

LETTERS TO ISAAC EDWARD DYASON IN  
AUSTRALIA FROM HIS FAMILY IN  
ENGLAND 1847 TO 1915



## Contents

### Principal characters

[Elizabeth Illenden Dyason \(nee Pearce\)](#)

[Isaac Edward Dyason](#)

[Uncle Frederick James Pearce](#)

[Harriet Dyason \(nee Mason\)](#)

[Isaac Edward Dyason's young family](#)

### Principal places

[Royal Clarence Baths](#)

### Letters

[1847](#)

**1848 Gap**

[1849](#)

[1850](#)

[1851](#)

[1852](#)

[1853](#)

[1854](#)

[1855](#)

[1856](#)

[1857](#)

[1858](#)

[1859](#)

[1860](#)

[1861](#)

[1862](#)

[1863](#)

[1864](#)

[1865](#)

[1866](#)

[1867](#)

[1868](#)

[1869](#)

[1870](#)

**1871 Gap**

[1872](#)

[1873](#)

[1874](#)

**1875-1887 Gap**

[1888](#)

[1889](#)

[1890](#)

[1891](#)

[1892](#)

**1893-1898 Gap**

[1899](#)

**1900-1914 Gap**

[1915](#)

**Elizabeth Illenden Dyason (nee Pearce)**



**Isaac Edward Dyason**



**Probably in 1870s in the uniform of the Bendigo Rifles also known as “Old Greys”**

**Parts of these notes come from a Dyason family reunion booklet written in 2006 by Mary Young (Isaac Edward Dyason's great grand-daughter) with additions garnered from the letters themselves.**

Born 30 March 1832, the eldest child of Isaac Dyason and Elizabeth Illenden Dyason (nee Pearce) was sent to live with his father's brother (Uncle John Dyason) and Aunt Julia Dyason (nee Heywood) in Cape Town, South Africa when he was about 9 ½ to 10 years of age. Isaac had cousins in Cape Town from Uncle John and Aunt Julia: who they named rather confusingly, John and Julia.

When he was about 18 years of age Isaac left Cape Town for Australia and landed in Adelaide some time in 1850 in the company of John Hare. Shortly thereafter he made his way to Melbourne and thence to the Diggings. He entered into a business as a storekeeper and prospector.

Isaac was joined by his Uncle Frederick (Fred) Pearce in 1853 when Uncle Fred was about 35 and nephew Isaac Edward was just 21.

Isaac's family in Ramsgate grew to include eight other living siblings (a ninth died in infancy). Their sole support was Isaac's father (...also called Isaac) who ran the Royal Clarence Bath house on the harbour in Ramsgate. For a variety of reasons (including cholera epidemic, war, competition from other bathing establishments, changes in clientele etc...) this establishment struggled to remain a viable business, especially as it relied on a short summer 'season' for the bulk of its trade. The result is that for perhaps the first twenty years of Isaac's life in Australia he was often importuned to send money back to his family in order to avert their 'ruin'.

Isaac never returned to either England or South Africa, and no relative other than Uncle Fred and Captain Watts (a relative by marriage on his mother's side) came out to Australia to visit him. There were various rumours of his being married or about to be married in the 1850s but these appear to have been based upon false reports. He waited until he was financially secure before he married in 1882 Harriet Mason (a widower who had lost both her first husband and son to Scarlet Fever).

Isaac was fond of the flute, sang in choirs and was a volunteer in the Victorian Local Defence forces, rising to the rank of Captain in the Bendigo Rifles. Several commissions, medals and other paperwork remain of these activities and are reproduced in this document.

Isaac kept a daily diary from 1851 until his death in 1915. This diary runs to an estimated 4,000,000 words and is held in the manuscripts collection of the State Library of Victoria. As of 2013 it has not been digitised. The biographical note in the library's catalogue record regarding this document places Isaac in Australia a couple of years before the transcribed English and South African letters indicate that he left (1849 versus 1851) however the notes provide a concise snapshot of his life:

*Isaac Edward Dyason was born at Ramsgate in Kent and he arrived in Adelaide in 1849 aged 17 from South Africa. Trained as a clerk and accountant and worked in Adelaide until 1851. Went to the Goldfields in Bendigo in 1851 and later returned to accountancy and worked for George Lansell becoming Manager and eventually Co-director. Accumulated mining interests and sat on boards of mining companies numbering 28 directorates on his death. He was member of the militia with the retired rank of Captain. Joined the 'Old Greys' as a private in 1864. In 1883 when Greys disbanded he joined militia and served 6-7 years. He died in Melbourne at the age of 83 years on the 13th of July 1915.*

In Bendigo he worked for George Lansell (the 'Quartz King') as accountant, then manager, and eventually co-director. He accumulated mining interests and sat on the boards of a large number of mines. However, mining was a speculative business and Isaac often felt insecure. When he died, his son Clarence went through some of his papers and noted that there had been many ups and downs. Isaac postponed his marriage to Harriet for over two years. He wrote in 1879: "I know I am right in postponing this – anything happening to Lansell and I am in the world again."

Isaac and Harriet finally married at St Paul's Anglican church on 5 May 1881 after Isaac had spend the morning at his office. Isaac was 48 and Harriet 28.

His work in Bendigo is commemorated in the inscription on the former plaque at the base of the poppet legs in Rosalind Park, Bendigo:



POPPET LEGS OF THE GARDEN GULLY GOLD MINING COY. THIS MINE PRODUCED 444,436 OZS OF GOLD & PAID £1,050,848 IN DIVIDENDS. DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY WERE DR. H.L. ATKINSON I.E. DYASON W. HUNTER G. LANSELL E. MUELLER BENDIGO FIELD SINCE 1851 HAS PRODUCED 20,637,223 OZS. APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup> 1931

***Fortuna*** – where Isaac lived for a while when its owner, Mr Lansell, was in England





"Fortuna"  
Army Headquarters Survey Regiment,  
Bendigo, Victoria.

Long Service Medal awarded to Isaac Edward Dyason 1883



**Isaac Edward Dyason probably in 1890s in the uniform of the Bendigo Rifles**



## Uncle Frederick Pearce



Uncle Fred Pearce in older age, wearing his bronze medal from the Royal Humane Society. See November 1851

Frederick Pearce was Isaac's mother's younger brother. He joined Isaac in Australia in early 1853 after a particularly difficult crossing (See English Letters 1852 December 10 from Isaac's mother El Dyason, and the newspaper account following it). He returned to England in May 1878. Isaac's mother writes:

*I am very desirous to have a letter from you as I am anxious to know of your welfare though I do as you wish, and suppose that you are well till I hear in the contrary. I thought your Uncle Frederick would have spent the Christmas with you but he will not leave England much before that time. We*

*sent you a letter by the Melbourne mail in which Uncle Fred was passenger and half his are likewise on board as they did not unload, he could not get at them. She may arrive safely at her destination, but it is a very doubtful case, she was an old Man of War and purchased from Government by the present company who have fitted out the vessel this letter comes by. In coming from London the Melbourne nearly grounded on the Goodwin Sands, encountered a gale off Beachy Head took her top gallant mast, the water rushed in at her port holes which were partly left open for ventilation. She put back again to the Downs for some days, the Engineer lost his hand. She was repaired at Plymouth, and in sailing out of port ran into an old guard ship, took her anchor and lat head, and in getting free from her backed into an other, at last she got fairly into the Bay of Biscay, was going on very well, had steamed four or five hundred miles across the Atlantic when she encountered a stiff breeze, gave a roll, over went her top mast, rigging and sails and the captain said they must put back to Lisbon, when the engine suddenly stopped and it was found that her masts and rigging had got twisted round the screw. The vessel sprung a leak, and it was thought all was lost. There were two small Brigs at a distance, the captain hoisted the signal of distress, they soon came to them and remained by them eight and forty hours during which time the passengers with the sailors after much labour and fatigue cleared the screw and they arrived at the Tagus, every berth was dripping wet, the passengers were all ill, the smell on board dreadful as her port holes were all closed in and in consequence no ventilation. The surgeon on board said as soon as they arrived at the Tropics a fever would certainly break out and in consequence of his statement he was dismissed.*

*Uncle Frederick was very ill and it was thought necessary that he should return home. The vessel was pronounced by competent judges in England to be not sea worthy. All the first class passengers left her and their births were appropriated by the second class. The captain was dismissed, the vessel was repaired and has again proceeded on her voyage, and I trust will arrive safe at her destination, but Uncle Frederick returned home as we did not like the vessel and the company have agreed to find them a passage on board the Adelaide and to pay all the expenses from Lisbon. The morning he left her there was a mutiny on board, one of the men was stabbed and has since died of his wounds. You will see dear Isaac there was a constant succession of disasters. Uncle Fred was sick the whole of the time but was not laid by. I hope you will see him on his arrival at Melbourne as he will need your advice and he depends much on your knowledge and experience of the country. The reason of their being so miserable on board the Melbourne was she took more passengers than she could accommodate, and there being no ventilation. But this has since been altered and she has fewer passengers, and an other commander. But she is called a great rotting tub by all the sailors.*

He took another ship to Melbourne where he also narrowly missed being 'blown up'. Isaac's mother writes in February 24<sup>th</sup> 1853:

*Your Uncle left home the latter part of September and has not yet reached the Cape as we received a letter from him about a week since dated St Vincent where they were waiting for coals. We have read that the ship caught fire and very nearly escaped being blown up owing to the potent fuel being placed too near the engine room, but he writes that his health is good and he hopes all will yet be well. He is not one who looks at the dark side of the picture*

Fred Pearce's character is referred to several times by Isaac's father in the letters that he sends prior to Fred joining Isaac in Australia. Fred had already been awarded the Royal Humane Society's Bronze Medal for bravery when he saved two people from drowning off Ramsgate in 1851 as mentioned in a letter written around November 1851 by Isaac's sister Elizabeth Dyason (aged about 15)

*Uncle Fred and Uncle Charles send their love to you. I do not know whether you recall them, they are both fine young men. Uncle Fred last summer saved the lives of two men at the great risk of his own. One very rough day a gentleman was bathing when he lost his footing and called for help. From the shore a man went out to save him and after vainly struggling with the waves he began to sink too. Uncle Fred, taking off his boots, ran into the water. At first the waves knocked him down but soon recovering he swam to the first man who just as he got to him sunk, he dived after him and swam with him in his hand to the other and succeeded in bringing them both to land amidst the*

*shouts of people. As he said they had never seen so brave an action before. He was presented with a medal and ten pounds by the Humane Society and a meeting was called at the Town Hall where he was thanked by the Chairman.*

Fred's business acumen received a mixed report from his brother-in-law, Isaac's father, although Isaac's mother is more positive in a letter dated 1852 August 1; she writes:

*Your letter has quite decided Uncle Frederick to come out to Australia, but as some of the family are averse to his leaving I am not certain whether he will go or not, should he come he will leave England this Autumn by one of the Screw Steamers, however we shall write this month August to let you know their decision. He is a very good salesman and will be very much missed at home in the business as in the morning he is on the sands with Uncle Paulin and the rest part of the day in the shop in Harbour Street, you may be sure we shall all miss him very much, particularly your Grandma.*

In a letter from Isaac's father dated 1855 January 13 we get a more balanced opinion of Uncle Fred's business abilities:

*I find by your letter that you are entering into partnership with your uncle. I trust that it will prove advantageous to you and him, but I have no occasion to inform you that it will be quite necessary for you to take the principle management in your own hands for your Uncle Fred wants firmness in business and has not the tact to manage and conduct it as it ought to be. You have justly said that it is far better to be straight forward in business than beat about the bush, this is your Uncle's fault, he would rather do anything than to come to the point. It is not for want of principle or unfair dealing but it is a want of nerve, he would rather submit to anything than have anything unpleasant with those he might be connected with in business. He is a capital salesman and no doubt would get a good business together anywhere but has not the nerve to take the business part which I think you are fully competent to do.*

And he later writes in June 3 of the same year:

*With respect to your Uncle Fred, if you enter into business with him you must take the management entirely into your own hands as he wants never to carry on any Business and does not like to refuse anything to anybody however injurious it may be to himself. I dare say you have seen sufficient of that in his conduct with Christmas respecting his leaving for England, but that has been his fault through life. He is a capital salesman and would be a great acquisition to any business in that capacity. I think you would do very well together but the management must rest entirely with yourself*

One of the elder sisters, Frances, Elizabeth, possibly Julia Dyason



One of the younger sisters, Augusta or Catherine Dyason



## Harriet Dyason (nee Mason)



Isaac's wife Harriet Dyason (nee Mason) circa 1880 (born January 1853, died 1939)

**These notes come from a Dyason family reunion booklet written in 2006 by Mary Young and Jane Poulton.**

Harriet Dyason nee Mason

Harriet was born at St. Peter Port, Guernsey (Channel Islands) on 3 January 1853, the youngest child of George and Mary Ann Mason (nee Gordon). She was only seven when she came to Australia on the Atlanta with her mother, brothers Joseph and Alfred and sisters Mary Ann and Jane in 1860. She had another

brother, William. Her father and eldest brother, George, were already in Bendigo. Harriet's daughter Amy used to sing a lullaby in the English/French patois of Guernsey to yet another generation of babies, Amy's grandchildren.

Harriet married Isaac Edward Dyason in Bendigo in 1881 and had four children; Emily, Amy, Clarence and Cecil. She had previously married John Saville Eastwood. Her first husband and her baby daughter, Ruby, both died from scarlet fever within two months of each other in 1875 and are both buried at Bendigo Cemetery. Frederick Cecil Roger, (known as Cecil), youngest son of Isaac and Harriet, was later buried with John and Ruby. Harriet therefore lost two babies and her first husband. Amy Pearson also said that Harriet's father and brother George died young, probably from typhoid. Harriet's mother, Mary Ann, survived until 1893.

It seems that Harriet was an adventurous lady. There is a photograph of the Bendigo Ladies' Cycling Club of 1895 in which she features (as does daughter Amy). She was also musical. She appears in a photograph on the website of Girton College, one of a group of ladies (all wearing enormous hats) which included Emily's musical friend Lottie Mueller. Harriet's son Clarence wrote in July 1943: "Both of my parents were accomplished vocalists and pianists."

Ding Dyason, in "The Half-Open Door" (*a book*) remembered Harriet as a lover of parties which she gave "until well into her eighties." Another grand-daughter, Elizabeth told us: "Every year my grandmother had a party in her home for her birthday – the house was decorated, we all wore our best clothes, and all the grandchildren had to perform – sing, dance, play the piano, recite etc... And the adults also." Ding noted that Harriet was "petite" and "ultra-tidy", believing in "a place for everything and everything in its place" – including her grandchildren. Harriet and her chauffeur used to go on afternoon outings, sometimes as far as Fish Creek or Bendigo. She also patronised the theatre and musical events.

**Isaac Edward Dyason's young family**



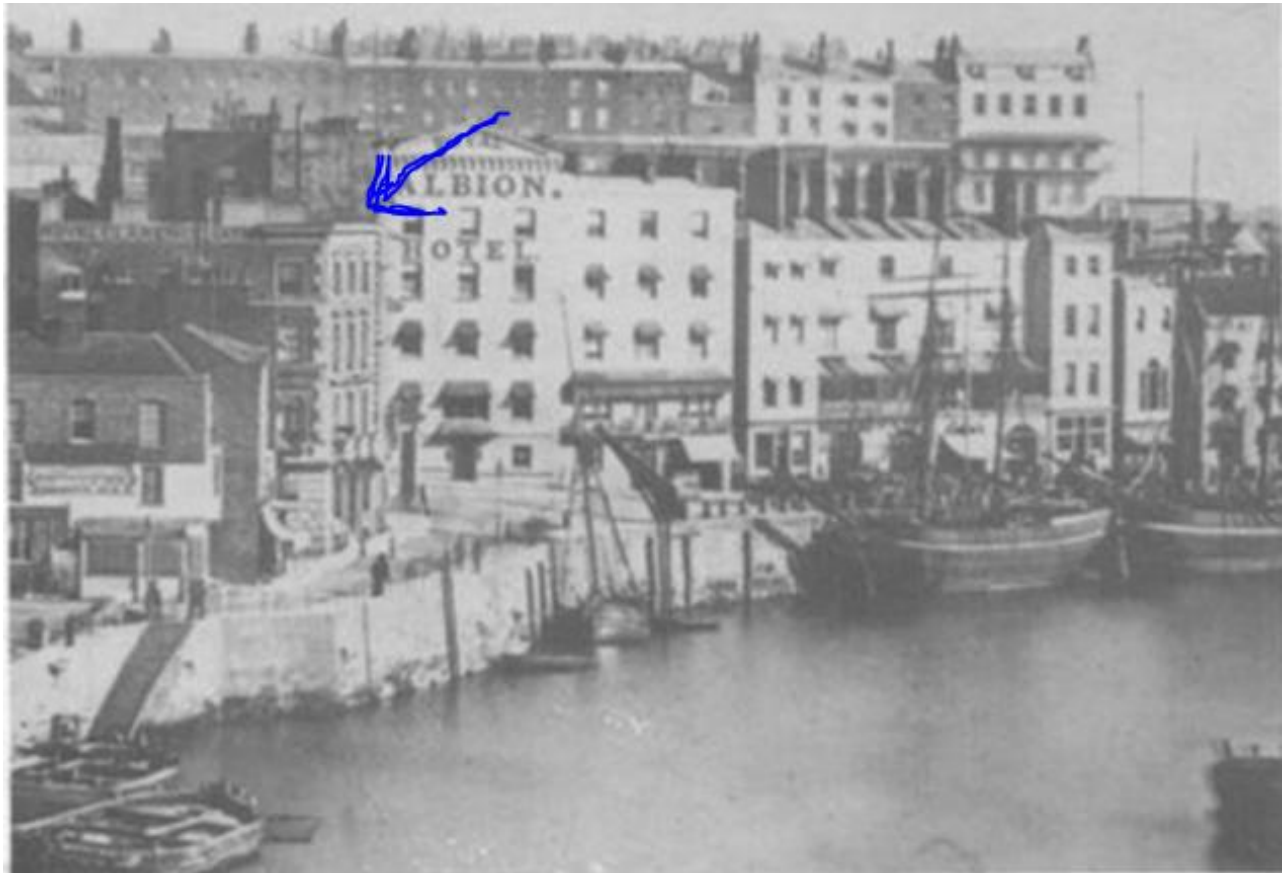
**Emily Illenden Fortuna Dyason, Clarence Dyason, Harriet & Isaac and Amy Harriet Dyason circa 1890s**

**Amy Harriet Dyason, Clarence Dyason and Emily Illenden Dyason and Harriet Dayason circa 1890s**



## Royal Clarence Baths

Royal Clarence Baths circa 1860's



Royal Clarence Baths circa 1860's (detail)



Royal Clarence Baths building circa 2010



Bathing machines Ramsgate



Ramsgate Sands by William Powell Frith RA, signed and dated 1854



1847

1847 March 29

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason to Isaac in South Africa (Mother is 44, Isaac is one day shy of 15)

My very Dear Isaac

I thank you for your interesting letter of the 15<sup>th</sup> inst which I received two days after I had posted my last to you, and likewise for the papers and drawings you sent and should have written immediately but I thought it would be better to wait for Captain Harrington and as we have not yet seen him I should write you a few lines now and send a longer letter when he returns to the Cape. I am very sorry to hear of the bereavements in your Uncle's family, it must have been a great affliction to them, particularly to your aunt as also the great loss of property they have sustained by the heavy rains which you gave me an account of in your letters but I hope brighter days will succeed these dreary ones for they have had much to endure.

I hope my Child you are quite recovered from the effects of your cough. I should think from its violence and long continuance it was the Hooping (sic) cough, it is a distressing complaint, it leaves such a lowness of spirits and so much weakness after it, but it is much better to have the disease when young, you will now not have any dread of it on your mind. Your sisters and brothers had it very badly. I did not expect they would all be spared to me.

I hope those naughty Caffers will learn better manners and not again trouble your peaceful Colony. Pa says it is pretty well at an end, we had heard of the wars and were anxious to know their proceedings. It is always attended with loss and inconvenience even to those who are not immediately concerned in it.

I should have liked to have formed one of the party to the top of Table Mountain. Such little excursions are very agreeable and beneficial and were I not a female I think I should like to travel all over the world. You remember me writing to you last March 1846. A few days after I had sent my letters Pa was introduced to a Captain Canvin, captain and owner of a schooner in the Harbour bound direct to the Cape. He came to our house and spent part of two days with us. His friends reside at Cape Town and he is a native of the place, he offered to take a small parcel which I said I should like you to have, he said he knew your Uncle but was not personally known to him but as you have not noticed them in your letters I am fearful you have not had them. The books were *Wragg's Instructions for the Flute*, *Book of Kent* which cost a sovereign, two small histories of England, *Murray's Grammar*, about thirty or forty pictures of the Forty Thieves and Aladdin and his Lamp and a few small books. We knew his vessel had arrived by one of your papers. If you have not had them I think you had better mention to your Uncle as they were useful books and you and your cousins would have been pleased with the pictures.

Grandma's and Uncle White's gardens look very poorly at present as they have not been well attended, but have had a long cold winter and there has been much distress in Ireland, Scotland and partially in England, but summer is coming and we hope for a plentiful harvest from the hand of Him who knows our wants, only let us be faithful to Him and all will be well.

Mr Hiscocks who bought No. 11 where we used to live has pulled the whole of it down and is carrying it up even with the Hotel, which will make the Baths and kitchens a shade darker, be as it will, the new Baths are much to be preferred to the old ones though they had plenty of light. But we were losing business fast as they began to look so very old outside and people like a pleasant place to bathe in. Pa and Aunt Fanny understand the business so much better than the others in this town.

Uncle Thomas has removed into King St opposite Fall Bakery. Uncle Paulin is getting ready his machines. We shall soon be cleaning up for the summer. Grandma, Grandpa, (*Great*) Uncle and Aunt White, Miss Kirkwood, Uncle Roger and family and all your uncles and aunts are quite well and send their kindest love to their little Isaac.

*(half a page has been carefully cut out after the letter was written.)*

And now my dear Isaac, we all wish you many happy returns of your birthday which is near at hand. May He who watches over you guide and protect you at all times particularly in this your season of youth. Your Father joins me with kindest love and likewise your sisters and brothers with many kisses to their beloved Isaac and believe me your ever affectionate

Mother EID

*(accompanying the letter above is a cut-off piece written in the same hand on the same paper)*

...your Father has received a letter from your Uncle John stating that you wish to come to England, if so my dear boy come, we shall all be very glad to see you and you have only to name it to him that you do wish it and he will get you a passage home. You had better write us a few days previous to your departure that we may look out for you as you know dear Isaac, we can see the vessels come round the point.

Aunt Fanny desires her kind love to her brother, sister and family. Present my kind love to your dear Uncle and Aunt, little cousins and give them a kiss from the children. Do not forget to write when you receive this and tell me all your thoughts and wishes. Adieu dear Boy.

*(on reverse of piece)*

...do not think I could not afford a whole sheet of paper. I had not another of the same sort in the house and I was fearful I should not be ready for Pa's letter.

**1847 June 19\***

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason to Isaac in South Africa**

My dear Isaac

We received your very interesting letter on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May and rejoice to hear that you and your dear uncle's family are restored to health and trust that you still continue in the enjoyment of so great a treasure. I should think by this time your uncle has received Pa's letter and you mine which we sent in March in answer to the one he sent to us.

Aunt Fanny likewise received hers but has not yet answered it but intends to write very soon to her brother. We have all been very busy in preparing for Summer but we do not expect a full season as Parliament will be dissolved in July or August and families will remain at their own homes, but we must hope on and not look at the dark side of the picture as your Grandma often says.

I am sorry to hear of the war being still carried on. I had hoped all was quiet, perhaps the new Governor will be able to do something effectually. How do the people like him. I cannot conceive how you have contrived to light the town with gas as I have heard that coals are exceedingly scarce at the Cape. I hope after a little you will accomplish the breakwater. We have something of the kind built lately at the end of the last pier but I hardly know what to say about the railroads, we have had so many dreadful accidents in different parts of England and elsewhere. After a great deal of persuasion I went to Minster by the rail and were it safe I should prefer it to a stage coach but then you see nothing of the scenery about you.

I thank you for the picture at the head of your letter. I should like to know if the family feel a sacrifice to those cruel Caffers (sic) what a fearful predicament to be placed in, but I suppose there were many such cases in which women were obliged to assist in defending their lives and property. When you write again I should like you to send one of your own drawings, never mind about its being well done. I am very much pleased with your last letter, it is a sufficient proof that my dear boy has not been idle. It is well written and scribed. I should think the river you mention is considered an important discovery and will assist travellers in their researches into the interior which they have so often attempted.

You say you would like to have an instruction book for the flute. I sent one to you last March twelvemonth by Captain Canvin with several others which I had been hoarding up for you and about forty or fifty pictures of Aladdin and his lamp and the forty thieves which you remember reading in the Arabian night's entertainments. If I could get another book I do not know how to send it as I should not like to trust another stranger. If you can find his friends they may be able to direct you in the recovery of the books as they live at Cape Town. They are French people which have been at the Cape many years.

