dissolved, for no one will part with what belongs to him that has any means of defending it, and all the horrors of Civil War would ensue. The newspapers, or, as they are called, 'the gentlemen of the Press', are doing incalculable mischief at this time by publishing mis-statements, misrepresentations, and the grossest falsehoods, by which they mislead and excite the people, and so far from having a 'Gentlemanly Revolution', in the way you talk of, we cannot even have Reform in Parliament without riot and bloodshed, as you will see by the proceedings at Bristol. In short, the people here have no other Reform than that of licence to pillage, and a division of property.

The ministers have not been able to carry the Reform Bill, which keeps the country in a sad state of agitation. I shall be very glad when it is settled, and I never knew of any measure which excited so much dissension and animosity. In the midst of it all, I am happy to say our agricultural population are perfectly quiet and appear contented and happy, and I have no doubt will remain so if the disaffected will but leave them alone.

We are threatened by another evil, the Indian cholera. Every precaution has been taken to prevent it spreading. We have all the cottages in the village whitewashed, and I have laid in a store of the medicine recommended in case we should be attacked, but I trust from the habits of the people that the villages and thinly inhabited places will escape will escape this dreadful scourge.

Give my kind love to Margaret, and tell her I will write to her soon. I mean to send her two useful gowns, with some shirting and sheeting, and clothing for the children by the first ship to Sydney. I am glad that the last Christmas cargo arrived in such good order. We will endeavour to pack this as well. I imagine your wheelwright did not understand the late improvements in your threshing machine, but I hope Mr. Scott, who superintended the making of it, has set all right before this. I shall be glad to hear he and his party arrived safely.

I thank you, my dear George, for the asylum you offer me in case of our being driven from hence. I trust the occasion will not arise, and at any rate I must cling to the old wreck as long as I can, and I hope my children will not desert their native land as long as they can be of any use in it.

Alexander and his wife have been spending a fortnight with us on their way to Nettlecombe to spend Christmas with Sir John Trevelyan. She improves very much on acquaintance, and is certainly a very superior young woman. Alex was in high luck to get her twenty thousand pounds! They have a fine boy of eight months old, very intelligent, and the sweetest temper I have ever met with. He is called Trevelyan, You did right to leave a name for William's first-born, it is expected in June.

We took our luncheon at the cottage yesterday. I went to meet Henrietta on her way from Brighton. I suppose they have told you of our adventure in the pony carriage. I am happy to say your father is quite recovered, and I rejoice to find he is as eager in the pursuit of woodcock, only that he is obliged to let Will Barnes walk him for a little.

The summer has been delightful - one of the most enjoyable I ever recollect, the weather serene and beautiful. The great comet is expected to appear in 1832. Pray make a memorandum when first you see it, and tell me in what part of the heavens.

I shall be glad to hear that your vineyard succeeds.

Your truly affectionate mother,

LAETITIA WYNDHAM