I should think people will be very careful to keep close in shore while bathing since the capture of the large shark you mentioned. I have often heard your uncle Paulin speak of them as being very ugly creatures. You wish to know your age. You my dear Child was born 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1832, you were 15 last March. Fanny 13, Elizabeth 11, George would have been 9, Fred is 7, Julia 5, Edward 3, Charles was twelvemonths old last April.

Your uncle mentioned his having dissolved partnership with Mr Corbitt and of the immense trouble he had occasioned him. Grandma has taken much pains with your primrose – it looked very poorly for some time but she transplanted it and now it is doing better. She said it was because little Isaac was ill and it is recovered now because he has got well again. Uncle Paulin and Uncle Frederick are on the sands they meet with much unpleasantness from the other parties that have machines there. Uncle Thomas has removed into Kings Street the corner shop opposite Rammels. He does not play the flute much now but the organ. The church on the West Cliff will be opened soon, the steeple is like the one at Minster. The Trustees have the power to choose their own minister. Grandma feels great interest in it as she intends to take a seat there.

The large ships you mention we noticed going by, some of them were towed up to London by steamers. We said they had sailed around the Cape and most likely you had seen them. We did not know they were bringing a letter from you. Pa was standing at the door the other day (*when*) a gentleman by the name of Grainger, lately arrived from the Cape, looked at him and remarked to his daughter how much he was like Mr Dyason at Cape Town. She replied exactly like him but not so stout and others that know your uncle have said the same thing. So you must fancy it is Pa – he takes great care of your sword, the handle he has bound with red leather and it hangs in his bedroom. Your Grandpa has remained at Liverpool up to the present time but is now in London.

Uncle Roger and family are quite well, he is papering Mr Hiscock's new house and Aunt Fanny is quite well. They desire their kind love to you and your uncle and aunt and family. Grandpa, Grandma, all your uncles and aunts are in health (*and*) desire to be affectionately remembered to their little Isaac. Uncle Charles still plays the organ at St Peters, Uncle Frederic sings and has a very good bass voice, as yours is changing I would advise you not to try it too much. Tell little Julia I am glad she is fond of music. Fanny too is fond of it but her advantages are not equal to Julia's as she has to teach herself, besides she is constantly nursing. I am fearful of passing this subject too much on your attention my dear Isaac lest I should burden you with too many things but if you have sufficient leisure I should like you to continue it.

We were not aware that Captain Harrington had left England till we received your letter. Pa looked in the Times paper every day to see his vessel advertised for the Cape, intending to write to him as he said he would be sure to see it there, but he was mistaken. We were greatly disappointed to find he had left England without seeing him. I am thankful to say we are all quite well, Libby has been very poorly with a swelling and gathering in her face. Mr Webster had four leeches put on it. She is not quite well but much better now. Fanny grows a very good girl, she is losing that paleness which you may remember. Libby has lost her roses, she used to have such a nice colour. She says we must call her Elizabeth as she is not a child now, but I do not think either of them will be fresh coloured, but this is of no importance if they have their health. They are both at present desirous to do well. Freddy is what you were at his age, Julia, Edward and baby grow nicely and now dearest boy I must leave you for a little while. I will write again soon, endeavour my precious one to cultivate a cheerful grateful mind for this is well pleasing to Him who provides every good for us present.

Pa's and my kind love to you, uncle, aunt and family, your brothers and sisters send you dearest love. Pa joins me in the tenderest love to you my Sweet Boy and believe me your ever affectionate mother

Elizabeth Illenden Dyason

*\*Note that in this letter Julia is 5 in 1847. Julia was born in 1842 – a letter from Mother says “2 months after you left for South Africa” Isaac was born in 1832 so he was 10 or possibly 9½ when he left England for South Africa.*

1849

1849 July 13

**From sister Frances Dyason to Isaac in South Africa (Frances is 14 years old)**

*(letter ends with the line written sideways):* and do believe me dearest brother, your ever affectionate, FD

*Isaac wrote on the outside: received per Agencourt 27 September 1849, answered 29 September*

Dear Isaac

I received your letter of March 20 and am sorry to hear that business is dull and money so scarce with you at the Cape, but I hope this will not always be the case, as I expect you will not afford a housekeeper when you arrive at the proper age, and all my grand views and expectation will be disappointed as I hope you will select me to superintend your domestic affairs. You know a long time ago I made saucepans and frying pans and furniture of various kinds, now I can make lasts and am learning to sew on string and buttons and men's socks, but I must not speak too much in my own praise but shall refer you to Ma who I think will plead in my favour.

I suppose you have heard of the sufferings of those who have gone to California, of the many hardships they have had to undergo, of the great difficulty they had to get provisions of any kind and of the heat and fatigue they endured, but without the protection of any government what could they expect, but to be plundered of their wealth by the stronger party and often very often cruelly murdered, so dear Isaac we will not try our fortunes there for I presume you are not tired of life yet nor myself unless when troubles press too heavily.

Respecting Stephen Base, we think you did quite right for though he is related to the family we have no acquaintance with him and as we intend always to send through the medium of the post we think you had better do the same, we remembered you on your birthday and wished you many happy returns of the same, and this reminds me of some questions I have to ask you, do you smoke, are your whiskers growing and what colour are they and how tall are you to a hairs breadth and what clothes do you wear. I often think I should like so much to have a correct likeness of yourself but in the next letter I claim your long promise a drawing. Ma received one of the letters which arrived the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February in answer to the one she wrote you in August last, she will write again soon and sends her kind love to you, Pa has sent the Illustrated London News regularly every week all through this year, we should like to know if you receive them (*section of letter bearing the 'front' has been cut away, likely because it contained a stamp*)

...and all your uncles...

to you, uncle Charles...

Aunt Fanny, Aunt...

To be remembered...

Love to uncle and...

Mrs Brook is uncle...

Great aunt and...

In (?Theeling) street are...

I should like to...

Flute and if you...

(?) such as she...

four or, five others...

...taken with Julia's education, what a privilege to have a mind well stored with useful knowledge, I should like to hear from you at your earliest leisure. Pa sends his kind love to you. The children the same.

**1849 September 13**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason to Isaac in South Africa**

*(written on back – Received Dec 8<sup>th</sup>, Returned Dec 11<sup>th</sup>)*

My Dear Isaac

We have received 3 letters and one paper since the commencement of this year from you, which we were all much please with, we send the Illustrated London news regularly to you and feel much gratified to have you prefer them to any other, but are fearful they are expensive for you to receive them, we were much surprised to know that Convicts had been sent to the Cape and think the Inhabitants to have done quite right in resisting a measure so degrading and ruinous to the Colony and likewise in not suffering themselves to be made soldiers of, you say the Governor likes to have his own way, if his judgement is always correct it will not matter. I tell Pa he reminds me of some one I am acquainted with. I think you are very spoiled people at the Cape and I am sure your subscriptions are very handsome towards getting rid of the convicts. The Dutch people and farmers being content to have things remain as they are without improvement are like a relation of Grandma's who lived about two centuries ago, he used to say if his children could spell bottle and bellows they knew quite enough.

We had a great number of visitors at Ramsgate this summer, some of the tradespeople have done a large business such as bakers, butchers, grocers etc... Uncle Paulin has done well I should think as people are fond of the cold bathing and the expense is small. I think we have had our share in the warm bathing and the house has let pretty well, in our endeavours to succeed in our affairs we must guard against a dissatisfied and covetous spirit. The French say we are a covetous nation, otherwise there would not be so many thieves, but I do not think this failing is more prevalent in England than elsewhere. Grandpa Pearce is doing a very good business now. Pa wishes you dear Isaac to ask your Uncle if he can do any thing in the boot and shoe line, Uncle Charles can send him a hundred pounds worth of goods which he will be able to sell at a very low price, well manufactured articles. If your Uncle thinks any thing of it Uncle Charles will send him all the particulars. I am very glad you can endure the heat better than formerly, and truly thankful for your general good health. There has been a great deal of illness in England, we have escaped hitherto for which I trust we are grateful. Pa is not quite well, he has had a Rheumatic attack which has rather affected his nerves, he is taking a course of medicine which I hope will do him good.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has appointed to morrow Friday to be...

*(next section has been cut out for the front cover of the letter and stamp)*

prayer to Almighty

from the land,

next of course this

within their own

From the receiver

(?) observed by

expecting Autumn

(beg)inning to feel

Wester winds

they will prevail

family and Elizabeth

with Freddy who

has been considering

you had he not been written to for so long a time the rest of the Children send you a pretty kiss, they think of you as being like Freddy, a little boy. Aunt Fanny is quite well and Uncle Roger the same. They send their kind love. Grandpa and Grandma and all your uncles and aunts also Uncle White and desire their kindest love. Pa joins me in the kisses to you my beloved Child. I should like to have a letter as soon as you have leisure. I am always much pleased to hear from you

I am glad that your Uncle and Aunt and family are quite well, we all desire our kind love. Present our respects to Captain Harrington. We are glad to hear the steamer is out of repair, perhaps we shall see him.

1850

1850 April 16

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason to Isaac in South Africa. Isaac is just 18

My Dear Isaac

I received a letter from you in February and one for Fanny a fortnight after with a paper, we had thought his was lost it was so long coming. She was so much pleased with it and indeed it is a gratification to us all when a letter arrives from the Cape, after it has passed through all the hands in the house, I take it up the street, Uncle Charles always reads it first then the others who happen to be there. Your father was greatly disappointed at not receiving your Uncle's letter in answer to his, as he was greatly desirous to hear from him, but everything is attended with uncertainty in this transitory scene.

Beloved Child, you have now arrived at your eighteenth year and I have great reason to adore the Hand that has safely guided you through every difficulty and danger to which you may have been exposed, and I pray dearest Child that you may ever seek the guidance and protection of your heavenly Father that when the stormy scenes of life conclude you may land on that happy shore where all is beauty, harmony and peace.

It is with much grateful emotion that I hear from time to time of your steadily pursuing the path of right conduct which will cause you the esteem of all good men and the respect of those who do not practice it themselves, but I may say that from infancy the love of truth was very apparent in you, and if this principle becomes firmly wrote in the mind it will sustain us in our every difficulty and disappointment. My son, you walk before me in truth is the plain command and in this word much is comprised, and may you dearest boy be so influenced by this blessed principle as that you may devote the best and warmest affections of your heart to him.

By the time you receive this letter your summer will have passed. I hope you have all escaped illness and are enjoying health and a gradual return of prosperity. I suppose Julia is now an agreeable and useful companion to her mother, and John is quite a little man. Pa saw a youth lately who had been to school with him but he did not know anything of the family, he came over in a vessel that lay in the harbour some time.

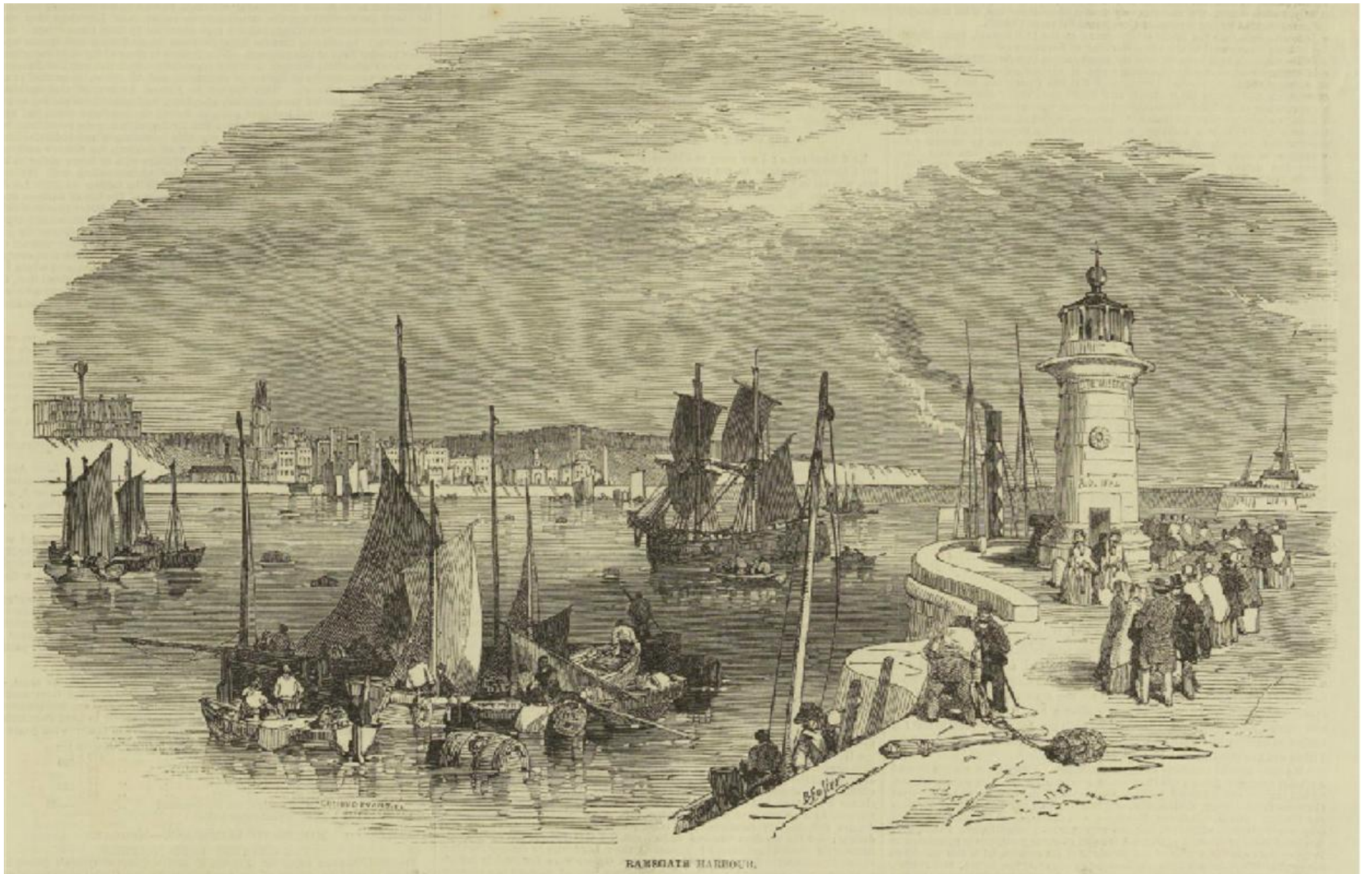
We have sent the Illustrated News regularly every week since last January twelvemonth with the exception of one or two which we forgot till too late for the post. Of course I do not expect they will all arrive, some of them are torn but that I cannot help as most of the pictures are copied by the little ones, and sometimes the music. We hear much of Port Natal. I suppose it becomes a flourishing Colony, there will be frequent communication between that and the Cape which may prove advantageous to trade. I think I remember you going once with Captain Harrington to Port Natal in his steamer. Uncle Roger says if he navigates at all he thinks that would be one of his destinations.

We have had more cold weather this winter than for some years past, but not much snow, and the prospect of a prevailing easterly wind during the summer. Vegetation promises largely, roots and herbs are becoming gradually more healthy for the last two or three years people have been obliged to partake of them very sparingly owing to their diseased state, last year the fruit was not good, bread and meat have been the principle diet but now we partake of our usual vegetables. Let us trust in the all wise Providence and be "Thankful when favours are denied and pleased with favours given."

We are now preparing for the summer. Aunt Fanny is busy in her department, Pa in his, I in mine, the children in theirs. "Mans" is laborious happiness at best. Uncle Charles is much obliged for the exact statement you have sent, desires his kind love and will write to you shortly. He conducts the business for Grandpa, with Uncle Frederick's assistance and they are much attached to each other.

Grandpa and Grandma are quite well. Grandma still calls you little Isaac, but you are quite as tall as Uncle Charles and Fred. Your uncles and aunts are all quite well, Uncle White is as ruddy and healthy and enjoys all his faculties as if he were a young man. Miss Kirkwood has been failing some time and is obliged to have a nurse. Uncle Roger and family I believe are quite well but I have not seen him for a few days past.

Aunt Fanny has been poorly with her usual Spring Malady, a disagreement of the liver. Mr Snowden has attended her and she is now pretty well, she desires her kindest love to you. Uncle, aunts and family...(*letter ends missing pages*)



RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

**1850 September 27**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason to Isaac in South Africa**

My Dear Isaac

We have received one paper from you with this year's date, and two letters in February, one for January dated Sep (18)49 and one for me dated December and we sent one each in return. We have expected to hear from you a long long time, and no doubt there is a letter close at hand, but Elizabeth says she does not wonder at your not writing as our letters are so dull and melancholy but as that is a fact of our national Character you of course expect our letters to breathe something of this spirit, but I hope it does not affect you, who live in a warmer and brighter atmosphere. We have sent you the Illustrated News from Feb to July occasionally since that time to the present regularly, with one exception, last week's paper was Louis Napoleon's visit to Cherbourg, I hope you will receive them all.

Dear Child I have to introduce a little stranger to your regard, a little girl born the 15<sup>th</sup> July, and named Catherine Agnese, she is a fine baby and at present is very good. The children are all fond of her, Freddy says I take as much pleasure in dressing her as a girl would in dressing a doll. We have now entered on the Autumn of the year, but with you it is Spring, delightful Spring, emblem of youth the favourite season of man's existence, but still attended with difficulties, owing to want of experience, may an allwise Providence guide your steps my beloved child. We have had delightful weather I may say all through the year, with very little sickness, and have been provided with a good harvest.

We have had a great many visitors to Ramsgate this Summer. The boats from Ostend and Bologne come every other day, and excursion Boats every day to Deal and Dover besides the London boat daily, twice this season we have had a month excursion train from London, bringing 14 hundred people the first time and 17 hundred the second, taking them to and from Ramsgate at a single fare. They appeared highly delighted with their holiday, many of them had never seen the sea. We have had likewise two Regattas and a duck hunt which last took place in the inner harbour. There were between three and four thousand persons present who were all much amused as the men performed their part very well. We have all been very well in health with the exception of Pa who cannot get quite well, but I trust that the cold weather will strengthen him as he will then be able to take exercise in the open air.

Business is not so prosperous as we could wish, but I suppose this is the case every where. Aunt Fanny is quite well and sends love to you and kind love to your uncle and aunt, and wishes to hear from them, and love to the children. I suppose Julia continues to improve and I do not doubt is a very good and amiable girl and John is becoming quite a little companion for you. Fanny and Elizabeth are useful to me now, and I trust will be a comfort to us, not that I expect them to be without faults, we often all of us do wrong but by constant endeavour we may improve and gain the victory over every wrong propensity, and he who conquers himself is a greater hero than he who takes a city.

Freddy reminds me of you as he is about as tall as you were when you left home. Julia grows tall, and is a well disposed child. Edward is shy, but a boy of good abilities and I think will have a voice for singing. He is fair, Charlie is dark and a general favourite being the youngest boy, Augusta is a spoiled child, and Pa says a very troublesome one, and I think too sometimes, but grown up people as well as children like to have their own way. Fanny has been on a visit to Mrs Hurst's these three weeks past with Aunt Susan and is there still. Grandma and Grandpa are all in Harbour St and are quite well, desire their kind remembrances. Uncle White enjoys good health, Mrs Kirkwood is quite recovered and can take her accustomed walks. I hope dear Boy that you and all your kind friends are in the enjoyment of health and that the affairs at the Cape and are in a better position than they were when you wrote last. Your letters will reach us in a much shorter time now as they will come by the steam ships. What do you think of the Submarine Telegraph, before it was completed Grandma used to say she could believe anything but that, and of the ascent of the house in the balloon, and of the sea serpent there will be a rich booty for any one who has the courage and good fortune to catch him.

We saw the four ships pass that took the settlers to the New Canterbury NZ settlement\*. This place exerts much interest in England, more I think than the California gold. I must now conclude, expecting to hear

from you. Your Father and Brothers and Sisters writing with me in kind love to yourself. Uncle and aunt and family and believe me to remain your ever affectionate Mother

E I Dyason

\*The following quote from <http://www.firstfourships.co.nz/> (accessed August 2013) provides an indication of the conditions on board the four ships voyaging to Canterbury in New Zealand.

*Those who came to Canterbury on the First Four Ships were divided into two main groups: "colonists" and "emigrants". Colonists travelled as cabin passengers and had the money to buy land in the new settlement. The Canterbury Association required that a rural allotment of at least 50 acres be bought at £3 an acre, as well as a town section in either Lyttelton or Christchurch. These high prices were aimed at preventing labourers and the like from buying land. The Association intended that the colonists be the leaders in Canterbury in its formative years.*

*The "emigrants" were mainly agricultural labourers, tradesmen, domestic servants and young married couples. Emigrants travelled in steerage and paid what they could afford for their fare. The shortfall was made up either by the Canterbury Association or by their future employers travelling on the same ship. Emigrants were required to be under 40 years old, to provide their own tools, and to supply testimonials as to their qualifications, medical certificates and certificates from the minister of their parish, countersigned by a Justice of the Peace.*

*Cabin passengers paid £42 a berth, intermediate passengers £25 a berth, and steerage passengers £15. Each ship carried a chaplain, a surgeon and a schoolmaster, all paid for by the Canterbury Association. The doctor received 10 shillings for every passenger safely delivered to Lyttelton, but had to pay back 20 shillings for every passenger who died.*

*Life on board was cramped. Steerage passengers were confined to a small space below the main deck. Single men slept in bunks 6½ feet long by 2 feet wide. Married couples shared a slightly wider bunk (3½ feet) and had a curtain for privacy. This space was used not only for sleeping, but also for storing everything needed for the voyage. There was a lack of fresh air, and dampness was a constant concern.*

*Basic food was provided, such as salted meat, flour, rice, biscuits and potatoes, but steerage passengers had to cook it themselves. A large table was fixed to the floor down the middle of the steerage area for this. A bucket was supplied for washing and laundry.*

*Cabin passengers had slightly better conditions. Living quarters had more space and privacy, and meals were cooked and served by stewards.*

1851

1851 February 2

Ramsgate from Isaac's father and mother to Isaac in Australia

My dear Boy

We all thank you for your very pleasant letter received by us on Monday evening last the 27 January and although I see by the date of yours it has been 3 months coming yours being dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 1850 but even that does not make it the less agreeable, you must endeavour to write as often as you can and send them by vessels chartered by the Government. We are very pleased to find that you have entered into business and I trust that your enterprising mind will not be thwarted by any circumstances which will cast a shadow or a gloom over it should it be the case. I feel quite persuaded that my boy will always look to that source for support and assistance which is never refused to those who ask it. I am also glad that you have bought some shares in a mine, I trust that your speculations will turn out well (and as you say). I see no reason myself why you should not be of that fortunate crowd, you cannot expect to do impossibilities, we think you have done wonders. Remember Whittington and Lockington, they both began young but by perseverance and industry they both amassed huge fortunes.

We are delighted at your description of the Country both with regard to the mines and its other productions, even your Ma from the delightful description you have given of it thinks if it were not for the perilous voyage she would have no objection to come out. Your brother Freddy who used to be such a bitter plague to you grows a very good boy, but rather delicate and we think of bringing him up to music. I do not know whether I ought to tell you but Fanny is getting quite a French Woman. She has now grown quite tall and is a very good girl. Indeed, my boy, I think you will be pleased to see so fine a family of Brothers and Sisters.

I have not yet heard from your Uncle John but I wrote to him directly I received your first letter from Adelaide and no doubt shall soon receive an answer as there is now steam communication between England and the Cape. They take 3 days from one country to the other and I am expecting his answer on the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month. I wrote you an answer to your first letter which I hope arrived safe. Uncle Charles has not consigned any goods to Uncle John (*piece cut out of the letter – probably for the stamp*) you have not told us what business you...

Your Ma wishes to write a line or two to wish you many happy returns of your Birthday which is 30<sup>th</sup> March. Accept the love of your affectionate father.

(From Mother)

My dear Isaac

We are truly glad to find that you are likely to enjoy your health in the country where you now are and trust you will be directed in all your affairs by an Unerring Providence. I regret that the water is not good but perhaps in the course of time that may be improved by some means or other. I should like to know if you have received three letters addressed to the Cape sent in 1850. Grandma sends her kindest love to you and Grandpa, Aunt Fanny and all your friends desire their kindest remembrances and wishes, your sisters and brothers send you many kisses and affectionate love and though so many thousands of miles distant yet, beloved child, you are always as present with me as the family by whom I am surrounded.

Adieu dearest Boy and believe me your affectionate Mother.

**1851 February 27**

From Isaac's Mother El Dyason

My Dear Isaac

It is with much pleasure I again write to you, and have to thank you for two letters and one paper, dated from Australia and Pa has sent you two letters in return. He is much pleased with you my dear child and appreciates your active enterprising spirit and thinks you cannot fail of success. I am much gratified with the descriptions you have given of the country and think I can partly guess the reason why you so prefer it to the Cape. Did you not say it resembled England, "dear Old England", for the same reason if either of the children resemble you in manner or feature they bring to mind loving recollections.

I should like to know what causes the water to be so indifferent but I suppose it has not yet been accounted for. I have heard that the interior is subjected to long drought and that there are no singing birds there. I hope you will write every information that you are able to afford from time to time, Australia being much more interesting now than formerly, not that it is likely we shall ever pay it a visit. The fact of its being sixteen thousand miles off would appal much stouter hearts than ours. I hope you still enjoy good health and are in good spirits. Do not forget dearest boy the effort is yours but the success with Providence, therefore there is no need of over anxiety if you act well your part, as the Poet says, it is all that is required of you. I feel assured that you do not fail to address your heavenly Father Morning and Evening and on every important occasion. His approval is above all price.

Pa wrote to your Uncle John by the first Mail Ship which sailed from England the 15<sup>th</sup> of December but has received no letter from him as yet. Your Uncle Isaac's brother in law Captain Watts is appointed Commander of the third Steam Mail which sailed the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month. Pa sent a note by it. The girls would have sent some little presents to you by him of their own making if you had still been at the Cape. As it is they think of making you a watchguard which are much worn by English Gentlemen and sending it a month hence.

I should like to have your opinion respecting Freddy who is now eleven years of age and has made some little progress in music at least he can play Kelz's four fingered exercises, the scales, and is going through Gerny's exercises. If we do not apprentice him to music it may assist him in some way or other. We should like him to be an architect but I suppose that he would not succeed unless he had some particular talent for planning and designing, otherwise this business requires great application which I do not think he would be equal to as he is rather inclined to headache. He has not had the advantage of a Master but he can write tolerably, he has covered one book in calligraphy, is entering the double rule of three\*, will shortly enter the first rule of syntax and has passed through Goldsmith's questions in Geography which no doubt you will remember. Of course home tuition is not attended with those advantages that a public school affords but self application will in some measure compensate for the want of it. Fanny is rather below the middle height and like Freddy, has brown hair and dark eyes and is not very rosy. She can play several overtures and of course all the preparatory exercises. Mr Piloher taught her nine months, she is now learning French under a Master and has translated the Fables, and is going through another work she has been studying six months.

Elizabeth is not quite four (*foot*) height, has dark eyes and dark hair, she too has learned the preparatory exercises on the piano and has gone through nursery German once and understands the four rules of arithmetic, they have been taught embroidery, knitting and crochet as the young ladies of the present day are expected to know something of this kind of work. For a few months past they have undertaken some of the household duties. Dear Isaac were you not their brother I should think all this very uninteresting, but I wish you to know exactly how they are progressing.

Julia and Edward are advancing by degrees slowly, I am aware, but we try our best. The children are not remarkable for either natural abilities or personal beauty but they are generally well disposed and at present have no particular defects, I mean with regard to mind and body. Edward I think will sing but he is young as yet, seven years old. Charles, Augusta and Baby grow nicely. We are all quite well I am thankful to say as well as the rest of our friends. Grandpa and Grandma and all your Uncles and Aunts send their kind love. I

delivered your message to Uncle Fred. He promised to write. Pa and your sisters and brothers desire their kindest love.

Adieu my dear boy, and that every blessing may attend you, is the sincere and constant prayer of Dear Isaac, you ever affectionate Mamma, Elizabeth I Dyason

*\*The rule of three and double rule of three are mathematical problem solving equations eg.*  
**Double Rule of Three**

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If 8 men, in 16 days, can earn 96 dollars, how much can 12 men earn in 26 days?

$$\begin{array}{cc} 8 & 12 \\ 16 & 26 \end{array} \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{cc} 8 & 12 \\ 16 & 26 \end{array}} \right\} \$96$$

$$12 \times 26 = 312 \quad 312 \times 96 = 29952$$

$$8 \times 16 = 128 \quad 29952 \div 128 = 234$$

**1851 May 28**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother and Sister Frances**

*From Frances (aged 18)*

Dearest Isaac

I return you many thanks for your affectionate and interesting letters which I received together with Mama's three days since. I had intended to write to you the middle of this month as Mama will do a note if something presents and Elizabeth wrote last month and sent a watch guard which we hope will arrive safe. We have a pretty knitted purse ready to send by this but when it was weighed it came to eight shillings postage which exceeded the value of the purse so we must wait for an opportunity to send it by someone that is going. We have known of several who have left this place for Sydney, Philip\* and Adelaide but they may be hindrances rather than assistants to you or troublesome in some way or other and as we are not personally acquainted we have not sent by them.

I am sorry that the country is not as pleasant as the Cape, but I hope that you will not lose your health, as Mama says it would be better to be poor and in good health than rich with ill health but you will soon be able to judge. You have passed a twelvemonth there already and you know dearest brother you are not a fixture there. You were kind enough to say that my questions were not troublesome which encouraged me to propose some more which I am very desirous of knowing. Anything concerned with yourself interests me much more than anything we are at present engaged in so do not fear beloved Isaac that you can tire us by stating every thing connected with yourself, your hopes, fears, expectations, disappointments, failures, successes and everything good or bad which befalls you. We have read there are stinging spiders in Australia as large as the palm of the hand, likewise mosquitoes only no doubt they have their uses as nothing was made in vain but they must be excessively annoying. Papa lifted up his eyes when he read the incessant heat, he said if the thermometer stands 102° in the shade, what must it be in the sun. He was much pleased with your letter, I do not think the English people reflect much credit on their country but it is much to be lamented that the crimes you mention we as a nation are sadly enslaved by. I think they cannot hope to succeed who practice these degrading vices.

I hope your Christmas trip proved successful and profitable to you, you can breathe freely now as this is your Winter time. I am rejoiced to find you are in health and spirit and wish your ideas would be realised and I was really beside you because you would not be alone, and although I could not advise you yet perhaps I could in some way contribute to your happiness. You must feel the want of Uncle's and Aunt's kind attendance and perhaps most of all the society of your cousins Julia and John. How much I should like you to describe them exactly as they are, fair or dark, pretty or otherwise, clever, good-tempered, polished and above all things which for I long time I have wished to know whether your affections centre upon Julia, if so does she love you in return. Remember dear Isaac my letters are not public property so you can answer this (to me) important question.

I did not think to ask if you were ill on your passage to Australia as you suffered in going to the Cape. How glad I shall be of your likeness should you be "as black as a crow", it will not matter to me but how glad to see the Original. Well dear Isaac we must live and hope as Monte Christo says, but I think you will expect to see us better than we are, better in every respect, but as in Nature, we see and admire the majestic oak, the lofty pines and the graceful poplar while we pass by the lesser trees of the forest without noticing them.

We are now preparing for the Summer and we hope to have a better Season than the last as the baths on the West Cliff are closed, we must of necessity have more business. Grandmama and Grandpa are quite well and with Uncles and Aunts send their kindest love. Pa and Mama will write shortly and desire their kindest love to you. They are quite well and likewise all the family who send their warmest love and many kisses. Wishing you all the enjoyment of health and spirits,

I remain dearest brother you affectionate sister Fanny Dyason

Please do write to me at your earliest leisure.

*From Mother*

My dear Isaac

Your letters were truly acceptable as we all greatly long to hear from you. I shall write to you very soon, Uncle Charles the same. I am truly thankful that you are well and in good spirits. Do not be overanxious dear child. Pa sends his kindest love, accept these from your ever affectionate mother

EI Dyason

*\*Melbourne is situated on Port Philip Bay*

**(1851 November estimated)**

From Isaac's sister –Elizabeth Dyason.(aged nearly 16)

My dear Brother

Mama promised that we should in turn write to you every six weeks. Fanny wrote last and so now the pleasing task devolves on me of addressing one so dearly loved as you are Isaac, though I can scarcely think that a letter from a sister as little known as myself can interest one so greatly my superior in many ways, but I hope that you will be pleased to receive this and will favour me with an answer.

We have had a most delightful winter and very mild, though a very severe one was foretold by the weather-wise in England. Flights of birds came over from Norway which was said to be a sure forerunner of a cold winter, and a large boa constrictor kept at the Zoological Gardens in London swallowed a blanket that they used to cover him with. It's now thought to be a wonderful example of the power of instinct for they said he had done so to keep his inside warm\*.

There has been a large fleet of vessels in the Harbour this winter, a larger than has been in for seven years at one time, there were above four thousand sailors in the harbour. The Southerly and Westerly winds prevailed for a long time, once or twice it turned to the North and the vessels went off but after a day or two they were obliged to come back again. They are all gone now and I am so sorry, it makes us feel so dull. Some of them have been in for nearly three months and Papa says that some of them have the mail on board so we must not wonder if a long time elapses ere we hear from each other for it is likely for our letters to be delayed in the same way. Talking of mails, I saw in the paper that in making the voyage to Australia the bags were opened and newspapers supplied to the passengers to read out of them. If it were true it would be but little use for us to send you the Illustrated. Papa intends having them bound for you to read when you come home, for we are all looking forward to the time when we shall see you again. Indeed we feel it would give us the greatest possible happiness could we but see you who are so often in our thoughts.

The Great Exhibition is now become a thing that was and all the conjectures concerning London being burnt, ravaged by the plague, French invasions, Chartist conspiracies are all falsified so much the better, indeed we English take no little credit to ourselves on the subject. I say that in another country could such a thing have been projected and carried out with so much order and tranquillity as was this same Exhibition.

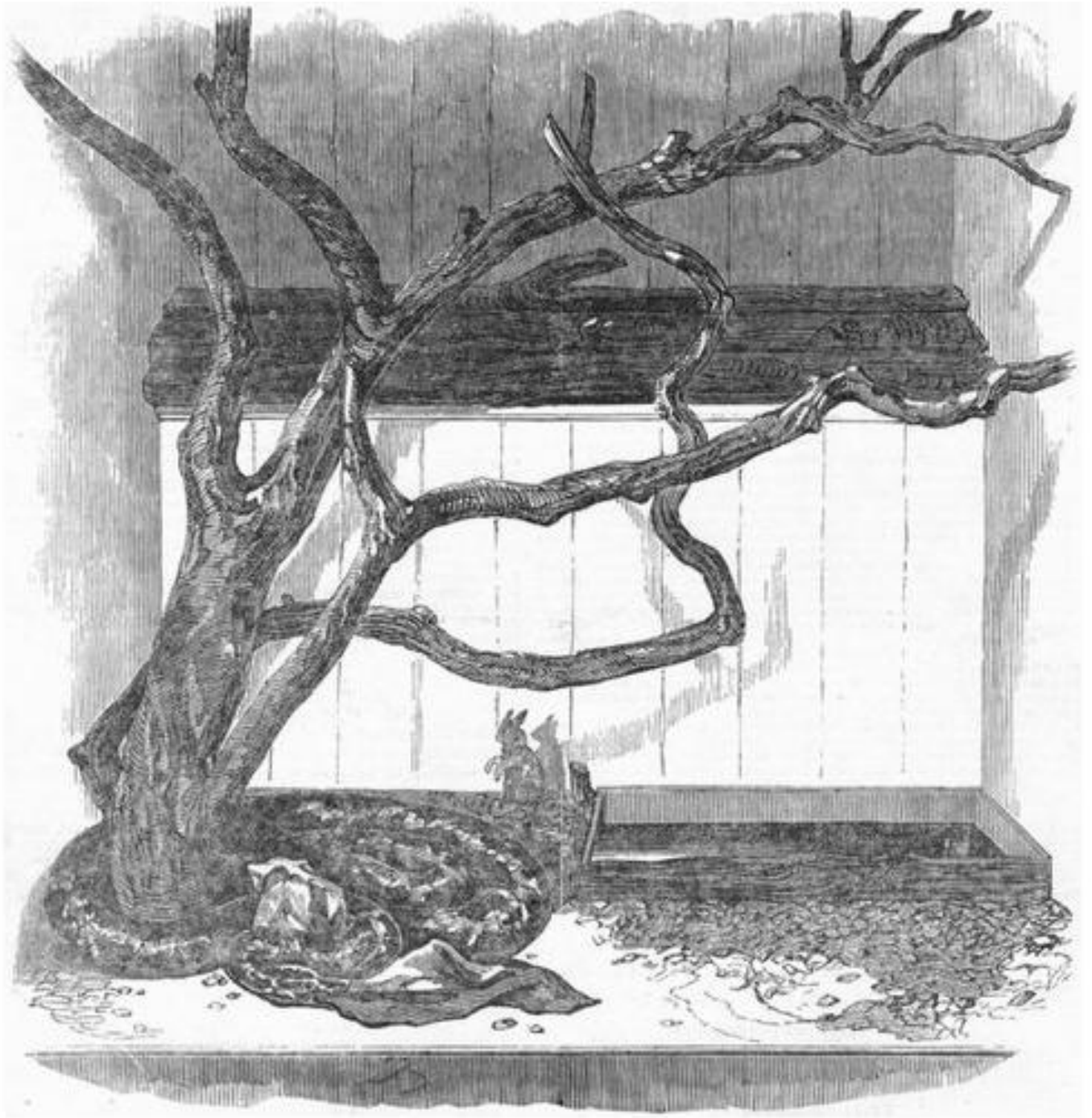
Uncle Fred and Uncle Charles sent their love to you. I do not know whether you recall them, they are both fine young men. Uncle Fred last summer saved the lives of two men at the great risk of his own. One very rough day a gentleman was bathing when he lost his footing and called for help. From the shore a man went out to save him and after vainly struggling with the waves he began to sink too. Uncle Fred, taking off his boots, ran into the water. At first the waves knocked him down but soon recovering he swam to the first man who just as he got to him sunk, he dived after him and swam with him in his hand to the other and succeeded in bringing them both to land amidst the shouts of people. As he said they had never seen so brave an action before. He was presented with a medal and ten pounds by the Humane Society and a meeting was called at the Town Hall where he was thanked by the Chairman.\*\*

Uncle White is very well at present, he is ninety three and is the oldest man in the Isle of Thanet. He always asks after you and likes to hear your letters read.

We have had several views in the paper of Bathurst and the gold diggings and when we see a young man whose appearance pleases us we say it must be you. I do not know whether they represent them truly but they look very pretty places. I have sent you my likeness and some of my hair that you may have some faint idea of what I am like, it is not exactly like me but people know for whom it is intended.

Grandma, my Uncles and Aunts all send their love to you. We are all quite well at home and all send their love and wishing you health and every happiness. Believe me dear Isaac to be your affectionate sister Elizabeth Dyason.

We received a letter dated from you July 15 which Mama answered soon after we received it. We see by the paper that they are going to send Steamers to Australia and that the first one will leave England in May by which we shall write to you again.



*\*Caption below picture: 'The boa constrictor swallowing the blanket, in the Menagerie of the Zoological Society' DATE PRINTED: 1851 from the Illustrated London News*

*A Bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society*



\*\* see record at <http://www.lsars.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/bronze1851s.htm> Pearce, F. Bathing Machine Attendant earned 9/10.8.51 Ramsgate RHS case number 15103 awarded the Bronze medal

**1851 November 27**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father (aged 40)**

My very dear Boy

We received your very kind letter at the beginning of the month, dated in June last, but not the paper which you have sent with it. We have received but 3 letters from you to this date, but I trust you are well and hearty and that God may prosper you in all your undertakings.

We have met with a loss in your Grandpa Pearce, who died on the 21 September of this year. I was with him the night of his death, and I am pleased to say he died very comfortable. He was advanced well in years as he arrived at the age of 93 and have no doubt he is gone to a better world to receive that reward which is promised to those that believe in Him. We miss him very much as he used to visit us every Sunday evening to smoke a pipe and have supper, as I dare say you remember. He was not ill more than a fortnight and I have no doubt it was a general break up of the constitution. Your Ma felt it very much but I am happy to say that she is getting over it.

I find by your letter that you have lost some money by speculation, never mind my boy as long as you do what is right and just God will prosper you, *nil desperandum*\* is a very good motto, and (*I*) shall not be surprised to see it on your carriage some day or another. By the by, you have not told us what you are doing, what business you are in or what it is you are after. We might fancy you one of the Errant Knights, riding about after some fair Lady or some other unaccountable thing as you keep it such a profound secret, not having mentioned it in any of your letters, but let it be what it will I trust you will succeed. You talk of provisions being dear, I do not wonder at it when you have found a superior California near you, and that it will have a great effect on your markets generally. You talk of going to visit it, I should not run any risk of your health and strength for a little more dust. For you know we shall all return to it and cannot take it with us, therefore I am quite sure you will well weigh it over in your mind before you run any risk, as we hope and trust some day or another to see you well and hearty.

We heard some time back from your Uncle John and I am glad to say he is well and improving again in his prospect if I may judge by his letter. Do you think some shoes and boots sent over to you would be a profitable speculation? If it would I could arrange quite independently of your Uncle Charlie with a wholesale dealer who would ship them for me direct to you. You will let me know in your answer to this, if it will, send the prices retail out there and we shall then be able to judge if any thing can be done.

I should have written to you some time ago but have been waiting thinking the Government would put on Steam communication, but they have not, they are very dilatory and will do nothing for the Colonies. They have been very backward in sending Troops for the Cape and have not done so till almost compelled by the voice of the public. I should not be surprised that it is in consequence of the Cape people refusing to take the convicts some time back, and now paying them out for it.

The Exhibition passed off very well, your Ma & I went to see it just before it closed with your Uncle Charlie, but there were 100,000 people present at one time and in one building, so you may suppose we could not see a very great deal, although at places there was plenty of room and indeed you could walk about much more easily than you could in the streets of London.

Your Grandma and all the family are quite well and desire their kindest love to you and look forward to the day when they shall see their Brother Isaac. Your Ma joins with me in kindest love to you, recommending you to that God to watch over you and protect you to whom, if you ask with sincerity, is able to keep you from all harm in this world and in the world to come to give you everlasting happiness.

Believe me my dear Boy, Your affectionate Father  
Isaac Dyason

*\*nil desperandum; Latin for never despair*

**1851 December 10**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

It is with much pleasure I again address you after so long silence. I had intended to write to you in June but thought it better to wait till you had written to us but I am sorry I did not write then as your letter did not arrive till the third of November and a long time must have elapsed between Fanny's letter and Pa's letter. I now purpose if all is well for one of us to write to you every six weeks as long as you are absent from us and to send the Times paper once a month. We do not send the Illustrated News as we do not think you would have them so they will be reserved for you and if it is not too great a tax on your time I should like you to write every six weeks to us.

I grieve to say beloved child that there is one less to rejoice at the arrival of your letters, one who always took an interest in all your affairs, but he is gone from this family circle never more to return\*. Your father has mentioned this sad bereavement in his letter to you. I pray that we all of us meet again in that happy place where there will be no separation.

I am truly sorry to hear of your life, it seems to me to be the case with the generality of persons who are seeking their fortune abroad, particularly in their first speculations, but I trust you will be more fortunate should you visit the gold regions. We have read much about them and there is no doubt many will be greatly enriched by them, and who can say but that this may be your lot, as it says in the scriptures "the lot is cast into the lap but the whole disposing of it is from the Lord" so we must be diligent and leave the events to a higher Power.

I am glad to say the last Season was better as the Baths on the cliff are closed, consequently we had several who had been in the habit of bathing there which was a very important circumstance for us as the watering places all over England are very deficient in their usual number of visitors owing to the Great Exhibition. Your Father and I went to see it on the Thursday previous to its closing on Saturday and truly it was a wonderful sight, one day was very insufficient to pass there. I could have spent weeks if not months there, but once going was better than not going at all.

You will see by the papers that the French nation are again in a sad state, there has already been some lives sacrificed. I trust it will not lead to a Civil War but that something will be done to restore tranquillity to that unfortunate country. The Caffer War\*\* too is not likely to terminate. I am very glad you left the Cape as they would have made a soldier of you and perhaps you would have lost your life.

You mention the price of bread in Australia, we pay 1 shilling a gallon for bread and 14 pence for flour and seven pence a pound for meat but more for the best joints but the great drought the country is subject to is a great disadvantage and a serious evil. If England should experience the want of rain the springs are so abundant that the evil would be limited in some measure.

The cold North Wind has been prevailing some time which has carried off several elderly people but it is now changed to Westerly breezes and the weather is much milder. Uncle White is very well and likewise his sister Aunt Brook, this is the only great great Uncle and Aunt you have.\*\*\*Uncle White is ninety three and Aunt Brook eighty nine, neither has the appearance of very old ages, being fair and good-humoured. Your Grandma is gone today to see Uncle White, I have not seen him for two years but intend to pay him a visit the first opportunity.

I suppose you have received Libby's letter with the (illegible) and Fanny's which they sent in April and May and also my two letters which I sent previously. They are much afraid you will think of them as pretty girls and so will be disappointed when you see them. I tell them it is fortunate they are not so as they might be vain which would soon put their beauty in the shade and after all, it is of very little consequence, it is much better to possess a good and virtuous mind than personal beauty without these accomplishments.

Freddy still continues attached to music, though not far advanced. He is nearly twelve years old. They have all a good deal of the Kentish dialect which perhaps you do not recollect. I do not think you spoke at all broad, neither does Fanny or Libby.

The children are all quite well and I am happy to say Pa is much better though he has been suffering with a severe attack of rheumatism in his back but is better now. Aunt Fanny is quite well and desires to be kindly remembered to you.

We received a letter from Uncle John not long since. He says he means to use all his energy to make another fortune. I think he fully intends success and I sincerely hope he will not be disappointed. When you write do not forget to remember us most kindly to him, your aunt and cousins, I hope all in the enjoyment of health

Uncle Roger and family live on East Cliff near the plains of Waterloo and are all quite well I believe, but I have not seen them lately. Aunt Grove has been staying here some time but is gone to Southampton as your Uncle George has a situation on board one of the East India Mail ships and they sail from that place. We have in the Harbour a Greek ship and three or four fine barks (*barques*). A Prussian brig was laden with coals and as they were passing as the coals ignited and blew up part of the deck and killed two men and another of her crew died a few days after. She is now lying opposite.

Dearest Child, I must now conclude. I do not think you will say I improve in writing but I have (*not*) written since my last to you which I think will plead for me. Your Grandma sends her very kind love to you. Uncle Fred and Charles talk about shipping a cargo of Boots for the gold diggings and coming out to you, do not think anything of their not writing, they do not like it but they will someday. They all send their kind love and kind wishes. Do not forget every six weeks a letter going and coming.

*(Written sideways)*

Your Father and brothers and sisters join me in the kindest to you my beloved Boy and that the Almighty may protect and bless you is the sincere prayer of your ever affectionate mother

EI Dyason

*\*Grandpa Pearce, Isaac's mother's father. Grandmamma lives on for a long time.*

*\*\*in South Africa*

*\*\*\* Grandmamma's brother and sister so great... not great great*

1852

1852 March 30

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

"*The Bengal Trader*" will sail from Portsmouth the 31<sup>st</sup>, I send these few lines by the same. I need not say how greatly desirous I am to have a letter from you when I hope to hear of your health and safety this day 30<sup>th</sup> is your birthday which I hope has been spent happily by you and if not happily yet I have no doubt usefully, and I hope it will be the harbinger of many happy days yet to come, of this I am well assured that your life cannot pass otherwise if you have courage still to choose the path of virtue. Your infancy and childhood were marked by the love of truth and I trust this noble principle will ever dwell in your bosom.

I am thankful to say no action of yours has yet caused me an unhappy feeling and I am looking forward to the time when by the permission of our heavenly Father we shall see you again. I hope Dear Isaac you will not be careless of your health, as that is preferable to Gold which we hear some have found by a great amount while others have had the toil without the reward. The climate and soil of Australia are good and I think it will tempt many to leave Old England with all its advantages.

The first Steam Ship will leave England the first of June when if all is well we shall write to you and hope that you will write regularly by them that we may have the comfort of knowing how you are doing. Elizabeth wrote a letter to you in February, and sent her likeness which perhaps you will have before this reaches you. Fanny will write next and post by the Steam Ship.

We have had a pleasant Winter and have had no rain for these two months past and no snow the whole Winter.

The East wind has prevailed but the glass which you may remember is low now and we expect rain, everything is covered with cloud. As our Summer advanced, yours receded. When we retire to rest you rise but we are not quite the Antipodes. In your last letter dated June you mentioned your intention to visit the gold diggings if you have not been fortunate do not forget the motto all cannot be successful in any one particular employment you know.

I suppose the situation is as great as ever. Provisions in England are cheaper than with you as we do not pay more than 1s gallon for bread\*, 4 pence ditto for potatoes, 1s per pound butter...which is dearer in Australia.

If it will not be too great a tax upon your time I wish you would write us every particular about yourself as every thing is important to us which concerns you. We have not heard from your Uncle John lately, but I think of writing to your Aunt to thank her for her kindness to you which I think is justly due.

Your Uncle has fully performed the promise he made me that if ever I felt inclined to let you go to him he would make a man of you and we feel truly grateful to them for the kind love they always manifested towards you as well as the great pains they took with you. We were talking about your singing the song "There was an old Chap in the West Country" which I suppose you have forgotten. You knew all that song before you were two years old, neither can you remember Uncle Freddy and Charlie taking you round South Head and on the Royal Road in a little chaise wrapt up in a green plaid down quilt. They used to sit on the edge and away you all used to go without fear or care, they often laugh about it and particularly when you all went over a bank into Brick field, your dear Grandmama who calls you little Isaac to this day, sends her kindest love to you, but she has lost her companion and I fear is not so happy as she used to be. She looks serious and thoughtful. I hope her life will be spared to us but he who watches over all events knows better than we poor short sighted mortals.

We should never be willing to part with those we love that we may be fit for those heavenly enjoyments. The children are gone to bed quietly this evening knowing that I have but little time to write this as it is now nine O clock and the post closes before ten, I told them I would tell you about it, they all wish you many

happy returns of the day, your father desires his kindest love for you with best wishes for your welfare, your sisters and brothers send their kind love an many kisses, likewise your Uncles and Aunts who are all quite well.

Adieu dearest Child, May every blessing attend you and accept the love of your ever affectionate mother EI Dyason

Please write soon

*\*“For many centuries, from the early middle ages onwards, bread was commonly sold in the form of a ‘gallon loaf.’ This was not, as is often quoted, a quantity of bread made with a gallon of water. A gallon (or half-peck) loaf was made with a gallon of flour or grain, not a gallon of water, and weighed 8 pounds and 11 ounces, or 8.6875 pounds. It was considered that a gallon of bread (a little over a pound a day) was the basic ration for one adult for one week, and it was on this basis that labourer’s wages and parish poor relief were based.” Source <http://www.theoldfoodie.com/2012/08/a-gallon-of-bread.html> accessed August 2013*

**1852 May 12**

**Ramsgate from Sister Frances Dyason, (aged 18)**

My dear brother,

I received your very interesting letter of October and hope that you have had Elizabeth's by this time. And are you really off to the Diggings? Then dearest Isaac may you realise your most ardent wishes for it is a toilsome and expensive speculation, but as you say it is a lottery and all do not gain a prize. So you, dear brother, must not be discouraged if you are not successful, you can easily console yourself should this be the case as gold is regarded as a mere metal it is not so valuable as iron, again should you be able to collect a good sum through your labour and toil it would really be of more value to you than iron as being the reward of your industry, so either way you can be perfectly content. Pa says he should like to come out to you and work with you in the Diggings a year or two and then return with you to England. Do you not think it would be a good plan, he will write to you by the government steamer which leaves England in June. I send this by the first steam ship for Australia.

I sincerely thank you dear brother for the troubles you have taken in answering all my questions which no doubt were troublesome to you but are perfectly satisfactory to me and I am very much delighted to think that we still have your affection, neither do I feel now at all uncomfortable when I hear Julia spoken of, not that I can or ought to dislike her but it is something to know your love is not divided. We on our part will endeavour to be all that you wish and recommend in your excellent letters. You mention the great quantity of rain that has fallen in Australia, on the contrary we have had no rain for many weeks but lately we have had some light showers, not sufficient to moisten the earth. Vegetation is rather backward for May, cherry apple and pear trees are now in full bloom. The trees in Mrs Wood's garden look very beautiful. We often look at them in going to and from church and Ma points out the windows of the room where you used to sleep when a baby boy. We are expecting Summer. The steam boats have begun to come to and from London. We shall have a rather late season. Last year was not a good one owing to the Exhibition but we had a tolerable business. We hear that the Baths on West Cliff are to be re-fitted, not that they will pay, but it would be better for us if they were not here.

Aunt Fanny and Pa are again preparing for the summer business. Uncle Fred and Charles are conducting the business in a partnership. Uncle Paulin has 36 machines and has a very good business. Grandma has planted another primrose in the place of the one you left there, yours used to be so full of bloom every year. She thinks it lost its strength. She misses our dear Grandpa very very much, he always supped with us every Sunday evening and he was our only guest as the children are so young we could not very well entertain strangers but he was always pleased with us and never on any occasion looked dissatisfied or ill-humoured. I hope you will have a finer Winter than the last. You heard of the loss of the ship Birkenhead which took the troops to the Cape and also of the arrival of the steam ship *Megaera* that had been so long on its passage. I hope they will restore tranquillity to the Colony, they have suffered greatly from the natives. I am glad you have nothing to fear from those of Australia. The pickarel (*\*another name for Pike fish*) are just now coming in, we had but few sprats and herrings last autumn which was a great disappointment to the fishermen of the place. A vessel arrived in England a few days ago with two tons of gold from Australia which makes people afraid lest it should become of less value. We read in the paper of a young man who caught the gold fever and had gone to the diggings, we immediately concluded it was the West Indian fever but afterwards learned that it was a term applied to those who went to seek for gold. The reptiles and insects you mention must be very disagreeable, we think it a great deal too much with the black beetles which infest our harvest and which are perfectly harmless.

And now dear Isaac I must conclude wishing you every success with a continuation of health and good spirits. Looking forward to the time when we shall see you. Pa and Ma send their kindest love and pray for your safety and happiness. Your brothers and sisters and friends send you their love, with grandma and Aunt Fanny.

Hoping to hear shortly from you.

Yrs affectionately

Sister F. Dyason

(1852 July estimated)

Ramsgate

From Isaac's father and mother

My dear Boy

I was very much pleased at the receipt of your letter as it is a very encouraging one and I trust you will go on and prosper for your own sake for I do think after the toils that you have had you deserve to succeed, for there are very few if any who are so young as you are would have been so enterprising. May God prosper you my boy for your industry and perseverance and that you will soon make sufficient to return to your home where you will be heartily welcomed by all under any circumstances indeed. I am almost jealous even now you are always in our conversation. I shall write to your Uncle informing him of your success and I think when he reads it it will almost induce him to come out to you, but I shall hear what he says in answer to my letter although you say your luck is only that of thousands, you have already succeeded more than any of us. We have been working for many years and have not done for ourselves what you have done in a few weeks. In England we can only just get a living, but we must be thankful for that. I think your Uncle Fred will go to Melbourne, if he does he will leave about the end of August or beginning of September. I should think he would do very well.

There will now be regular steam communication between Australia and England and I trust my boy will write as often as he can. I wrote a long letter by the first steam ship to Australia that carried the Government Mail and this is the second, *The Sidney* (sic), we intend to write regularly by every mail. The last letter was directed "Adelaide Post Office". I shall write a long letter by next mail therefore you must excuse this, may the Almighty bless and prosper you is the sincere wish of your affectionate Father,  
I Dyason.

*(missing a middle page from Isaac's mother)*

...evening during the summer months as we let all the middle part of the house and we occupy the rooms above them, of course they expect to be quiet and do not like that virtue. I do not know how you would like their romping, teasing and crying but I expect you and the two girls\* would often take your departure for a few hours. Julia is ten, Elizabeth is 8. Charles 6, Augusta 4, so there are plenty to welcome you home.

We are now in the height of our Summer business and hope to have a good Autumn. You will excuse the tedium of this letter but it is from home and that will plead for indulgence. I am thankful to say we are all well excepting Pa has the Rheumatism in his head. Uncle White is quite well, Grandma, Aunt Fanny with the rest of your Uncles and Aunts send their kindest love.

I should think by this time you have received some of our letters as there are several on the road. I shall write again soon and hope soon to hear from you, do not forget to write as often as you have leisure which I know you will do as soon as you have promised it. I must soon conclude, take care of yourself dear Child. You have adopted one excellent motto, take one more for my sake, that which I have already written "Keep *innocency and do the thing that is right*" and may that peace be yours which arises from a consciousness of your Heavenly Father's approbation who is equally observant of you as of us though situated at the furthest extremity of the Globe.

Accept the love of your most affectionate mother EI Dyason

*\*Frances and Elizabeth*

**1852 August 1**

**From Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

We received your very affectionate and interesting letter of January on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July which gave us great pleasure, you have succeeded much beyond our calculations. I hope your endeavours will still be attended with success and all your hopes will be fully realized but whether successful or not you are beloved by us all. Your father is much pleased with your letter and has read it to several gentlemen and trades people who are desirous of learning every particular relative to Australia, and you have conveyed much information in a small compass. I should like to know from time to time everything that comes under your observation, as you may have leisure. We have seen your mode of life represented in the Illustrated papers and have singled you out from among the rest. It reminds us of the ancient Britons, they slept in the open air, and on the bare ground. Many who go to the Diggings do not calculate upon what they would have to endure or they would never stir a step from home. I should think you must be very tired when night comes after labouring so many hours.

I trust dearest Child you will take care of that most invaluable blessing health which I hope you will still continue to enjoy. I am truly glad to hear that labour and the slender fare do no distress you, it is a great privilege to be strong and active and able to endure hardships when necessity requires it with cheerfulness, but at the same time I hope my dear Boy you will not over exert yourself nor try your constitution too much.

I read that ophthalmia\* is a disease to which the inhabitants of the country are subject in Summer time. I suppose you take every precaution to shade your eyes as much as possible from it and also from the strong light and heat. Your letter has quite decided Uncle Frederick to come out to Australia, but as some of the family are averse to his leaving I am not certain whether he will go or not, should he come he will leave England this Autumn by one of the Screw Steamers, however we shall write this month August to let you know their decision. He is a very good salesman and will be very much missed at home in the business as in the morning he is on the sands with Uncle Paulin and the rest part of the day in the shop in Harbour Street, you may be sure we shall all miss him very much, particularly your Grandma.

I look at your Baby picture which hangs in Lizzy's bedroom and think you are at the farthest extremity of the globe, toiling and working perhaps much beyond your years but beloved Child preserve still your integrity and all will be well, "Keep innocency and do the thing that is right for that shall bring a man peace at the last." I should very much like to know whether Australia, under every circumstance is a more desirable country than England, for tradesmen in general with families, whether the evils and disadvantages there, are worse to endure than the anxieties and distresses he meets with at home in our overtaxed country and the great competition he has to contend with. I hardly know whether it would be advisable for Uncle Frederick to leave home but he says he wants one of his own, which he cannot have independent of the rest of the family. He thinks by going to Australia he might in time be able to accomplish this if he were to take a good stock of boots and shoes, you see dear Isaac, people grow tired with contending with circumstances or I should say the toils of business, finding that they do not make any progress but rather the reverse. Everyone says that Australia is the desirable country in which to find a home, food, and clothing with far less toil and trouble.

You are capable of judging in a measure whether it is so or not. You do not remember laying your head in a soft silk handkerchief before going to sleep and saying to Grandma one day when out walking "that man is not so pretty as I am Grandma because he has not such rosy cheeks as I have." \*\* She was talking of you last evening about your singing "The fine old English Gentleman" and saying now look all of you, not that you were at all a vain or forward child but quite the reverse. Little Catherine who is just two years old reminds me much of you. She is about your complexion and has stout fine legs, as you had.

Freddy has not courage to write to you, he says he does not write well enough yet, he is twelve years and a half old and is going thought the rules of syntax and is translating the French fables and is as far as *tare* and *tret* but there he stops. He says in Winter he shall proceed, he is not very strong and I do not persist in his

doing much at present. Fanny and Elizabeth with the rest of the children send their love with a kiss from each of them. The two girls nurse the children and do the household work, either one or the other take the children out morning and...

*(Missing pages)*

*\*severe inflammation of the eyes*

*\*\*Grandma asks if he remembers this in a letter from 1857 too*

**(1852 estimated) September 25**  
**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

It is with much pleasure I write these few lines to you as they will I hope be presented to you by my dear brother Frederick who will be greatly delighted to see you my dear child. I had written a letter to send by the steamer that left the seventh of this month but was informed that she did not take letters to Melbourne, which I learned afterwards was a mistake. There are several more persons leaving Ramsgate for Australia. A desire for change of scene seems prevalent all through the country. Our season has been very short and we have had, in different parts of England, very severe thunder storms but at Ramsgate none and some have been billed as a *coup de soleil\**, rather an unusual circumstance with us but the weather on the whole has been pleasant. I do not think the tradespeople have done well this summer which makes them rather dissatisfied.

I hope you are not molested by thieves who I understand are always hovering about the diggings ready to take away what others have worked for. How much I should like to take a peep at you while at work. I feel impatient for another letter from you and I think there is one near at hand. This month we took your Grandpapa, a circumstance which I much regret but he has endured the last conflict and cannot wish to come back again. Your Grandma will feel much at parting with your Uncle Frederick, but if he realises a comfortable sum in a few years it will be better than toiling on to an old age. The business will not be as good when he is gone as he is an excellent salesman. We shall all miss him very much. Pa does not think he will meet with you for some time as perhaps you are some hundreds of miles distant from Melbourne.

Your kind school mistress is gone at last, she became rather desponding as her long recovering of money due to her Father while acting as chief gunner in his Majesty's Service. She was a very excellent woman and much attached to you. Uncle White was much pleased with your letter which Uncle Charles read to him. He is now getting old and infirm, but my dear mother looks young and is of a cheerful disposition. I hope that she may be spared to us for a long time.

We are all quite well and hope that you still continue to enjoy your health. Pa will write by the *Melbourne* and inform you of the particulars respecting your Uncle Frederick who is cheerful, good-tempered and warm hearted. I hope you will not be disappointed at the contents of your little parcel as it is the children's work. I thought it would please you. Should Uncle Frederick send for more goods from England we can send anything to you packed with their goods if you will let us know what you most want.

I have sent you my likeness which was taken for a shilling being much cheaper than formerly. I must now conclude, wishing you and Uncle Frederick every success, and hope that you will take particular care of your health.

I remain dearest Isaac, your ever affectionate Mother  
EID

*\*To get sunburnt*

**1852 September 30**  
**Ramsgate from Isaac's Father**

My dear Boy

I again take this opportunity of writing to you by the Royal Mail Steamship *Melbourne* which leaves Plymouth early in December as your Uncle Frederick is a passenger by it and goes out with the inclination of remaining a few years either at Melbourne or Port Phillip whichever place they consider best for business. I say 'They' because he has entered into Partnership with a person of the name of Christmas who comes from Herne Bay near Canterbury. They have taken with them a very large stock of boots and shoes and ready-made clothes to the amount of nearly £1000, and if they succeed in their speculation they will carry on business there by having continual supplies from England. If it does not answer it is your uncle's intention to find you and seek his fortune on the goldfields. I know he would like to find you directly he got out that he might have your advice and experience how to proceed, for although young your knowledge of colonial business must be of very great advantage to him or any one else, your having been abroad so many years, you must have gained knowledge that is worth possessing but you must first think of yourself and if you are at any distance from him when you receive this of course you would not, to your own injury, give up your employment or any other occupation that you may have entered into that was advantageous to yourself to give him information but of course you would write to him by letter and advise with him in it.

If you are not doing any great things I know he will be very glad of you but I hear from the letter we received from you in June last dated January 1852 in which you stated that you cleared 78 ounces of gold in 10 weeks and of your intention to go again to the gold fields for a 12 months diggings and by this time if you have been fortunate equal to your own expectations you must have realised a little fortune but however you will be the best judge in the matter whether you are with your uncle or not as I have every confidence in your judgement for I have heard of your abilities from several quarters which is a great satisfaction and a consolation both to your Ma and myself to know that our boy is everything that we can wish. If you join your uncle you will find in him a liberal and straightforward man, clever in his business but wants a little more direction and to be more determined for his own interest, he is fond of pleasure and company but we feel fully satisfied and persuaded that our boy will not under any circumstances be induced to steer from that course of life which he has hitherto preserved with so much credit to himself and satisfaction to ourselves.

You have not told us in any of your letters what you have been doing since you have been to Australia, previous to your going to the Goldfields, we have been very anxious to know and it would have been a satisfaction to us to have heard of your proceedings since you left the Cape. You have given us a fine description of the country which has been very gratifying and your description of the goldfields is exactly as we have seen it represented in the Illustrated London Newspaper. If you would like it we would make up a parcel of them and send them to you every time the mail goes to Australia, which at present is every two months.

You have not told us what you intend to do with your gold dust. I think if you get it in any quantities your better plan would be to consign it to England to some firm that could be depended on, for you would get a great deal more for it in England at present than in Australia, but no doubt you will be the best judge of that.

Now then for myself, I wrote you a very long letter dated May 31<sup>st</sup> and sent it by the first Government Steam Mail that sailed for Australia, her name was called The Australia and directed to you to be left at the Melbourne Post Office till called for, which I hope you have had. It contained several questions respecting the Family and as I shall only now give you the heads of them. I know you will answer them to the best of your judgement, for in that I put every confidence. When the news first came to England of the existence of Gold Fields in Australia it made everybody almost mad to get out there, indeed at the present time there are thousands leaving monthly. Now I wish to ask you if you think it would be worth my while to bring the Family out to Australia or to come out myself to seek a fortune for them, for in England there is no chance of a man being enabled to do anything for his family without capital, he may get a living and that is as much as he can expect for in England, there is so much competition in consequence of our population that if a man lives and pays his way it is quite as much as he can do. As for doing anything for his Family that is

impossible, his children have no expectations beyond labouring hard to get a living. Now, I thought if we came out the two eldest girls could open a school for which they are quite competent. They might get a very good living. They could teach the English grammar, Geography, French and other little accomplishments and Fred might be put to something that would enable him to become a respectable young man, for in England there is nothing for him to look forward to but a Mechanic and as for the other children as they grew up they might be placed in comfortable situations. I ask you for your advice in this respect because I am quite certain that it might be depended on, but you must be quite aware that I could not bring the Family out to Australia without a great deal of expense, at least £200 and if you do not think there would be every prospect of getting a competency in the end, there would be no use of my coming, for I am enabled to get a living for them in England, but nothing more. If we were to come out I think it would be an inducement for your Grandma and all your Uncles and Aunts to come out for they would not like to be left behind for you have given them such a beautiful description of the Colony that your Grandma says that she should like to live at such a place. Your uncles Tom and Charlie say they should not mind coming out, therefore if you stay in Australia you will be the inducement for all to Emigrate, but if my boy in his candid opinion does not think it worth our while to come out I am sure he will say so.\*

I think because you are far away from old England that we forget you. I can only say we are always talking and thinking of you and shall be glad when my boy thinks the time has arrived for him to set out for old England. Your Ma has sent you a letter by your Uncle Fred and has sent you two or three little things just to remember us. We should have made up a parcel but was not certain if your Uncle would see you at first, if there is any thing that you want from England you should have only to write and we will endeavour to get it for you and send it out the next time your Uncle Charlie sends out his goods to your Uncle Fred. While I am writing this I have been anxiously looking out for the Melbourne as she passes Ramsgate this afternoon for Plymouth and must therefore close my letter as it is to go to Plymouth to be shipped on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

Trusting my dear Boy that this will find you with best of health and spirits and that the Almighty will bless and prosper your undertakings through life is the sincere wish of you affectionate father, Isaac Dyason.

P.S. Your Aunt Fanny and Uncle Roger desire their kind love to you and hope you will continue well for they say you will be sure to make a fortune. I forgot to mention in your letter that I wrote to your Uncle John but have received no answer. Goodbye, God bless.

(on bottom of letter from mother – written)

My dear Isaac

I think your Father has written rather too confidently on the subject of our Emigration not considering the uncertain element which if we must necessarily attempt ourselves on for so long a space of time we shall more patiently endure the ills we have, whether real or imaginary. I hope to hear from you shortly, excuse haste. I remain dearest boy your truly affectionate Mamma.

*\*Quoting from Hugh Anderson on the issue of migration (mostly young males) from England to Australia:*

Nearly half a million people sailed from the British Isles to Australia in the ten years following 1851. This was almost one out of every fifty persons in the population. The magnetism of gold drew them to Melbourne, where the bay was soon crowded with all kinds of ships. The anchorage was a forest of masts. In one month during 1853, twenty ships arrived from London, twenty three from other British parts, seventeen from the United States, seven from India, two from Cape of Good Hope and many smaller vessels from other Australian parts.

Source. Anderson, H., 1975. *Gold mining*. Melbourne: Lothian Publishing Co.

**1852 December 10**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My Dear Isaac

I am very desirous to have a letter from you as I am anxious to know of your welfare though I do as you wish, and suppose that you are well till I hear in the contrary. I thought your Uncle Frederick would have spent the Christmas with you but he will not leave England much before that time. We sent you a letter by the *Melbourne* mail in which Uncle Fred was passenger and half his are likewise on board as they did not unload, he could not get at them. She may arrive safely at her destination, but it is a very doubtful case, she was an old Man of War and purchased from Government by the present company who have fitted out the vessel this letter comes by. In coming from London the *Melbourne* nearly grounded on the Goodwin Sands, encountered a gale off Beachy Head, took her top gallant mast, the water rushed in at her port holes which were partly left open for ventilation. She put back again to the Downs for some days, the Engineer lost his hand. She was repaired at Plymouth, and in sailing out of port ran into an old guard ship, took her anchor and lat head, and in getting free from her backed into an other, at last she got fairly into the Bay of Biscay, was going on very well, had steamed four or five hundred miles across the Atlantic when she encountered a stiff breeze, gave a roll, over went her top mast, rigging and sails and the captain said they must put back to Lisbon, when the engine suddenly stopped and it was found that her masts and rigging had got twisted round the screw. The vessel sprung a leak, and it was thought all was lost. There were two small Brigs at a distance, the captain hoisted the signal of distress, they soon came to them and remained by them eight and forty hours during which time the passengers with the sailors, after much labour and fatigue, cleared the screw and they arrived at the Tagus, every berth was dripping wet, the passengers were all ill, the smell on board dreadful as her port holes were all closed in and in consequence no ventilation. The surgeon on board said as soon as they arrived at the Tropics a fever would certainly break out and in consequence of his statement he was dismissed.

Uncle Frederick was very ill and it was thought necessary that he should return home. The vessel was pronounced by competent judges in England to be not sea worthy. All the first class passengers left her and their births were appropriated by the second class. The captain was dismissed, the vessel was repaired and has again proceeded on her voyage, and I trust will arrive safe at her destination, but Uncle Frederick returned home as we did not like the vessel and the company have agreed to find them a passage on board the *Adelaide* and to pay all the expenses from Lisbon. The morning he left her there was a mutiny on board, one of the men was stabbed and has since died of his wounds. You will see dear Isaac there was a constant succession of disasters. Uncle Fred was sick the whole of the time but was not laid by. I hope you will see him on his arrival at Melbourne as he will need your advice and he depends much on your knowledge and experience of the country. The reason of their being so miserable on board the *Melbourne* was she took more passengers than she could accommodate, and there being no ventilation. But this has since been altered and she has fewer passengers, and an other commander. But she is called a great rotting tub by all the sailors.

I have sent a small parcel by my brother, a silk kerchief, white pocket, a box of lucifers, and a purse, and guard which were made by your sisters. I wish it were more worthy of your acceptance, but I trust my dear boy the time is not far distant when we shall see you in this your native land, and in your own home. I purpose writing by this mail, to your Aunt at the Cape by whom we can never be too grateful for her kindness to you. We are all quite well and hope you still are blessed with health and strength. Do not forget your promise to write at every opportunity as we all anxiously expect to hear from you. Your Aunt Polly Grove is staying here with your Aunt Fanny as Uncle George is just gone to India for three years, they with uncle Roger and family are all quite well and desire their kind love to you as well as Grandma and all your friends and relatives. Your sisters will write by the next mail. The children are all quite well, they send many hearty kisses and their love, and here though it will not reach you in time I wish you a pleasant Christmas and a happy new year, believe me dearest Child I remain your ever  
Most affectionate mother EID

NB Be sure and not over extend yourself dear Isaac.

## ARRIVAL OF THE MELBOURNE, SCREW STEAM SHIP,

This, the third of the Australian Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company's steam-ships, arrived on Wednesday night in Port Jackson, after a voyage marked, in the early part, by very unpropitious circumstances. She was originally advertised to sail from Blackwall on the 28th of September, and from Plymouth on the 3rd of October; but she did not leave the Thames until the 1st of October, and on the following day, off Beachy Head, experienced a heavy gale, which she rode out till the 5th, when she steamed up to the Royal Dockyard at Devonport, where the necessary repairs were performed. On the 9th the Melbourne left the dockyard, in charge of a pilot, but by some mismanagement the pilot, in taking her out of the Hamoaze, ran her foul of H.M.S. Jupiter, and in so doing carried away her jib-boom, head gear, port cat-head and rails, anchor, and cable. This casualty caused two more days' delay, but on the 15th the Melbourne again proceeded on her voyage. At midnight, when in lat. 38° N., long. 18° 50' W., a casualty thus graphically described

"Crash, in an instant, went fore, main, and mizen top-masts. There was at this time a fresh breeze of fair wind. The ship rolled considerably all night. Soon after, the wreck of rope and sail got foul of the screw propeller, stopped its revolutions, and rendered the Melbourne as helpless as a log of wood; in which state she continued until 9 p.m. on the 20th, when the screw was got clear. Many of the passengers worked in clearing the wreck from the screw. On Thursday morning, the 21st, Captain Cox told the passengers he was steering for Lisbon, stating as the reason the discovery of a leak, which had done some damage in the mail room."

On the 22nd the Melbourne arrived in the Tagus, where she was surveyed by the officers of H. M. steamer Inflexible, and by some Portuguese shipwrights, and pronounced seaworthy. She was also put into dry dock, and the same opinion was given. But very opposite opinions were expressed by the passengers, and these were published, with condemnatory remarks, in the *London Times* of November 6. We feel it our duty to submit, from our London contemporary, the following extract:—

"The ports had to be caulked at Plymouth, and the water was indeed shut out, but the air also. The air, in fact, was excluded with the greatest care; a skylight, which had been promised was not constructed, and lamps were kept burning all day long in the steerage, thus consuming what little fresh air was left amid the exhalations of 50 human beings, many of whom were suffering from sea-sickness. The sleeping cabins were soaked with sea water, and the air in them was so bad that many of the passengers were compelled to sleep on deck. This was the case at the commencement of a voyage of many weeks, and in a northern latitude

What the consequences would have been had the Melbourne been able to proceed to a tropical climate may be gathered from a correspondence between a committee of the passengers and Mr. Foucart, the surgeon of the ship. In reply to certain questions which the committee addressed to him, Mr. Foucart states:—

"1. That, in his opinion, it was perfectly impossible to maintain proper ventilation, dryness, and general cleanliness, between decks and below.

"2. As an experienced hospital physician, it was Dr. Foucart's opinion that great and general sickness must break out within a very few days from the date of his (Dr. Foucart's) letter, upon the ship proceeding to a warm latitude and,

"3. That the probable contingencies of general sickness under such circumstances would be general malignant fever, with dreadful mortality."

"This opinion, delivered by a physician of Dr. Foucart's professional experience and eminence, caused the series of mishaps which compelled this ill-appointed vessel to put into the Tagus to appear all but providential. In this light it would appear that the passengers consider their dangers and their escape. What those dangers were, and how they came about, is most graphically described by a letter which Mr. Davenport, one of the passengers, addressed to a friend in England, and from which we extract the following:—

"This unfit ship, the Melbourne, was no sooner at sea again after her repairs at Plymouth, than the cabins turned out still leaky; water through the gun-ports saturated the berths, and, through the bath-room floor and water-closets, floods the under deck as a daily and nightly occurrence; so that the damp and damage to health and baggage, the absolutely untenable state of some of the berths, compelled the occupants to vacate them.

... .. A fine, but moderate breeze, aided by the screw, carried us well from Plymouth to about midway between Cape Finis-terre and Cape St. Vincent, where a little heavier weather broke over us, but still fair and by no means heavy in comparison with what you and I have seen. Still, be the causes what they may—bad sticks, too much sail, loose rattlings, bad steering, or what you like—at one roll of the ship, about midnight of Monday, the 18th, all her masts went overboard, including boom and jib-boom, sail and all, and these being drawn on by the revolution of the screw soon choked it, and there lay our ship two days and nights at the mercy of winds and waves, unable to sail, screw, or steer.

The exertions of the crew and passengers had, by the end of the second day, cleared the screw, and this again was set in motion, when another damage showed an extensive leak—the mail bags 18 inches deep in water—the whole force of the engine able only to keep down the accumulation of water. In this plight we headed into Lisbon, and here we ~~the~~ must go into dock—can't

... must go into dock—can't get in for a fortnight, the next spring tide—must partially unload the ship, if not totally

The poor passengers, at sea as to what to do, look to the directors for payment of expenses, for return of passage money, or a passage in another ship; not a soul will go, or ought to go, in her in her present state, short of the most complete fitting up, and this, it is said, will take not weeks, but months.

After the survey of the Melbourne at Lisbon a despatch was forwarded to London, and commissioners immediately arrived. A meeting of the passengers was convened, and the result was that Captain Cox was superseded in the command, and the chief officer, Mr. J. S. Hutton (formerly master of the Martin Luther, a vessel well known in these seas), was appointed to succeed Captain Cox.

The Melbourne left the Tagus on the 21st of November, and her dates of sailing to these shores (with her detentions) are as follow:—

Left the Tagus	...	...	21st November,	3 p.m.
Arrived at St. Vincent	...	..	29th	8 a.m.
Left St. Vincent	...	...	1st December,	10 p.m.
Arrived at the Cape	...	...	27th December,	8 p.m.
Left the Cape	...	...	1st January,	5 p.m.
Arrived at King George's Sound	...	...	23rd January.	8 p.m.
Left King George's Sound	...	...	25th January,	6 p.m.
Arrived at Port Adelaide	...	...	31st	6 p.m.
Left Port Adelaide	...	...	1st February,	8 p.m.

Arrived in Port Phillip...	...	4th	"	8 p.m.
Left Hobson's Bay	...	6th	"	6 a.m.
Entered the Heads of Port Jackson,	...	8th	"	11 p.m.

Such is the memorandum of the voyage of the Melbourne. Unpropitious in the commencement, it will be seen, when a column and a half of the London Times are freely given to register the loud complaints of the passengers. The voyage from Lisbon can scarcely be deemed a bad one; viz., 79 days. The detentions at the various coaling depots were 12 days 9 hours; by which her running time is made 65 days 15 hours.

The chief dimensions and capabilities of the Melbourne are as follow:—

		Feet.	inches.
Length over all	...	240	0
Beam	...	37	4½
Mean draft of water	...	15	6
Area of immersed section	...	450	tons
Displacement	...	1,980	"
Tonnage	...	1,820	"
Horse Power	...	338	"
Diameter of Screw	...	13	6
Pitch of ditto	...	13	0

Length of ditto	...	...	...	2	2
Multiplying Gear, 2 to 1					
Diameter of Cylinders	...	...	...	4	2
Length of Stroke	...	...	...	3	0

The Melbourne is fitted with a pair of horizontal direct action engines, with four tubular boilers, of a peculiar power, adapted to the purposes of a man-of-war. They are very low under the water; and this, with her telescope funnel, and her machinery, which lifts her screw out of the water *a plaisir*, her guns, and her 30 tanks, whereby the effects of an enemy's shots would be considerably nullified, are ample proof that in subsidizing these mail steam-ships, England has other objects in view than effecting speedy communications between herself and her children in Australasia.

With reference to the unpropitious commencement of the Melbourne's voyage, it is but fair to state that after Captain Hutton was appointed to the command, the average daily distance performed by the Melbourne after leaving Lisbon was from 235 to 289 miles.

The Melbourne and Cleopatra entered the Gulf of St. Vincent together; and the latter was beaten, in the run to Port Adelaide, by five miles.

The fears expressed by us in our yesterday's issue as to the damage done to the Sydney mails during the early part of the Melbourne's voyage, were unfounded as regarded our own mails; but we are sorry to learn that the report, as to the alleged drainage, was true as regarded some of the mail bags for Victoria. Our mails were delivered safely, and consisted of 4,491 letters and 17,680 newspapers.

**1852 December 10**

**Ramsgate from father Isaac Dyason**

My Dear Boy

I again take this opportunity of writing to you by the Royal Mail Steam *Adelaide* which leaves Plymouth at the high tide and I trust she will make a much better passage than the *Melbourne* which left Plymouth on the 10<sup>th</sup> October and ought to have been in Australia by this time, but I have no doubt your Ma has written full particulars respecting her and therefore shall not repeat them to you again, I shall only add that I write to you by her, and shall continue so to do by every mail while you remain in Australia. We are very anxiously looking forward for a letter from you in answer to one I sent you by the *Austalian*, as she is expected every day she being due on the 30 November, and shall feel very much disappointed if we do not receive one, for although you said you were off to the diggings for 12 months you said you should take every opportunity of writing and as there will be a mail every two months I hope you will not forget to fulfil your promise, since we received your last letter we have had many anxious hours respecting your letter, which informed us of your determination to go to the diggings for such a length of time, we have often conceived how you must have suffered and what hardships you must have undergone since you have been there but I hope your perseverance and industry will meet with the reward that you are so justly entitled to.

It appears that there is a very large quantity of Gold found in that country, indeed it is the wonder of every one here what it will all end in, some fancy one thing some another, our statesmen and ministers know not what to think of it, our country is improving in all branches of commerce the labour market is greatly improving in consequence of so much emigration to Australia and it is all attributed to the Gold found there. We have such large importations of it in respect from Australia that it "amounts to" tons, we do not know what to make of it as gold used to be shipped formerly by merchants a few pounds at a time. I think it will eventually, if it continues to go on at the same rate, make Australia what England is at the present time a great country.

I will now offer a little advice my dear boy, but perhaps he will say he is the best judge and I must, if he thinks so, bow to that decision as his Uncle John says from his experience in Colonial matters he is quite capable of giving it, but however I shall offer it and he can do as he pleases about accepting of it. If you have been fortunate at the diggings and realised something considerable to invest some portion of it in the purchase of land, for I feel quite satisfied that it will become in a few years most valuable, and no doubt, will be the best security you can have for the money. I do not think it would be advisable to invest much in this country as the fundholder only gets at the present time 3 per cent and that will shortly be reduced to 2 ½ and the funds at the present time are at par and rather more people buying in at that price for they do not know what to do with their money.

Some short time back I received a letter from your Uncle John, I told him what I had written to you in a letter I sent to him and he says if things do not prosper at the Cape he shall make a venture to Australia but at present should not take his wife and family with him. I must now think of concluding this letter and I trust my dear boy will continue to prosper, and that he will still pursue that line of conduct which he has hitherto done and which has won for him the good opinion and well wishes of all who have known him or heard of him, go on my boy and prosper and may the Almighty watch over you and guide your undertakings and that you may return to your family blessed with health and a good constitution, to enjoy the fruits of your industry is the sincerest wish of your

Affectionate father

Isaac Dyason

1853

1853 February 24

Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dearest Child

We are most anxious to hear from you as your present undertaking is attended with some danger. We cannot wholly divest our minds from misapprehensions respecting you. I am quite aware that it is not owing to neglect that you have not written. I pray that all may be right and that you are in health and safety, and will soon be prevailed to return to us, after so long so very long an absence from us. I often look at your infant likeness and recall many endearing reminiscences to mind of our days in your early life. I hope dear Boy that your Uncle will meet with you, he has been most unfortunate in his voyage up to the present time but most Providentially saved from imminent peril both from fire and water. I am sorry he ever left us, but it may be all for the best, in the end.

We have had rain with little intermission for many months past which is now turned to snow and is very cold, it is expected that the seed that is in the ground will be perfectly useless with all the rain that has fallen we have generally pleasant hours in each day, which enables us to walk out if we have leisure. Captain Watts called on us and took a few dried fish for your Uncle John. He is Captain of the *Hellespont* and is bound for Port Philip. He does not take the mail but ship letters and this letter will come by him. Perhaps he may meet with you. It is uncertain whether the ship will remain for a couple of years, or not. We are in expectation of a letter from you as the *Great Britain*, *Sarah*, and the *Sydney* are expected daily, and I expect there will be a great rush to Australia in the Spring.

There are some hundreds of vessels preparing for the trip, America seems quite in the shade. The climate of the latter country is I believe more particularly trying to elderly people. Your Father is all expectation about what you may write to him, as he will be entirely guided by your opinion whether to try his fortune in the land of Gold or not, there is an increase (*of*) business doing in London at the present time and also in the different manufacturing towns, demands for all sorts of goods for Australia being very great, the goods that your Uncle has taken out it is feared will be much injured if they get damp. Those which are made of black leather will be worth very little. Most of the heavy goods are on board the *Melbourne*, some are in the *Adelaide* and the rest in a Dutch merchant ship – I do not know the name.

Your Uncle left home the latter part of September and has not yet reached the Cape as we received a letter from him about a week since dated St Vincent where they were waiting for coals. We have read that the ship caught fire and very nearly escaped being blown up owing to the potent fuel being placed too near the engine room, but he writes that his health is good and he hopes all will yet be well. He is not one who looks at the dark side of the picture. We shall write to him by the *Hellespont* the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, will arrive long before you receive this, yet dear Boy we will now all wish you many happy returns of your birthday, your one and twentieth year, an important era to many and not the less to you as you are now entering manhood and who can tell what lies before you. I am thankful your youth has not been stained with crime and I trust that you will still preserve your integrity and be enabled to “act well your part” that you may have a calm and peaceful mind all through the journey of life.

Your Grandmama is quite well, desires her kindest love to her little Isaac and hopes you are in the enjoyment of health and happiness. Pa desires his best love to you and is anxiously awaiting your letter, that he may write in answer to you. Your brothers and sister are quite well and desire their kind love and sweet kisses. Uncles and Aunts are quite well with our kind Uncle White who has been our friend. And now dear child I shall bid you adieu for a little while and will write again soon, wishing you every blessing I remain

Dearest Child

Your most affectionate

Mother EI Dyason

**(1853 estimated) February 25**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Brother

I thought I would write to wish you many happy returns of your birthday, how ancient we are getting. I think dear brother we shall all be confirmed Old Maids which is a very alarming consideration. We have heard but I suppose it is a secret that Julia\* is thinking of getting married but I do not at all know who the Gentleman is. Had she been living in Ramsgate this phenomenon would never have happened. We have sent her a few pieces of music by Captain Watts who always stayed at Uncle John's house when he goes to the Cape. He dined with us and Lizzie said she was sure he was drawing comparisons between Julia and our family for I think without exception Uncle Roger's family and ours are as plain and short of stature as any that can be found but however it cannot be helped.

Uncle Paulin says we must go to Australia where we shall have a ten Guinea dress and shawl, bonnet and parasol to match, which is always presented to the fortunate lady who is to be married. I think I see you looking very serious over these lines - I am sorry my sister Fanny is so light minded, I had hoped better things - but Shakespeare says, "The truth will appear". There are several persons with large families who think of emigrating this Spring and I suppose it is the best policy. We are looking out for the vessel homeward bound and fully expect a letter from you. I hope we shall not be disappointed. Uncle Frederick will be delighted to see you. I wish he had taken Lizzy and me with him. We should have had Spring time all the year and a discontented face would not have been tolerated.

We are all quite well and hope you are in the enjoyment of the same. Please excuse all mistakes as the Post will soon leave. Lizzie sends her kind love, and believe me dearest Edward\*\*, yours most affectionately  
Fanny Dyason

Do write soon. Forget us not. Good bye

*\*Cousin Julia Dyason in Cape Town*

*\*\*Isaac's middle name*

### **The Hellespont of Captain Watts**



*Built by: C. J. Mare & Co. of Blackwall Launched: 1849 Tonnage: 531 5/10 Length: 174 5/10 feet  
Breadth: 24 4/10 feet Depth: 14 5/10 feet Machinery: 300 i.h.p. by Maudslay. Decks: One deck and raised  
with three masts. Built of: Iron. Type: Auxiliary Screw Steam Ship. Image accessed July 2013*

<http://www.historic-shipping.co.uk/gssco/Hellespont.html>

**1853 September 2**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother E I Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Your letter diffused joy through out the family circle as it relieved us from a world of anxiety on your account. Your father was not able to forgive himself for some time. Every time he read, something would keep blocking his sight, but having persuaded him to take a cup of tea he succeeded better and read it to me. We have to congratulate you Dear Boy, one year extraordinary swift, and trust that the Almighty will still reward your industry and perseverance with his blessing.

I do not suppose either of your youthful companions are arriving at his one and hundredth year could command a sum equal to that which you possessed, it is quite a little fortune, and may you have long life and health to enjoy it. I suppose you and Uncle Fred have been settled down together for some time now. I should like to have been present at the first interview. I am sure it was a noisy one. Please present him our kindest love, and he shall have a letter by the next vessel which leaves for Australia. We were very thankful to hear of his arrival. I thought the voyage would never terminate. I am rather sorry he had not time to see your Uncle's family as they would have spent a pleasant evening together. In my letter to him I shall write all that Uncle John says about it.

It is very satisfactory to your Grandma, as with us here, that you are near each other and we looking forward to the time when you will return home, yours has been a long absence Dearest Child but we will not despair, perhaps Uncle Frederick and you may return together for he was never very unfortunate, indeed I may say, he is fortunate.

I suppose you have seen Captain Watts. We hear he is to remain some time in Australia. He as well as Uncle Frederick carried letters from us by Uncle John, your uncle George Grove was staying some time at Rondesbusch not being able to proceed in his vessel to India on account of some ill luck. Your aunt nursed him with great care. He speaks very highly of her. Julia is fortunate in having such a mother, and she appears to be a good and affectionate daughter. Fanny received a long letter from her about a month since in answer to one she wrote to her. She and the girls will no doubt frequently correspond. She is a few months younger than Fanny. They were very anxious to hear from you.

We have placed Frederick at a day school, as it is necessary for him to be a good arithmetician and also to write a free hand. He is quite pleased with the change, he says he shall teach you and Uncle Fred the second exercise. Fanny is expecting the promised likeness, but still if it will be attended with trouble or expense or if it will not be done well I should not have it done yet.

I thank you for the very nice letter you have written, I tell Pa I think for the future he must be your correspondent as you are now no longer a child. You will think my letters foolish and uninteresting. You remember what Shakespeare says of the behaviours of twenty, thirty and fifty, the last I can perfectly understand, but the experiences of youth I cannot be expected to remember. I must now bid you adieu Dearest Boy for a short time. The children send you many kisses and kind love. Aunt Fanny and Aunt Polly who is here, Uncle Roger and family are all well, and desire their kind remembrances, Grandma, Uncle White and all of the family in Harbour Street are quite well and are looking forward to the time when we shall again see those we love. Don't forget Dear Child, "Keep innocency and do the thing that is right, for that shall bring a Man Peace at the last".

We have had an immense deal of rain all through this year and the Season has been very indifferent. I hope you will both enjoy health, and strengths and good spirits. All friends join me in kindest love and best wishes and that every blessing may attend you my Dearest Boy is the constant prayer of your

Ever affectionate mother  
E I Dyason

**1853 September 2**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father Isaac Dyason**

My Dear Son

You may indeed be assured how very thankful we was to have once more a letter from you, after your very long silence although you said we was not to make ourselves uncomfortable if we did not hear from you for 12 months, but we expected as the steam communication had commenced that you would by some means or other write. We began to be very fearful that something had happened to you, and both your Ma and myself have had many sleepless nights, fancying something had happened to our boy and we should never know anything about it. So you may suppose we was all highly delighted with it as it arrived. We are also thankful to find that you have been so fortunate as you have been, indeed you have succeeded beyond my expectations and I hope you will continue to be so. I have no doubt but what your store properly managed will realise you in a short time a very handsome fortune. Indeed it is the opinion of every one in England that I have mentioned it to, say it is a surer fortune than the Gold Fields. I trust it may prove so for the sake of my boy.

I have no doubt but what you have advised your Uncle Fred and old Christmas to take their stock up to your store, sell it as soon as you can, and then all start to the diggings, for it will be at least 6 months from the time I am writing this before you can calculate upon receiving any fresh supply. The things are only just ordered after receiving your Uncle's letter and they will take at least 6 weeks before they can be manufactured, then there's the voyage, so I will leave you to judge if I am far wrong in the time I have stated.

Old Christmas will make a capital Molly at the diggings, cook and do every thing necessary while you work, and watch while you sleep, and should you be so fortunate as to find a lump of Gold of 2 or 3 Hundred Weight he will do very well to pull it up, so I think you will be very well together. Indeed they will be guided by you, for they put entire confidence in your judgement.

There is a Mr Hopwood living in Flinders Lane Melbourne who is a general merchant, you can call upon him if you like and tell him you are a son of Mr Dyason at the Baths of Ramsgate, and if you think that he sells any thing that you could do well by at your store, I could send you them out. I shall send you a circular in your Uncle Fred's next lot of goods so you will then see if there is any thing that suits you. It will be from the firm that supplies Mr Hopwood. I know them very well and do a little business with them now and then, and they would ship for you as well as for Mr Hopwood.

I wrote a letter to your Uncle Fred by the *Great Britain*, also a short one to you for I was fearful when I wrote it I should never hear from my boy again, but it has pleased God that I should not only hear from him but that he should be in the best of health and strength and above all in excellent spirits. Write my Boy as often as you can for if you could only form half the idea of the pleasure it gives us in receiving a letter from you I am sure you would take every opportunity of writing.

I tell Fred he is now getting a great boy and must soon think of something. He says you went to the Cape, he shall come out to you for it is no use staying in England for there is nothing to be done, he says Uncle Fred will find him some thing to do as he knows what he is.

Your Ma and all the family are in the best of health and they also write to you, Fanny and Libbie are women grown, you know what Fred was before you left, but the rest you know nothing of and therefore when you see them you will find them a set of saucy ewes. Tell Uncle Fred I shall not write to him again till I have an answer from the one I sent by the *Great Britain*. I have written several times to your Uncle John and have lately heard from him. They are all quite well, your Grandpa Dyason is still in England, and I have him intirely (sic) to support, it is a very hard case and makes me very poor. I have allowed him £10 a year sinse (sic) he has been in England. I have written to your Uncle to help me and he says he cannot afford it. I do not know why but I think he could if he liked. However I will say not more on the subject and will now

conclude wishing you my boy, with your Uncle Fred, all the health, happiness and prosperity that this world can afford you and may the blessings of God attend you both is the prayer of  
Your affectionate Father.

**1853 September 24**

**Ramsgate from sister Frances Dyason (aged 20)**

My dear Isaac

Uncle Frederick and Charles are going to London this morning to get the baggage on board and the vessel will leave on Wednesday morning. I hope will arrive in safety and have a pleasant voyage. I feel rather jealous that he should see you first but perhaps it will not be long before you return home and vessels are making the passage in a much shorter time, the *Melbourne* is expected to arrive out in sixty days, so if all is right you will see each other and have the pleasure of spending Christmas together. And I will now wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

I should like to have accompanied Uncle Fred but he said he would not take the charge of me. I think more of the family will follow if he is prosperous, as Uncle Isaac is desirous of leaving and others of the family too. I should like to have come to the diggings and taken you by surprise. I and Lizzy could be of great use to you as we could take care of your tent and nuggets, prepare your dinners and mend your clothes.

Uncle Fred would have taken little Fred if Pa had thought it best for him but perhaps he would have been but little use as he does not know anything. We all feel very much unsettled and it makes us impatient to see you.

Brothers and sisters send their best love to you, I hope you are quite well and believe me Dearest Isaac, I remain your ever affectionate Sister F Dyason

Please excuse the very bad writing as ma is waiting to put it in the box, Good Bye

**1853 November 8**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason AND sister Julia Dyason**

*From Mother*

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter a few days since and am sorry that you have not been as successful at your stores as you anticipated but I trust that this state of things will not last long but that you will again be as prosperous as in your former undertakings. I do not regret our not leaving this country for Australia were it ever so desirable, as the long voyage would be a sufficient barrier to my ever undertaking such a step, as I cannot travel even so short a distance by train or coach without feeling sick or giddy, and most likely the children would not be able to endure so long a voyage. I have sometimes thought a change of scene and a more active life would have prevented the long indisposition under which your father has laboured, but I am thankful to say he is now in a much better state of health having been to Cheltenham for a few weeks past to drink the mineral waters of that vicinity which have greatly benefitted him. He was suffering from an affection of the liver and kidneys with a general derangement of the whole system and had we not had other medical advice I believe he would have died as for two days his pulse and head ached so badly that we became greatly alarmed, but by the blessing of God he is I trust being restored to his former health and strength. Great merit is due to Mr Bary for his knowledge and judgement in so complicated a case as his was and I trust we shall all be spared to see you and enjoy your society in dear old England. When you return we can travel all over the country with a little expense and in a short time.

How much I wished for you at Cheltenham which is a most beautiful town in Gloucestershire, and then there is all London to look into which is a world in itself, and will be as new to me as to yourself. I hope my dear boy you will write as often as you have leisure until your return home. I have to claim your indulgence, for my uninteresting letters, which I after think is a tax upon your time and patience. We have heard from Uncle Frederick, he is doing very well and enjoys good health. We shall not write to him by this mail but intend to do so shortly. Present our united love to him. There are a great many enquiries after him,

Our winter is coming and is at present very mild, I sincerely hope dear Child that your health will continue good as well as your spirits. All will be well dearest boy, trust in your heavenly Father who has taken care of you hitherto, and I trust will conduct you in safety to your desired home. We are all quite well and Grandma and Uncle White send their kind love and many kisses, hoping to hear from you shortly and wishing you every blessing, I remain with much love your truly affectionate mother EI Dyason

*From Sister Julia (nearly 15)*

Dear Isaac

We were very much pleased to receive a letter from you and also to hear that you were quite well. Pa and Ma were at Cheltenham when the letter came which understandably he kept it till Sunday morning, which you must think was a great trial to us since we were obliged to lock it up for fear of being tempted, as we intended to send it unopened. When Aunt Martha came down and said Granma would not hear of its being sent because she said it might be lost, so we were obliged to open it.

Our summer is now quite over, it has appeared very short which I suppose is owing to the best weather. Uncle Charles is at present in London selecting goods to send to Uncle Fred. I suppose you did not remember him at all, did you expect to see him as he is, or did you think he would be different. Uncle Paulin has finished business for the Season, and is making a garden in the field where he keeps his machines, it is a new idea and he is quite delighted with it. He has bought a hundred gooseberry bushes and several other plants. He generally spends the winter in London, and I suppose he will go as soon as the important business of planting is finished. I have written to Julia which I think Ma told you and am expecting to hear from her again. Hoping you will write soon and that you are quite well,

Accept Dearest Isaac, the love of you ever affectionate sister

J D

**1853 November 8**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father Isaac Dyason**

My Dear Isaac

We received your kind letter on Saturday last dated July 23<sup>rd</sup> which states that you are in good health and spirits. I sincerely hope that you may continue so, and that you may be prosperous beyond your own expectations. The pictures you have drawn of Australia and from what I read in the different papers is not a very great inducement for anyone to leave England to emigrate to the land of gold, and I shall therefore give up all idea of emigration till I have a letter from you stating that it would be decidedly to the advantage of the family to do so. I am very sorry to hear such poor accounts of Melbourne and the diggings, but it is no more than I expected, and it has been predicted in England for some months that with such immense exportations from England to Australia that a glut must take place and that prices must fall considerably.

I trust that your adventure at the diggings may turn out better than you expect and that you may realise considerable profit by your investment. I have no doubt my dear boy but what your life must be a very monotonous one at the diggings, and I fancy I can see you at the store serving your customers, from what we can learn by the papers removing stores from place to place must be very expensive work and if much competition, I am sure it could not pay you.

There has been a letter from Cape Town. Watts, the Master of the *Hellespont*. She was sold out in Australia, I believe from what he says he is doing very well, he has sent for his wife and family and means to remain out there a few years. He says he is getting £1000 a year, he knows both your Uncle John and myself very well. He trades between Melbourne and Sydney and would do any little commission for you, or any thing else that he could be of service to you. When you write to your Uncle Fred tell him he must be sure and not let Mr Christmas take the lead in their business, but he must act with firmness in all their transactions, and if he thinks it would be more desirable to dissolve (the) partnership, to forfeit the bond and do so, for I am fearful that your Uncle has not that firmness in business matters that he ought to have and for peace and quietness, would allow things to be done although it would be against his interest to do so.

We have not heard from your Uncle John for some months, but from the last letter which Fanny had from Julia they were all quite well, I hope my dear boy that you will write as often as you can for I assure you nothing gives us greater pleasure than to hear from you and to know that you are enjoying (sic) good health and spirits, it is a great blessing, and should you want a little change a run home to England would do you a great deal of good, we should all rejoice to see you and endeavour to make you happy and comfortable, but I shall leave that question to your own judgement which has always been very good in all matters connected with your own interest.

Our Season has been, I am very sorry to say, a very indifferent one but I hope another year will prove more prosperous. I have been very unwell and obliged to leave Ramsgate for a change. I went with your Ma to Cheltenham. It is quite inland and about 225 miles from Ramsgate which in England is considered a good distance from home. I think the change has done me good and hope I shall continue to improve. Your Uncle Roger is well in health, and I think would do very well in Australia, but here in England he is not doing any thing more than when you left. I wanted him to Emigrate but he says a crust in England is better than gold in Australia. I have heard very poor accounts from several Ramsgate people who left here to seek their fortune in the gold fields, but have done nothing for themselves, so I think we may congratulate our boy upon his success and trust that by the blessings of God he may still continue so. Your Ma is writing and no doubt will tell you all about the family, they all desire their loves and accept the same from your affectionate father

I Dyason

Write regularly

1854

1854 January 2

Ramsgate from Isaac's father (aged 44)

My dear Boy

We have been anxiously looking for a letter from you as we have not received one since last October, it was forwarded to us at Cheltenham where we were staying to recruit my health. In that letter you stated that you had commenced Store keeping and that things had not turned out so well as you expected. I hope that your predictions are not realised and that you have done better than you anticipated. I dare say you were surprised at the short note you received by the *Great Britain* Steam. I assure you my boy I was very fearful that something serious had happened to you and therefore it was quite useless writing, indeed I could not bear to hear Australia mentioned and when we received your letter at the end of July we were all quite overjoyed at it as it gave us the welcome intelligence that you were alive and well.

We received a letter a short time ago from your Uncle John. He told us that you had written to him advising him not to leave the Cape as he had promised to do, from what he writes to me I think it is quite as well he did not, as he has entered into partnership with a firm of the name of Anderson Jason and company in the same street as he used to carry on business for himself, I think it was Saint George's Street and from the spirit in which he writes he seems to have every prospect of realising a Fortune. He says himself if he has good luck in a few years he shall return to Old England, but I have no doubt he has written you fully on the subject. We hear and read of each wonderful account of the gold fields that is quite incredible, but there is no doubt that people have a great number of hardships to encounter and deserve all they get.

With regard to Store keeping, I have no doubt but at the time you wrote that, from the immense quantities of goods poured into Australia from all quarters, it must have reduced the prices very much indeed and unless people had store room they must have sold at great sacrifice. It was the official opinion England that a reaction must take place in Australia and that goods could not continue to fetch the prices they were then selling at, but at the time I am writing things have taken a different turn, people in England are very cautious now in sending goods to Australia in consequence of the immense quantities poured in from all quarters and they will not run the risks of shipping goods unless they have a place to consign them to or are ordered by parties living there.

The average number of vessels leaving London being about 2 or 3 a week and at this time last year and up to August last they would average at least from 10 to 12, with that difference and causes such as strikes among the work people in England in several branches of trade which has been going on for 6 months and every prospect of a long and troublesome war with Russia before us will make things very dear in this country so that I have no doubt but what Store keeping in Australia will pay well those who have been able to purchase cheaply and not be in a hurry to get rid of them.

Your Uncle Fred seems to be doing very well by the letters he has sent home, the last he gave a long account of the Colony, it was not very inviting and I think enough to deter any one leaving Old England who was not obliged. And now my dear boy, a little about myself and I think you will not say it is unkind of me to ask you. I am sorry to say that I have had a very indifferent year and have been so very ill for more than 9 months of the time that I can scarcely know how to make two ends meet, besides I have to support your grandfather Dyason who I am sorry to say has not a penny in the world. I allow him £40 a year which is a great drawback on my resources. I have more than once written to your Uncle John to assist me but he says that your Grandfather did him so much injury at the Cape that it is now quite out of his power to assist me. I have supported him ever since he has been in England.

Now what I should like to have, and if you can do it without putting yourself the least out of the way would be a loan of £150 or £200 for 3 years as I contemplate making an alteration which will greatly improve my business and add to my income. Do not my dear boy distress yourself about it if you cannot conveniently do it. I will endeavour to do without it, but it would greatly assist me and add to all our comforts at home.

Fanny is writing and will tell you about the Family. I must now conclude with every wish for your welfare and believe me dear Isaac,

Your affectionate father  
Isaac Dyason



*Ramsgate Sands* by William Powell Frith, RA. Signed and dated 1854.

Accessed June 2013 from <http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/frith/paintings/4.html>



(1854 estimated) February 2

Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances Dyason

My dear Isaac

The *Harbinger* leaves South Hampton on the 4<sup>th</sup> of this month and Lizzie and I have determined to tease your patience with our epistles and likewise a request, a long letter in return, which I hope you will not fail to read by the first opportunity, I should much like to know of your welfare. Are you still unsuccessful or are all your affairs progressing, do you not feel weary of enduring all those hardships which accompany your present mode of life. I would willingly share them all with you, I wish I were a boy I should have been by your side long ago. You know those lines which our dear Grandma often repeats "Our joys when extended always increase, Our griefs when divided are hushed into peace" – which I think is the case.

I had a long letter from Julia three days since. She says she would like to come to England but I should think her Papa would not like to part with her being the only girl, she says John is grown a fine, tall boy and is to be taken into the business the next school vacation.

I can bear to hear her talk affectionately of you now. I feel assured from what you have told me that you do not love her more than you ought, but is this the case with all my fair sisters in Melbourne. I fear I am jealous, I think it impossible but that you are inclining to some one, do tell me dear Isaac how things are with you. As for me it is of no use to think of any thing but to remain just as I am, as unfortunately I possess neither of those qualities – riches, beauty, nor wisdom which might make one agreeable and pleasing too. Elizabeth and I are determined (..?) from dire necessity, your little lone five old maiden sisters. The first one arrived at the great age of twenty and not the slightest approach to any thing like an offer.

What did you think of Ma's likeness? We all thought it exactly resembled Goldsmith's *School Master*\* I daresay you have often read the lines but it is very much like her. I have a likeness of myself but I did not send it as I think it flatters me too much and so you would be disappointed when you saw me, and how did you like the handkerchief, we thought it would suit your complexion so nicely. We held a long consultation to decide which was the right shade and came to the conclusion to have it the wrong as we afterwards found. You remember the consultation of the lawyers whether spectacles were intended for the nose or for the eyes and decided they were designed for the nose as the bridge plainly indicated, so we sincerely considered and ended by putting the right side for the wrong.

Are the lucifers all gone. Pa bought the box in London. I had no idea that Julia was required to do house hold work but she tells me she has a great deal to do in the house. I thought Uncle John was in a much better position than to require her to employ her time in that manner. Perhaps she means only to superintend the working it, she dates her letter Mowbrey town, do they live there.

Uncle Charles has just sent a large quantity of goods to Uncle Fred by the *Koh I Noor*, seven hundred and fifty pounds worth. I think the vessel has been delayed by the wind for three weeks, but now she has a very nice wind. We have a clipper ship in the harbour that has been to China and back three times in eighteen months. She is a hundred and ninety five feet long and thought to be the fastest vessel for her size afloat. We expect the overland mail on Saturday, and are looking for a letter from you. I hope we shall not be disappointed.

I suppose you do not often see Uncle Fred. Does he wear a moustache, do you wear them. Grandma is quite well and desires her kindest love. She has four larks, two thrushes and one goldfinch in her parlour and Uncle Tom has his violin and a large bath. Do you ever practice the flute and have you forgotten the Dutch language. How have your teeth been, do they give you any pain. I think the (..?) people here lose their teeth very soon. Do you still sleep in the same way you used to, or do you fare better. And now dear Isaac I have a favour to ask. Will you send me a lock of your hair, I should so very much like to have it.

Pa and Ma are quite well. Brothers and sisters, Uncles and aunts all desire their best and kindest love and believe me

Dear brother

Your ever affectionate

Sister F Dyason

Have you seen Captain Watts  
His wife and family have embarked  
Please write soon

*(written sideways)*

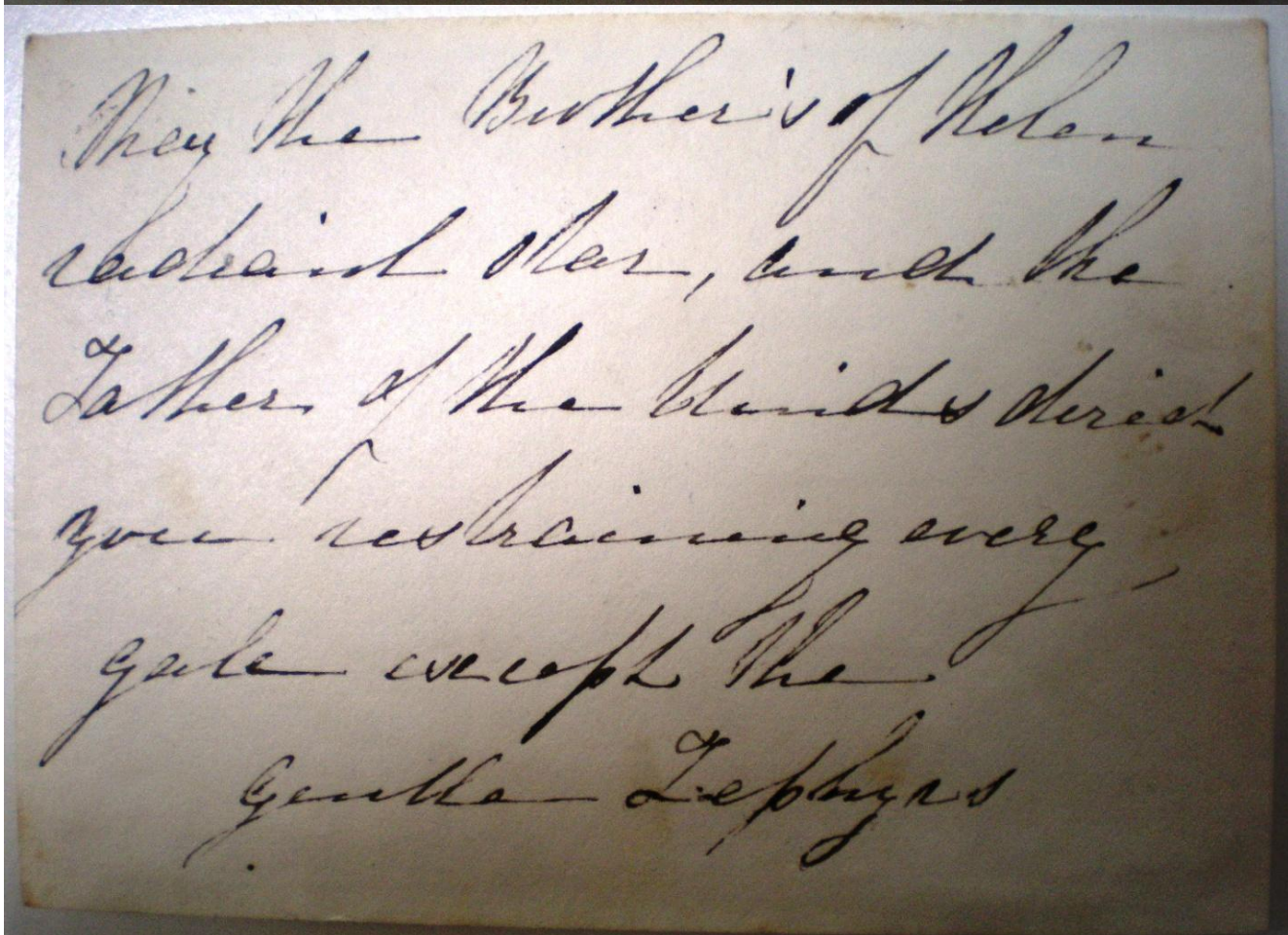
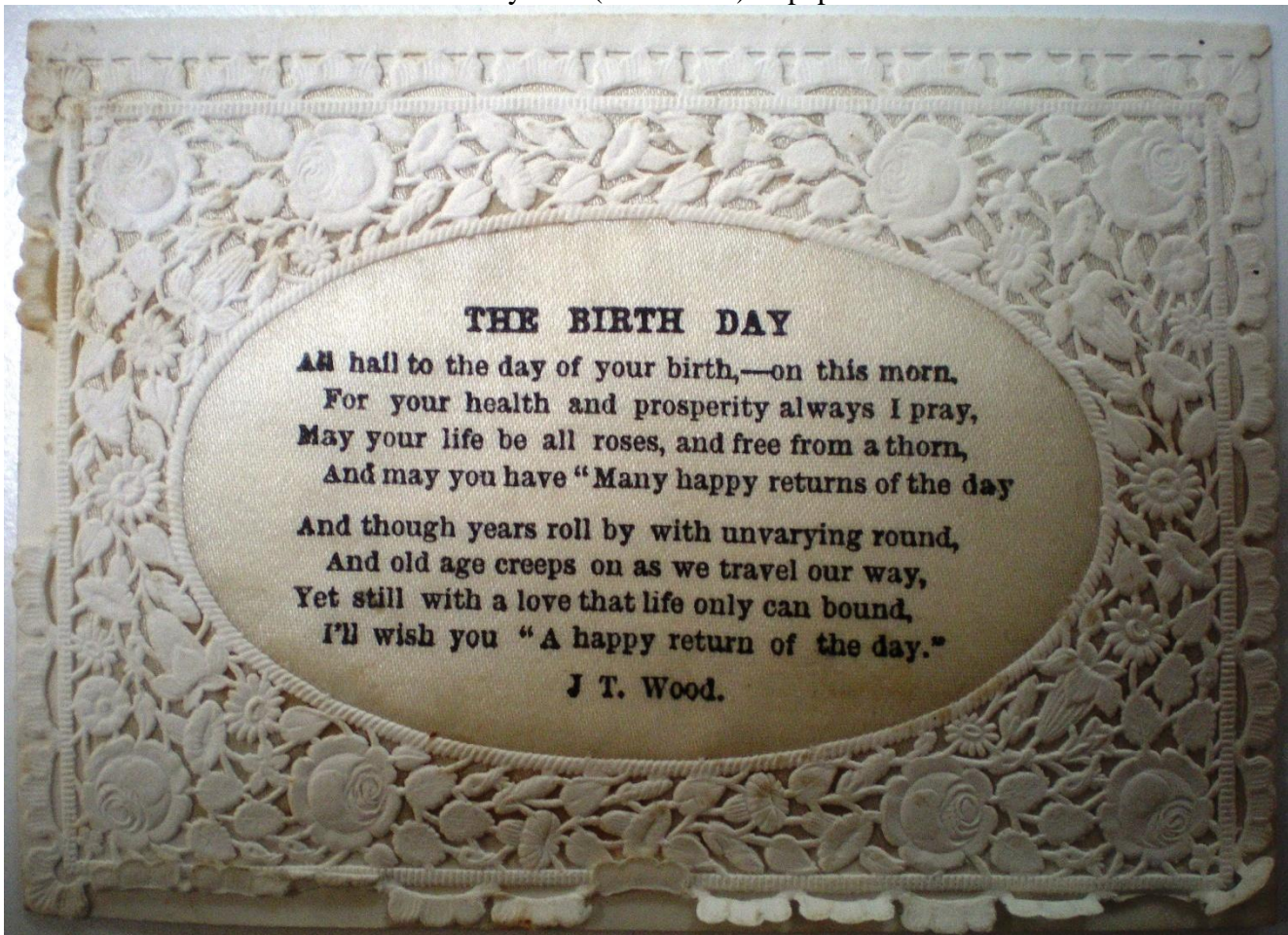
Please excuse all the foolishness blots and bad writing.

*\*Oliver Goldsmith 1730 – 1774 was the author of the poem alluded to*

### **The Village Schoolmaster**

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way  
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,  
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,  
The village master taught his little school;  
A man severe he was, and stern to view,  
I knew him well, and every truant knew;  
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace  
The days disasters in his morning face;  
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee,  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he:  
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,  
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd:  
Yet he was kind; or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.  
The village all declar'd how much he knew;  
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too:  
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.  
In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,  
For e'en though vanquish'd he could argue still;  
While words of learned length and thund'ring sound  
Amazed the gazing rustics rang'd around;  
And still they gaz'd and still the wonder grew,  
That one small head could carry all he knew.  
But past is all his fame. The very spot  
Where many a time he triumph'd is forgot.

Included in the letter was a small birthday card (93X66mm) of paper lace and cloth.



May the Brother's of Helen Radiant star, and the Father of the brides desire Your restraining every Gale except the Gentle Zephyrs

**(1854 Estimated) February 18**  
**Ramsgate from sister Julia Dyason**

My dear Isaac

No one can tell the disappointment we feel not receiving any letters from you, the *Great Britain*, the *Himalaya*, and the Overland Mail have arrived and we have been looking for letters morning and evening but have not had one. Letters keep arriving for different individuals in the town and we cannot account for your long silence. We sent a long letter to Uncle Fred by the *Great Britain*, and enclosed a small note for you because we did not know if you were dead or alive and Pa was so uneasy he could not rest, he sent a double letter to you in September and three since, and have only received one solitary one in the six months. We send this in the box to Uncle Fred because we think it may be safer. They tell us dear Isaac that you cannot like us because you do not recollect us, they say that true affection is only felt between people who constantly see each other. Is this the case dear Isaac, you see we are very much afraid you do not love us enough.

Uncle Fred says in his last letter that Summer is coming, no doubt the heat is very trying to bear and the bites of the insects very unpleasant. The case is different with us now, for it has been snowing very much today with a strong Northerly wind. We are all quite well, Uncle Charles and Grandma are very busy preparing the boxes to send to Uncle Fred. Grandma often talks of little Isaac as she calls you and says how much she should like to see you. Fred grows very fast, he is taller than Ma. Catherine still continues the youngest, I think you would like her. She is a pretty little dark eyed girl of four years old. We have seen a picture just like Augusta which we intend to send to you if it is to be sold.

You have heard of the Russian War, the sailors seem very anxious to have a battle and we expect our fleet in the Downs daily. The *Great Britain* and the *Himalaya* are engaged to take the troops to Constantinople. I have enclosed a Valentine for you which I hope you will like. All send their kindest love and are looking forward to the pleasure of seeing you.

Hoping to hear from you very soon, believe me dearest brother  
Your ever affectionate sister  
J Dyason

**1854 March 2**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father Isaac Dyason**

My Dear Boy

I am truly sorry to be obliged to write to you again on this very unpleasant subject, indeed I think I should not but your Ma thinks that you would blame me, if I did not fully open my mind to you. I am sorry to say that unless I meet with some friend who will lend me 2 Hundred Pounds I shall have to call my creditors together and sell every thing that I have and I am fearful that should such be the case, I should not be able again to provide for the family in that comfortable and respectable manner in which I have hitherto been able to do for them. The deficiency arises solely in consequence of the badness of the Season on which we totally depend for a living and that being a complete failure our whole resources for the present are finished, and I am fearful that if we have a tolerably good season, I do not think it will be sufficient to cover my liabilities as I am deficient in the receipts of last year, very nearly £300 less than any year since I have had the business. It was entirely owing to the Cholera which made sad havoc amongst us and the medical men would not allow people to bathe in the Warm Bath for fear of relaxing the system, so that it created quite a panic in our business. The badness of the Season would not have been so ruinous to me, if I had not your Grandfather Dyason to support, I am sorry to say that he has cost me more than £400 since he has been in England. I have applied to your Uncle John to assist me and he says he cannot, and your Uncle Roger and Aunt Fanny and Mary are not able, so the whole expense falls upon me who am very ill able to do it, but if I did not, he must want and that I could not see him do, he has been in England now 11 years and I allow him £40 a year which I am very ill able to afford.

I have also lost £200 by a Mr Maurilyn a solicitor in whose hands your Grandfather placed his affairs when he left England for the Cape. He had become insolvent and left the country and I being a Trustee with him have had to pay debts contracted which I fully expected were all settled. When I wrote to you for the £150 you were so kind as to send, it was for the purpose of buying some old property and creating some cheap Baths which I am quite sure would make a very handsome living, indeed could I but get it, it is the opinion of all my friends, that I should make a fortune, for they could be carried on with a very trifling expense more than I am at, at present, and the returns would be something like £5000 a year more, and I am fearful unless I can get the money I want, I shall have to give up the Business for want of present means to meet the deficiency. Could I but succeed in that, I should be able to save £60 a year from my present expenditure for I have to pay full 15 per cent for credit, and that would enable me to pay the money back in a few years. If you could spare it from your business, I could pay your Uncle Charles £50 a year on your account, but if you cannot do so without inconvenience to yourself, do not do it for I assure you my dear Boy it would grieve very much both your Ma and myself to know that we had caused you any serious inconvenience after all the trouble and hardship you had undergone, but if we cannot succeed we must endeavour to bear our troubles and look up to a higher power who never forsakes them that call upon Him for support in times of need, when they do so believing Him to be able to do it.

The mail ship *Marco Polo* has just arrived, and by it we find there has been a riot at the diggins (sic)\*. I hope you have not suffered by it, your Ma and all the Family are quite well and desire their kind love and accept the same my dear boy from your affectionate father Isaac Dyason.

Your Birth Day will soon arrive, and we shall wish you many happy returns.

*\*To quote from Wikipedia Goldfields unrest and agitation against what was seen as an unjust Gold License fee centred in Bendigo in 1853. Large gatherings of diggers took place in Bendigo over the course of August 1853. Over 23,000 miners signed the Bendigo Miners' Petition, with over 10,000 people welcomed the petition representatives back to the diggings on 13 August, assembled under the Diggers' Flag, designed by William Dexter.*

*The Red Ribbon Agitation of 1853 was one of the earliest in the string of events that led ultimately to the Eureka Stockade uprising in Ballarat. Miners were required to pay a licence fee of 30 shillings a month whether they found gold or not. This was seen as an unfair tax. The Red Ribbon Movement was active on the*

Bendigo diggings where diggers demanded a license fee from 30 shillings to ten shillings. The diggers planned to offer 10 shillings for a license and allow themselves to get arrested so as to cause overcrowding in the prisons, and an increase in administration.

**The Bendigo Gold Miner's Petition of 1853**

52/3056  
956

To His Excellency Charles Joseph La Trobe  
Esquire Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Victoria &c

The Humble Petition of the Undersigned Gold Diggers  
and other residents on the Gold Fields of the Colony

Sheweth

That Your Petitioners are the loyal and Obedient Subjects of Her Most Excellent Majesty Queen Victoria the Sovereign  
Ruler of this Colony

That in the present impoverished condition of the Gold Fields the sum of Thirty Shillings a Month is more than Your Petitioners  
can pay as the fruit of labor at the Mine scarcely affords to a large proportion of the Gold Miners the common necessaries of life

That in consequence of the few Officials appointed to issue Licenses the Diggers Workmen and other residents are  
at each Monthly issue so pursuing their Licenses

That the laborious occupation of Gold digging and the privations attendant on a residence on the Gold fields entail much  
sickness and its consequent expenses on Your Petitioners

That in consequence of the Squatter Land Monopoly a large proportion of successful Diggers who desire to invest their earnings  
in a portion of land are debarred from so doing

That newly arrived Diggers must lose much time and money before they become acquainted with the process of Gold  
Mining

That in consequence of a crowd of men (many of whom are voluntarily but in character being employed to enforce the sum of  
Thirty Shillings a Month there is general feeling registered amongst the Diggers against the Government

That in consequence of the non possession by some of the Miners of a Gold Diggers License some of the Commissioners  
appointed to administer the Law on the Gold Fields have on various occasions Chained non possessors to Posts and Condemned them to hard labor on the  
Public Roads of the Colony. A proceeding Your Petitioners maintain to be contrary to the spirit of the British Law which does not recognize the  
principle of the Subject being a Criminal because he is indebted to the State

That the sum of Thirty Shillings a Month is unjust because the successful and unsuccessful Digger are assessed  
in the same rate

For these reasons and others which could be enumerated Your Petitioners pray Your Excellency to Grant the following  
Petition

<u>Firstly.</u>	To direct that the license fee be reduced to Ten Shillings a Month
<u>Secondly.</u>	To direct that Monthly or Quarterly Licenses be issued at the option of the Applicants
<u>Thirdly.</u>	To direct that no arrears or penalties be allowed in registering their names at the Commissioners Office fifteen clear days residence on the Gold Fields before the license is enforced
<u>Fourthly.</u>	To afford greater facility to Diggers and other residents on the Gold Fields who wish to engage in agricultural pursuits for investing their earnings in small allotments of land
<u>Fifthly.</u>	To direct that the Penalty of Five Pounds for non possession of license be reduced to One Pound
<u>Sixthly.</u>	To direct that as the Diggers and other residents on the Gold Fields of the Colony have uniformly developed a love of law and order the sending of an Armed Force to enforce the License Fee be discontinued

Image accessed July 2013 from the State Library of Victoria  
<http://www2.slv.vic.gov.au/collections/treasures/bendigopetition/index.html>

1854 April 27

Ramsgate from Isaac's father Isaac Dyason

My Dear Boy

I again take this opportunity of writing to you as the *Great Britain* Steam Ship leaves Liverpool on the 29<sup>th</sup> Inst and carries a mailbag so hope this time you will receive the letter quite safe. I wrote you a letter by the *Queen of the South* which left the 4<sup>th</sup> of this month and should not have written quite so soon could we but get a letter from you which I am sorry to say we have not had since last October which from the time I am writing is 6 months. Fanny and Elizabeth also wrote on the 4<sup>th</sup> Feb which went overland and I hope arrived safe. I also sent one by the *Golden Age* which I see has arrived safe and I find by letter received by Fanny from Julia at the Cape that you occasionally correspond with your Uncle John. Now I do think my Dear Boy you should occasionally write home for I assure you that your mother and sisters and your brother Frederick are very anxious for your welfare and cannot account for your long silence. Indeed it sometimes makes your mother quite unhappy to think that you do not write and she says that she supposes that your long absence from home and other associations that you may have, makes you almost forget about us. My Dear Boy all we want to know is that you are well and as comfortable as you can be and of course we are very desirous for your welfare because we think you are justly entitled to it after the labour, fatigue and hard life you have undergone but should it please providence otherwise you will be always welcome to that home you left so young and we will endeavour to do the best we can together, therefore I trust that you will write as often as you can spare time as we look forward to have a letter from you every mail that arrives.

The weather is very cold at present and tell your Uncle Fred when you see him that we have had a most severe Winter in England, an immense quantity of snow, indeed it fell in Ramsgate in one night to the depth of nearly 3 feet, also that the Bay was covered with wild fowl but I was too ill all the Winter to go out side but we often talked about it when we saw the fowl flying over the Harbour that Fred would be down and say "What a splendid sight, come along, let's go" but I suppose he has other things to do now and could not go, if I was to send for him. Tell him that your Ma and myself frequently walk around Pegwell\* and look on the Bay but never do so without thinking of him. As for yourself my Dear Boy I should say that scarcely a day passes without your name being mentioned by one or another of the Family.

The war has begun with Russia and Sir John Napier is in the Baltic with 25 large vessels. He has taken several merchantmen and is at the present time just in the Gulf of Finland with the intention of attacking Helsingfors (\**Helsinki*) I read. I hope he will succeed and while I am writing there is a large French squadron just sailed out of the Downs which with some of our own vessels which are laying there waiting for them will form a second division for Sir John Napier in the Baltic. It is a splendid sight to see them and when this Division gets there there will be more than 30 sail of Men-of-War all Frigates and first rate ships under the command of Sir John in the Baltic. I think quite sufficient for the Emperor of Russia but he is like an old rat in his hole, he will not allow his vessels to come out and fight but keeps them in Harbour under cover of heavy Batteries which he fancies impossible for us to take. but Sir John is going to try and I have no doubt but what he will succeed. Everyone is in favour of the war and all hope he will be well trashed.

I must now conclude this almost I have no doubt unseasonable letter but you must take the will for the deed. The Family are all quite well and desire their kind love to you, your Ma also joins with me in kind love to our Boy and believe me your affectionate Father  
Your Grandma and all the family are well.

I Dyason

(\**Pegwell is a shallow inlet between Ramsgate and Sandwich – a nature reserve with marshes for birds*)

## SS Great Britain

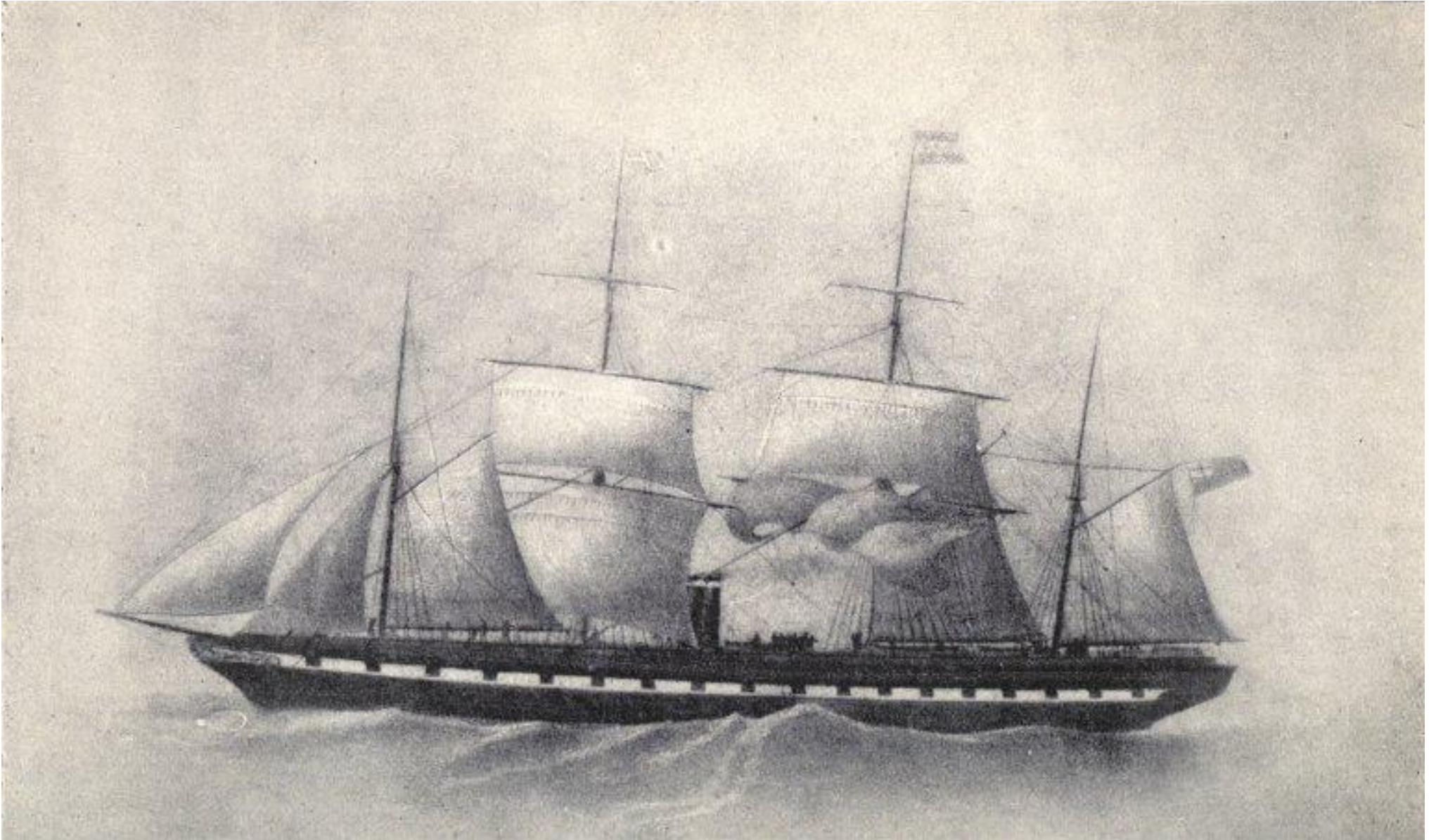


Image accessed from [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SS\\_Great\\_Britain\\_with\\_four\\_masts\\_1853.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SS_Great_Britain_with_four_masts_1853.jpg) On 10/03/2013 Description of image reads:: *SS Great Britain in 1853, showing her four-masted sail plan following her refit from five masts. She was later refitted again, to a traditional three-masted, square-rigged pattern.*

Queen of the South in a gale of wind

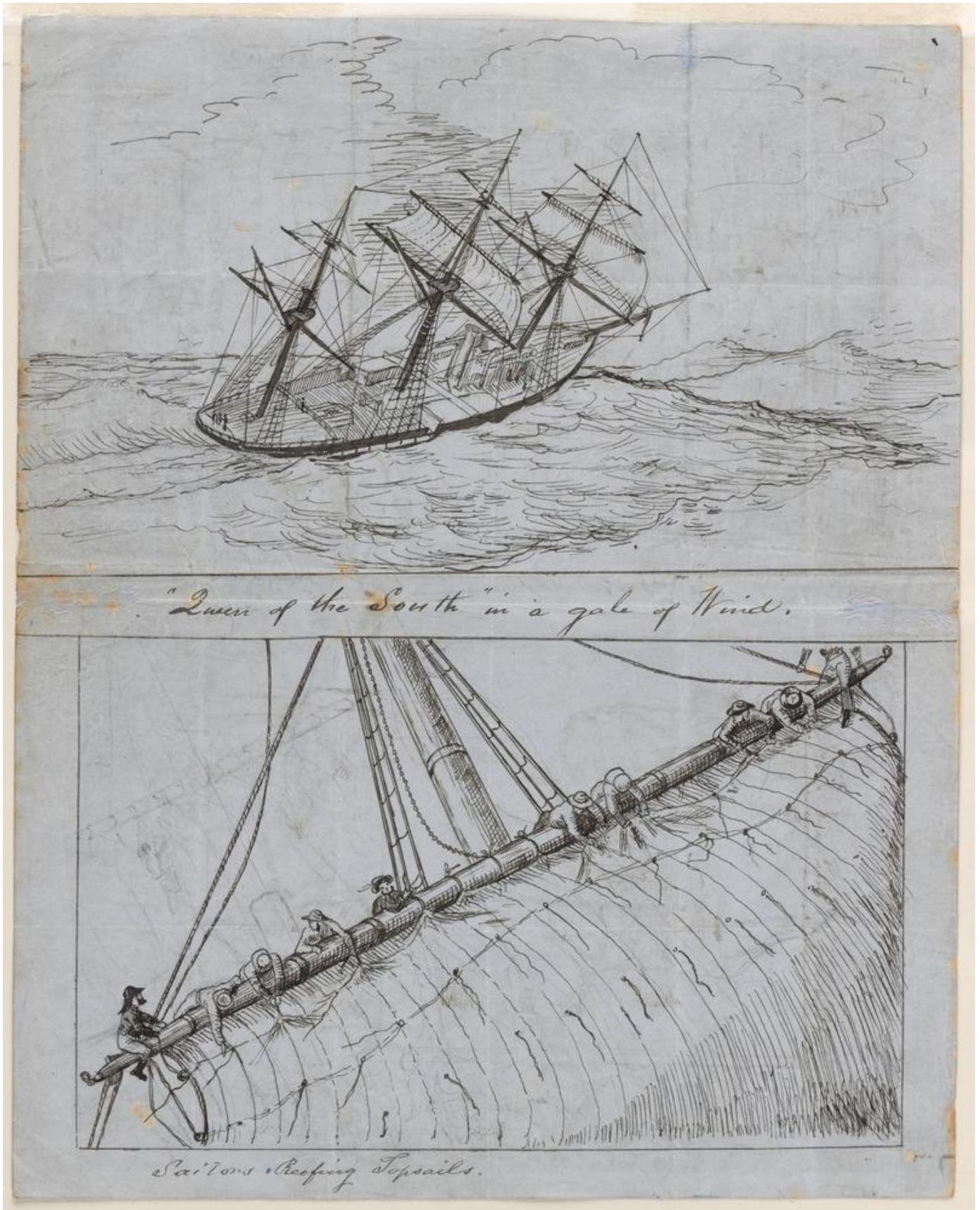


Image from the State Library of Victoria' digital image collection: **Title:** Queen of the South in a gale of wind ; Sailors Reefing Topsails [picture] **Author/Creator:** Charles Lyall d. 1910? **Date(s):** [ca. 1854] **Description:** 2 drawings : pen and ink and pencil on blue paper ; each 12 x 20 cm. or smaller , on sheet 25 x 20 cm.

**(1854 May estimated)**  
**From Isaac's father**

*(beginning of letter missing)*

...night would overcome night and every other nation would have to bow to the sway of Russia. We are expecting a letter daily from your Uncle John. We correspond now I am glad to say almost monthly. I expected in the last he had late received a letter from you and that you were quite well, so you see my dear Boy we do occasionally hear of you, although not from you so often as we could wish. Tell your Uncle I shall write to him when Charles sends the next goods, and then I shall write no more to him till I have a letter direct from him.

Your Ma, although at present is not very well, generally enjoys the best of health and desires her kindest love to you. I am glad to say that I am much better than I have been, although I have had a slight return of my illness which makes me very fearful as I suffered so much the whole of last Season that the least return quite unnerves me. Your Brothers and Sisters one and all my dear Boy send their kindest loves to you, and you would believe it, did you but see the gratification expressed on all their countenances when I tell your Ma there is a (*letter*) from you, there is not a word spoken until it has been read, and then off goes your Ma up street for there is no peace until it has quite gone the round, so you see my boy although so far away, any thing coming from you must give place to every thing else.

All your Aunts and Uncles desire their love and accept the same my dear boy from

Your affectionate

Father I Dyason

**1854 May 8**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

It was with great pleasure we again recognised the dear familiar handwriting which was so long expected and thank you dearest Boy for the large amount you sent which will benefit us greatly but I could not help looking at the letter with a mixture of sorrow and regret knowing it to be the produce of your hard labour and attended with privation and suffering but my dear Child it will be grateful to your mind to know it came at a time when your Father was just recovering from another attack of illness brought on in a great measure by over anxiety as he had much of this to contend with for many years. But this sum will enable us to go on very nicely and will be a great advantage to us all, but I hope dear Boy it will not prevent you from returning home at the time you proposed in your own mind, if so we shall be much distressed but I still hope to be able to refund it to you that you may not suffer the loss of so great a sum.

I have not yet received the letter you sent to me but it will arrive soon. I hope no doubt the vessel is detained for some reason. I hope you had the note I put into Uncle Fred's trunk. In the letter we received from your Aunt she invites one of the girls to come to the Cape and she says she will in every respect be a mother to her. It is Julia's wish that Fanny should come and I have no doubt they will be fond of her. She seems desirous of going and I do not think it does young people any harm to visit different countries and people, indeed I think it is often attended with real good, it enlivens and strengthens the mind and improves the bodily health. I hope to hear your opinion on this subject, she could return with you if you both wished it. Julia seems a very nice, lively, affectionate girl and with respect to your Aunt and Uncle you dearest Boy are a sufficient example of their goodness and worth so that I would have no fear whatsoever on Fanny's account, I think she will be able to teach music to junior pupils and French according to the Parisian pronunciation, favouring of provincialism is not accepted. I do not think she would succeed in this place as people generally think more of strangers than they do of those brought up with them.

Perhaps you may think it strange that we should wish her to do anything in the way of providing for herself but dear Boy it is better for young people to be employed and as Fanny and Elizabeth have capabilities beyond drudgery of household work I think it is a pity that they should be confined to that which others can do better. All the lighter part they have done for four years and it is necessary that they should understand household tasks and if ever they should be your housekeeper you will find I think they can cook you as nice a little dinner as anyone.

With regard to Freddy, it is necessary he should be under a good master in order to his becoming a man of business. He does not wish to remain in England and if your Uncle has a vacancy for him he prefers going to him. He is rather of a quiet disposition, honest and speaks the truth, he likes to have his way sometimes as I dare say we all do and I think with good training he might become a respectable and useful tradesman. With regard to the four elder children I esteem myself most fortunate, I mean yourself and the three next, as you are each endeavouring to pursue that line of conduct which is safe and honourable and if persevered in will most assuredly lead to a happy issue. I am aware that you will each have much to contend with, much to renounce, much to resist, many acts of self denial to perform but the reward is a mind at peace with itself and its maker.

With regard to your Uncle Frederick, your Grandma was saying yesterday she wished your two uncles and yourself had commenced business in Australia, the proceeds to be divided between the three, she thinks you would soon realise a handsome fortune. You need not have wanted for goods to any amount as Uncle Charles' credit stands high. But your Father has mentioned this to you for your consideration, it seems a pity for them not to succeed as Uncle Charles has exerted all his energies to establish a respectable standing in society, and Uncle Fred has seconded all his views. Perhaps a little of your advice would not be amiss as you have been there longer. I hope their speculation will not prove a failure. He intends to write to the Cape next week as a vessel is going there direct. Your Uncle has sent a small box for the children, it is in London and we are to have it in a day or so. Pa tells me the vessel that had your letter has broken down and will be in shortly. I shall therefore have the pleasure of receiving it. I hope dearest Boy you will take care of yourself and write as soon as you can, remember us all very affectionately to your Uncle Fred. He is to have

a letter from your Father. And now dear Boy I must conclude, wishing you every blessing and all protection and believe me to be ever your  
Affectionate mother EI Dyason

As your Aunt says I must not be jealous of her expressions of love to you but I can trust you.

(1854 June estimated)

From Isaac's sister Elizabeth Dyason (aged 18)

Dear Brother

I hope this letter will be more fortunate in reaching its destination than the others which I have sent for I have sent several, one containing my likeness and a lock of hair which I do not think reached you as you have never mentioned receiving them. Now you know dear Isaac that though I can scarcely remember you yet you are my brother and I am not going to write a dreadfully prim distant letter as though writing to a stranger but as I have seen you the day before yesterday and without any fear of you saying after perusing this "what a strange woman my sister is". I often think when you are thinking of us we must appear to you as a set of dim, undefined, misty forms which, being impossible to individualise you put down in a bundle as your brothers and sisters but I'm ambitious and am going out in bolder steps, for the future I shall expect the paragraph in your letters to run thus "Give my love to my brothers and sisters and to Elizabeth, Lizzy, Libby" some or any of these elegant titles with which I was dignified in days of yore. And another thing dear Isaac, you must be sure and like me better than you do Julia for I am your sister and she is but our cousin. It is no excuse to say you can't remember me for I love you better than anyone else in the world. And now dear Isaac, having unburdened my mind of two important requests I will proceed to general affairs.

This winter has been a glorious one for shooting, do you ever go out hunting or shooting? Such a number of wild fowl, one gentleman went out shooting for three weeks and shot an average ten or twelve birds a day. If Uncle Fred had been home he would have enjoyed it exceedingly, he was so very fond of shooting, at the first appearance of frost he used to come down to our house so full of spirits that he could scarcely contain himself and make Pa go out with him for the day on the bay, up Sandwich River, round Richborough Castle Minster marshes\*. Do you remember the old names? And come home at night with their pockets full of nothing generally, but Uncle Fred's liveliness not at all abated – and by the bye what do you think of his good nature, is he not. I suppose you have not seen much of him, but the more you see him the better you'll like him. Uncle Charles is something like him, very high-spirited, good-natured, lively and good looking decidedly, he says when you come home he shall make you call him brother, the reason is obvious to the most cursory reader.

We have had a nice fleet of vessels in the harbour but today they are all gone, we have been on the pier seeing them go out. A bark called *The African* bound for Australia Melbourne is lying to, opposite our window. We often wonder if you will see it.

Oh, had I the wings, not of doves, but the Flying Dutchman or a pair of seven-leagued boots, I'd traverse those abominable sixteen thousand miles and see you my dear Brother. If I take the wishbone of a fowl, eat cherries, strawberries for the first time in a season, my wish is always to see you. Pray do not shake my faith in such ancient ordinances more than you can help. I am very uneasy, I'm so afraid you won't like me as well as I deserve.

Our cousin Mary Hurst\*\*has made a long visit to us, she is a very nice girl, we often used to talk of you and when we were children we used to say you would come home on a Cape buffalo and then you could take turns with us in riding on it. How are you off for books, do you ever get any reading? I expect all sorts of impossible things such as that you will read this letter through and will one day send me an answer, will answer all my questions, which absurd expectations will, if you get as far as this, doubtless make you smile.

Hoping dear Isaac that you are quite well and with my best love I remain your very affectionate sister

E Dyason

\*Richborough Castle is an old Roman coastal fortification in the East Kent Marshes near Deal, Sandwich River is actually the Stour which empties into Pegwell Bay.

\*\*Mary is Isaac's mother's sister's child. They were better off and lived at Deal along the coast.

**1854 June 2**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Boy

In the first place let me thank you for your very handsome present to Fanny, although I have said nothing to her about it, ~~at present~~ nor neither shall I until I have it in my power to pay her when I hope you will be present, to receive the acknowledgement to which you are justly entitled for your brotherly love to her and affection for us all, we have not received any letters from you since last October till the present time, and we now have 3, one for Fanny and two for myself, your Ma has not received the one you sent to her about a month back, she is very much disappointed as I assure you it gives us all very great pleasure to hear and we are all very much disappointed when the mail comes in and no letter from you. We have received these letters by the *Chusan* which arrive on the 31<sup>st</sup> May and the *Lady Jocelyn* which sails on the 4 of June enables me without any delay to answer your letter and to thank you for your very handsome present.

I think for the future it will be as well to send the letters over land, (*see map below*) they seem to come more regularly, but send them any way you please, they will always be acceptable, Fanny and Elizabeth sent one in February. I also sent one by the *Queen of the South* on the 4<sup>th</sup> April and also one by *The Great Britain* but she broke down and the letters by her were sent overland. She is to leave again on the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month when your Ma and the children will all write by her. In your letter you say you are going again to the diggings, I hope and trust you will be successful, and God grant you health and strength to combat with the arduous task I am sure you have to encounter, and that you may receive the reward your enterprising spirit is justly entitled to.

You also spoke of carrying on the roads. I do not know if you remember Mr Abrahams, he has a brother who has been carrying some time from Melbourne to the Diggings and I believe he has done very well, but what ever you enter into your Uncle Roger says he is quite certain you will do well at, for he says you are the first that ever had any spirit of enterprise and would be sure to succeed, but you must take care of yourself for our sakes, for your Ma would never get over it if any thing was to happen to our boy. I am almost jealous for they are all looking forward to the time when they will be able to enjoy your society and planning little jaunts together and what they shall do when you come home and how they must act for fear you will be disappointed in them. I tell them they never study me so, and so I shall be quite jealous.

I dare say before this you have heard from your Uncle John, I am expecting a box from him with a few trifles for your Ma and the children. I wrote to him some time back asking him if he would take Frederick and in a joke asked him if he would take Fanny and Libby. He sends me word back by letter, that he will take Fred and do by him as he did for you, he speaks very highly of you and so does your Aunt, and cousin, your Uncle also says he will take Fanny and make her as one of the Family. I do not think we could spare either of the girls, but if it would be for their welfare I suppose we must give up all idea of keeping them and consent to that which is best for them.

Fanny would get a very excellent living at the Cape as a Teacher of French, German and Music, she is very competent to do it and if you think it would be advisable to send her I shall do so. I shall write to your Uncle in the course of a fortnight thanking him for the offer and tell him that I shall keep Fred at home a twelvemonth longer to improve him and then if they have a wish to go I shall endeavour to send them, in the meant time we shall have your opinion on the matter, and I hope you will say that which you think will be best for them, for I assure you having had the experience you have had, I think my self it would be best for Fred to, for if we kept him in England and apprenticed him, he can be nothing more than a journeymen(sic)\*\* afterwards for without a Capital a man cannot succeed and we cannot give him that, besides he says he will not stop in England so I suppose we must part with him. I am in hopes that your Uncle John now will do, he having entered into partnership with the firm Anderson Jason and Co. I dare say you know them and can form an opinion respecting it. Your Ma had a letter also from your Aunt and Julia begging of us to send Fanny directly but of course I shall wait your answer.

I have had a letter from your Uncle Fred, it appears by the contents of it he wishes us all to come out to Australia to buy some land and become Farmers. My dear boy, I have had no such thoughts of this. I wrote to you some time back and after what you stated I have thought nothing more about it. I wrote you fully on the subject at that time and you sent word back "by no means to come out". You say in your letter you do not know my position or what capital I could command. I have no doubt but when you left England you was (sic) too young to remember much but I assure you ever since you have been gone I have had a great deal to contend against and since Grandfather Dyason has been in England I have had him to support as he is quite penny-less but of course I cannot let him want, therefore my position is, dear Boy, that I am just enabled to get the Family a living and nothing more, as for having any Capital. That is quite out of the question. A man with a large family in England cannot lay anything by, if he can only support his family respectable (sic) that is all he aspires to, and with excellent management of your good mama we are enabled to do so.

It appears your Uncle Fred wishes one of his brothers to come but tell him there is not one who has the spirit to do so, they are all afraid. They say that he wants to get them out and then he would run away. But tell him I do not think he is such a coward as that. I never liked (*Mr*) Christmas when he was in England, I always thought him a man of no principle and, from what you and your Uncle have said, it is quite confirmed. I do not know if you remember Watts, he used when he commanded a steamship to the Cape, make your Uncle and Aunt his home. He is a very good young man and I am quite sure would do anything he could for you for the kindness he received at the hands of your Uncle and Aunt.

So far as regards myself my dear boy, I am glad to say that I am now much better than I have been. I had a return a short time back, it is an affliction of the Heart and kidneys brought on by too much anxiety. It is very distressing while it lasts and makes me very nervous but I hope and trust I shall spend many happy days with my family for they are the only comfort I have and the pleasure I have is endeavouring to make them happy.

It is very annoying to write letters and have them miscarry. It is a general complaint from all to and from Australia. I most likely shall write again by the *Great Britain* but if I do not your Ma and sister will.

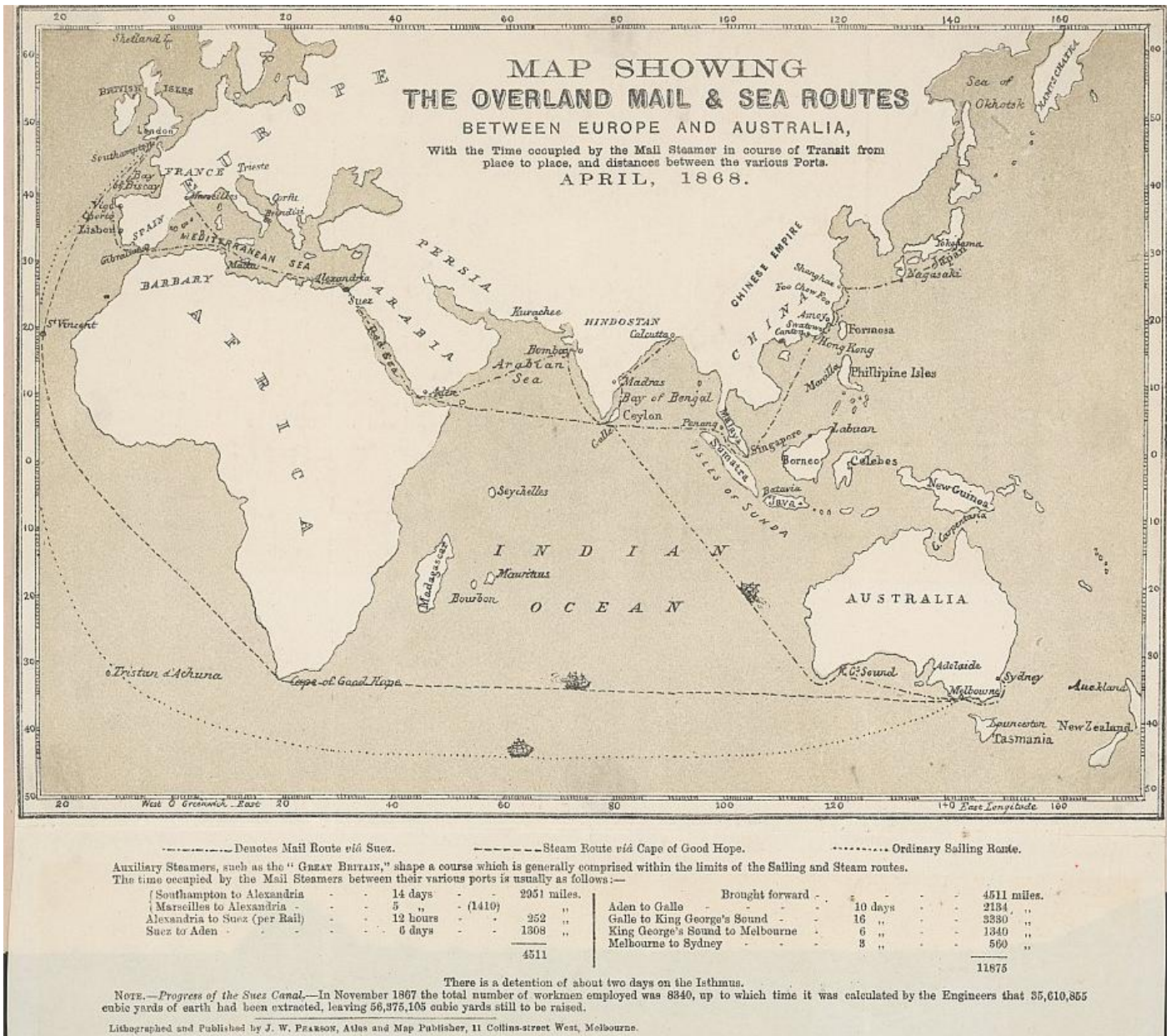
I must now conclude this long and dry letter but I hope my boy the next will be better. Give my love to your Uncle and accept the same from

Your affectionate Father I Dyason

Your Mother , sisters, brothers, Grandma, uncles and aunts all join in kind love, Goodbye, God bless you.

*\*journeyman a person who has served an apprenticeship at a trade or handicraft and is certified to work at it assisting or under another person.*

Although dating some 12 years' later, this map shows the overland mail and sea routes, 1868



Map image sourced from the National Library of Australia August 2013

<http://www.nla.gov.au/apps/cdview/?pi=nla.map-rm1393-e>

**1854 June 14**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Your letter of 15<sup>th</sup> June arrived in July as also the papers\* for which I have to thank you. Julia had copied out the Genealogy of the Huggetts and Edward is making a rough sketch of the family arms while I am writing this note to you. I hope you will excuse all the defects, both in the writing and (*illegible*).

It is Grandmamma's wish that you should have them. Julia will write to you shortly. I suppose you will have had Fred's letter before this arrives as he wrote last month, He spent Whitsunday with us, he seems very comfortable and has become used to his duties at the Customs House. You say you should like to be in a similar situation, we all heartily concur with the wish, as we should then frequently see you, but keep up your spirits dear Boy, we cannot tell what good thing is in store for you. We are quite sure you have done all that lay in your power and I fear you are feeling the inconvenience of it at the present time but do not I entreat you make yourself unhappy about home. Your father has made up his mind what course to pursue in case the Season is not a good one, he will endeavour to make all straight with the Trustees and come to terms with the other parties.

Your not having received one of my letters makes me quite nervous what I write. The house is all ready for the approaching summer, if we have plenty of business it will be all right, at least it will help to ward off the enemy, let us hope for the best.

I think I told you that Julia succeeded Bessie in instructing three girls as morning Governess. Yesterday she entered the family as Resident Governess for a term of years if all goes well. Mr Myers, the father of the family, is a Jewish Priest and receives young Gentlemen to board and educate. He is a man of correct morals and I think every care will be taken of her, she is to be instructed in Drawing and French and a little time hence, the German language. At present she will receive £15 yearly but when qualified to teach these three branches the salary will be £20 not including the washing which will be rather an advantage to herself as I shall have her clothes home and we can keep them in repair.

Dear Isaac, do you not think one's horizon brightens a little, of course it will not be all sunshine but let us be thankful it is not always cloudy. Julia has greatly desired instruction and now if time is allowed her, with the help of the Masters who will instruct her at the same time they are giving lessons to the little girls, she will have her desire gratified. Last evening was the first time she has ever slept away from the family. Her Sundays will be spent at home which will be a rest and change for her. Tell me what you think of it. Bessie did not send her likeness, we must have paid half a crown for the postage, it was so ill done we thought it better not go, she is not very well just now or she would have written. Fanny has not time today

*(written sideways page 1)*

being busy with Julia's wardrobe. Rest assured you are not forgotten, there are warm hearts and willing hands too that would gladly have shared your toils, anxieties and loneliness in order to lighten your burden and cheer your spirits. Still believe beloved child in the plain path of virtue and maintain the honourable conduct which has marked all your actions and the reward must come, if not riches, peace and contentment.

*(written sideways page 2)*

I forgot to mention there is a letter accompanying these arms to show why conferred we will send them next time. This is your Father's birthday 15 June Adieu dear Child.

*(written sideways page 3)*

We have not had a letter from Uncle Fred for a long time. Please present our kindest love and with hearty wishes for success. I have been trying to think of a Motto if you are ever called upon to defend yourself of anxiety, but I can think of none so good as your Country's though it may lose somewhat of its strength and beauty by being so familiar with it, what better objects can a man contend for than "God and his Right"

*\*Newspapers only cost 1 penny to send from Australia to England in 1854*

**(1854 estimated) August 3**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's Mother and Sister Frances**

*From Isaac's Mother*

My dear Isaac

Your letter at last arrived and I feel rather glad that it is not your intention to go again for the diggings as I am fearful the hardships you have to undergo there will injure your constitution, but I think you will take every necessary care of your health.

Uncle Charles has had a letter by the last mail from Australia and Mr Christmas intends to return in September. He says he is disgusted with the Country and with the general character of the people. We are expecting the long promised likeness which we hope to have soon, how glad we shall be to have that countenance but much more delighted to see your own self dearest Boy, which I hope will soon be the case and I trust under happy circumstances not one to be absent as that would mar our happiness. We must refer all our affairs to a higher power but I trust it will please him to be favourable to our wished, that after so long a separation we may meet in health and peace.

We received a box from your Uncle John since we wrote to you last containing four jars of preserves, four crepes\* and three dozen handkerchiefs which we shall find very useful likewise nice silk crepes for Aunt Fanny and four handkerchiefs. There was no letter as he had written previously but we are expecting to hear shortly to know if Frederick is to come out or not and likewise if there is an opening for Fanny as a teacher of music and French. I do not much like the idea of parting with her but if she could do well there I should not wish to prevent her going.

We have heard that your Uncle and Julia are coming to England shortly but I do not know if that is true. I shall be glad to know your opinion on their going. I have taken the family into the country for the Summer months, a place called Haine, about two miles and a half from Ramsgate. They have had their health better than last Summer and we are supplied with everything from Ramsgate. Your father walks here at night and returns in the morning and it is thought it will benefit his health and Fanny can practice here which she could not do at home.

We prepared our rooms for letting during our absence, papering, canvassing where it wanted but unfortunately there has been a very indifferent Season for letting and our speculation has proved unsuccessful. I wish we would have a good season, everything promised so fair at the commencement, if we had had a good run of business with the service you were so kind as to render us we should have done very comfortably indeed. I was promised ten pounds, a thing unprecedented, and unluckily I speculated some part of that sum by having Fanny taught the German and Elizabeth drawing, she having a pretty taste for it and thinking it might turn to some account but in this life we cannot reckon with certainty on anything.

I think your excellent motto dear Boy, may come in very well here, let us hope and do our best. Write to us the first opportunity and let us know of your health etc... etc... etc... I am fearful that you will not do so well now you have parted with so large a sum to us. I had hoped to pay part of it back to you but we must wait another year and we may be more fortunate.

We are all quite well, your Grandma, Uncle White, uncles and aunts who all desire their kindest love to you. Your Father is not very well but I hope he will get stronger for the walks he takes. Your brothers and sisters send their best love and plenty of kisses. I expect your likeness will have a full share when it comes. Take care of yourself dear Boy, hoping to hear from you soon,

I remain your truly affectionate Mother IED

*From Sister Frances Dyason*

I cannot write much now but I will write a longer letter next time. We have lately lost a relation, a young girl Lydia Hurst, one of the cousins, I told you of them, died suddenly in the garden. She had been subject to epileptic fits for three or four years occasioned they think by the fright received at her Grandfather's death. She was a very fine dark girl. I dare say Uncle Fred remembers her very well and now that she is gone I do not mind telling you that she had formed a romantic attachment to you and thought that you would come home and marry her. She was always very anxious to know when we had heard from you and was delighted when we talked of you. Her mamma used to tell her you would bring home a buffalo for her to ride to Church on. Poor girl, she suffered a great deal but she was a good girl and I have no doubt is going to a better place.

Isaac, do not forget me when you have an opportunity of writing. I shall be so disappointed if I do not have a letter from you. Believe me dearest Brother

Your affectionate Sister  
F.D.

*\*A light soft thin fabric of silk, cotton, wool, or another fibre, with a crinkled surface.*

**1854 September 27**

**Ramsgate from Father Isaac Dyason**

My dear Boy

I should have answered your letter dated March 31 1854 long before this time but did not receive it till the 8<sup>th</sup> August and as there was nothing leaving England till the overland mail of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst I thought it best to defer writing till now. I have received the second Bill but was obliged to make use of the 1<sup>st</sup> which came very acceptable, indeed I do not know what I should have done without it for we are having a very bad season. Indeed, I am fearful this will not more than pay its own expenses, therefore I am very thankful for your kind assistance.

I am sorry to find it is your Uncle Fred's intention to return to England, if he has not already left before you receive this, I cannot account for such strange conduct when they are doing altogether so well. He writes words home that the profits are good and that he enjoys his health but does not like his partner. I think that is a very poor reason for wishing to return and as he has been out so short a time I think a few years more would make a man of him. Your Uncle Charles has told me he wrote to you some time back offering terms to you respecting partnership with his business and Uncle Fred. I do not know if you have received that letter, if not the terms I believe were for your Uncle Charles to remain in England and buy, and yourself and Uncle Fred to remain and sell, you to have the goods at cost price and the profits to be divided between the three. If you thought it worth while to embark in it your Uncle Charlie says if you would bring a little capital into the business it would allow him to have from 25 to 10,000 worth of goods constantly on the water without any risk of it being an unprofitable business. Your Uncle Charlie is a first rate hand in Buying, indeed I have heard his dealers say that it is impossible to get much out of him, therefore it will be for your consideration whether you think it will be worth your while joining them. I believe it is also his intention to re-consign some goods sent to your Uncle for he is fearful that the ship will not arrive before he leaves for England, if so he will write to you all particulars.

With respect to your question about the Winter Boots, your Uncle is in London while I am writing, ordering and purchasing goods you have written for to the amount. Your letter not arriving till so late will not give him the opportunity of writing you a reply and then allowing him time to send them out for the next Winter for he says the order will take at least 4 months to execute and 4 months on the Water which would be beyond the time you mention, therefore he says he perfectly well knows the quality of goods you require and will send them out without delay. Should they not be the sort you require you can easily sell them wholesale at a profit and send your order by the next mail, but as he has been sending Winter goods to your Uncle Fred for two seasons he says he cannot make any mistake.

I am glad to find by your letters that things are improving at the diggens (sic), I hope they will continue so and that you have had a prosperous Winter. Take care of your health my dear boy as we are looking forward to the time of your return with pleasure and satisfaction. Your Ma and the Family are still in the country where they enjoy excellent health and I trust they will continue to do so as we have had a most sickly season but am in hopes by the blessings of God we shall escape it. I walk out to them every night and return in the morning. We are anxiously looking forward to a letter from you respecting your opinion about Fanny and Fred.

I see by your letter you wrote on your Birthday, you may rest assured, my boy, it is never forgotten. Your Ma always makes a cake for the children and gives them a little treat on that day and tells them when Isaac comes home they shall have such a treat as they never had before. I am glad to say I am greatly improved in health and trust I shall continue so. Your Grandma and Uncles, Aunts are all quite well and desire their kind love. Your Ma joins with me in kind love to you and trust the Almighty will prosper you in your undertakings and that he will protect you from all harm is the most fervent wish of your affectionate Father

Isaac Dyason

**1854 October 2**

**Ramsgate from Father Isaac Dyason**

My dear Boy

I was greatly in hope that we should have received a letter from you by the overland mail which arrived yesterday but it appears that we are again to be disappointed of that pleasure. It is now five months since we have received one from you and Isaac if you could but see and know the pleasure we have in receiving any intelligence of or from you you would endeavour Isaac dear to facilitate it as often as you possibly can. Your Ma and the family are still out in the country and when I go home this evening she will be greatly disappointed not to find any letter for we always have intelligence by telegraph 4 or 5 days before any arrivals overland so we have been anxiously awaiting and are again disappointed.

We have now nearly finished our season and a most miserable one we have had, it has been entirely owing to Cholera, our town has been quite deserted during the whole of September which is one of our best months and June and July were nothing but cold and rain so we have had only August to do any business at all. Indeed I have not taken the expenses required for carrying on the Business which amount to £500 a year before leaving me any profit for myself. The Cholera has been very severe in Ramsgate but thank God we and all our relations have escaped it at present and trust we shall continue to do so as it has now quite left the town. I am greatly in hope it will not return but to counteract the badness of the Season we have had a most plentiful Harvest which we ought to be very thankful for as it will make bread much cheaper than it was last year so we must be contented with our lot and look forward to another Season which I hope will be far more profitable than the present.

What I contemplated when I wrote to you for your kind assistance was to get fitted up some cheap Baths which I am sure could pay very well but at present I cannot succeed as the ground required to put them on belongs to Mr Turmaine whom I daresay you remember and he now will not let me have them therefore must wait his death which cannot be long as he is now more than 80 years of age, the Trustees will then purchase the ground and build the baths and it is the opinion of everyone that I should be able to get a capital living but there is an old saying, "while the grass is growing the stock is starving" which will be quite my case if we have any more such seasons as we have had this year. Indeed your Ma wants to know if there is anything I could do in Australia either to assist you in the stores or anything else. If you thought I could do any good out there I should very much like to come out for a few years without the Family. You must bear in mind that I understand no Business, but pride myself I could superintend anything that required an active person's services. I fancy myself that I could stand the diggens (sic) although I am fully aware it must be very laborious work. You know I consider myself quite in the prime of life, my age being only 43 years and as I know there are some people whose age exceeds mine that have left Ramsgate and are doing very well at the diggens (sic). I flatter myself that should you approve of my ideas I should be very glad to come for I am quite tired of the inactive life which does not employ me scarcely any time during the year with very little advantage to the Family, for by the time the year is finished I am in no better position than when it began. Your Ma and the Family would have no objections to my leaving for a few years and I should be glad to make any sacrifice on my part for their welfare however much I should regret parting from them. Your Aunt Fanny with a little assistance would be able to carry on the Business during my absence which would enable the family to live comfortably till my return. I have my dear Boy now told my proposition as from what Fanny has told me you wish to know it, it is that I am not more than able to get them a living from year to year and when we meet with such a season as that one that is now just passing it puts me to great inconvenience to make both ends meet. I shall not mention the subject to you again for I do not wish to make you at all uncomfortable. Do not think that the business will not support us but with a fair average season we are able to live comfortable and respectable and by the time the season comes around again we are very glad to see it so if you think there is any probability of my doing anything out there for the benefit of the Family I shall be quite ready to come out, if not I shall remain at home and wait patiently for better days. It is Ma's wish that you should quite understand our position and therefore have done as she wished.

I am glad to say that we have received intelligence of the fall of Sebastopol which I hope will be a death blow to the pride of Russia. The war has made things very dear in this country but if she should give way things would return to their old prices.

You never told me you have received that list of goods which I sent you in one of your Uncle's cases, if you have received it and anything there would be of any advantage to you at the diggings I could send them to the amount of 3 or £400, if you will only write and tell me what you require. Your Uncle Charles is in a fix, he does not know what to do for he is not certain whether your Uncle Fred is coming home or not but the goods for the future he will consign to you until he hears satisfactory from him. Your Ma, the children and all friends desire their kind love to you and accept the same my dear Boy from your affectionate

Father I. Dyason

If you have an opportunity write an answer for this by the Overland Mail. Your Ma said the girls say they shall write by the end of the month as there is a new Steamship which will leave England for the Cape and Australia at that time.

*(A short note from Isaac's mother)*

My dear Isaac

I have sent you a lock of Augusta's hair, this will remind you of home and of the little ones and is really a part of them. I hope you are quite well and happy. We are all in health and wish you every success. We shall soon write a long letter. Goodbye dearest Child for a little while, from your affectionate mother EID.

1854 October 11

Uncle Paulin Huggett Pearce in the newspapers. TEACHING YOUNG LADIES TO SWIM – This was NOT mentioned in any of the letters! [Daily News](#) (London, England), Wednesday, October 11, 1854; Issue 2619

## TEACHING YOUNG LADIES TO SWIM.

At the Ramsgate Petty Sessions on Tuesday, Paulin Huggett Pearce, a bather, attended in answer to a summons, charging him with having, on the 1st inst. bathed in rear of, and within the distance of fifty yards from a certain bathing machine, from which certain females were then bathing, contrary to the bye-laws in respect to bathing.

James Bloomfield deposed—I am a police-constable of the Royal Harbour of Ramsgate. On Sunday last, at a quarter before nine, I was on duty on the Sands. I saw defendant bathing at the rear of two machines, then used by females; he was about ten or twelve yards in the rear of the machines with two females. I saw him throw himself on his back. I then saw him turn one of the young ladies on her back, and in doing so the ripple of the sea turned up her bathing gown, which he then put over her feet. Shortly after he walked out of the water, and entered an empty bathing machine standing on the dry land; he had an old waistcoat and pair of trousers on. When he came out of the water I said to him, "You are carrying on a pretty game—you'll have a summons from me." He then said, "What for—teaching swimming?" I said "No, for bathing within the distance appointed for ladies." His arms and neck were quite bare when he came out of the water.

John Edwards deposed—I am a solicitor, practising at 39, Lothbury, London, at the present living at the Royal Oak Hotel. On Sunday morning last, between eight and nine, I had been taking a bath, and was returning from the Sands when my attention was called to what I considered a very extraordinary scene near the place where the ladies were. I saw a person in the water. At that time I did not know whether it was a man or a woman, but I subsequently saw from the moustache that it was a man. He was bathing with two or three women. The women had bathing dresses on. The man appeared to have nothing on but his lower garments, his arms and breast being quite naked. It appeared to me that defendant was teaching them how to swim. I saw one lady on her back, and the man was apparently teaching her how to float, for as she came towards him he pushed her by the feet from him. I felt as the father of a family great disgust.

Thomas Ratcliff deposed—On Friday last I saw defendant in the centre of a group of five ladies, bathing with them. I saw him separate one from the others, and teach her to swim. Twice before, during last week, I saw him with two ladies. I have had ladies make complaints to me about such exhibitions.

Pearce, in his defence, said that he had been teacher of the art of swimming for twenty four years, and had never had a charge of this kind brought against him, and in fact was ignorant of the law. He had never been cautioned. He had saved the lives of many persons from drowning, and had in this instance been requested to teach these young ladies, to prevent such an occurrence to them. He had conducted himself with propriety, and was clothed then as he was now. He produced the gowns the ladies wore, to prove that they could not wash up. The continual shooting of rubbish on to the Sands near to the place allotted to him, obliged him very often at high water to wade in and fetch ladies out.

A gentleman stepped forward and said, that as the father of one, and the grandfather of another, of the young ladies, he was convinced of the propriety of Pearce's conduct, and would, did it not tend to infringe the laws, allow his children to go in again.

The Bench, after a short consultation, said that they were of opinion that this case did not come under the Bye Laws, which were framed to prevent indecencies, which had not in this instance been proved. They were not called upon, neither did they express any opinion, as to the propriety of what had been described. The case was dismissed.—*Kentish Gazette.*

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**(1854 estimated) November 3**

**From Isaac's sister Elizabeth Dyason (*aged nearly 19*)**

My Dear Brother

At last my hope has been fulfilled, my patience rewarded by a letter really written by you and addressed to me in my own proper person not as I have long had, an addition made in the corner of the letter such as "Give my love to..." Oh that odious name I cannot abide, Bessie indeed, what Bessie I'd like to know ever achieved anything in either Love or War, let your lady love be Bessie if you like, I'll none of it. I intend committing a felony on the name Eliza, rob it of Lizzie and henceforth to take a place in your memory as "Lizzie Dyason" one of the most erring frail mortals that ever stepped into shoe leather but loving you withal and expecting that you'll love her faults and all.

The idea of you walking a hundred miles between one paragraph of a letter and another, why my dear Isaac, it makes me tired only to think of it. And so you are heart whole, at least were when you wrote. I am thinking what a sensation you will cause among the Ramsgate girls when you come home. You can have no idea how scarce the unappreciated Lords of Creation are here, positively there are but two or three in the same station as ourselves and they, stupidly thinking that the scarcity of supply increases the value of the article, walk about holding their noses like pigs in a hurricane and have to be asked if they will dance or take a walk – would you believe it?

Do you hear much of the war. The Allies have just obtained a splendid victory at Alma. The Fleet has not done much, in fact all their doings may be described thus "Sir Charles Napier, with fifty thousand men sailed up the sea and then sailed home again". Julia and Jack and their mamma are coming to England, is not that a stroke of brilliance. Of course I shall be very glad to see them but between you and me and the Post Office I've sundry misgivings. In the first place, I'm afraid Julia's perfect and then she will be such a reproof to me, and then her Mama shan't have to mind my "p's" and "q's" and be up on my good behaviour. Won't it be fatiguing especially in the hot weather, but I must endeavour to survive it though I expect to be lost quite into her shade and looked upon as very little better than one of the wicked.

Julia writes rather incoherently about a midshipman who has been staying with them, I don't know if the Gold band has led her captive. They are dangerous subjects to contemplate I confess.

What lovely weather we are having though it is November, I hope it will be just such when you come home.

I have no idea of your reading this letter through, unless you happen to get it on Sunday afternoon and you are not very sleepy. As for my writing I don't intend to apologise for I know that I shall never write in angles, nice slanting lines, frozen strokes have exact designs. So what can't be corrected must be endured by you as well as by me.

Now my dear Isaac, hoping that the time when I shall see you is not very distant and rejoicing in your good health and spirits I remain your own sister,

Lizzie Dyason



Wikimedia Commons accessed April 2013 painting of the **battle of Alma** by Horace Vernet [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Battle\\_of\\_Alma.PNG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Alma.PNG)

**1854 November 14**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

I have enclosed a letter from Fred, the first he has ever written.

My dear Isaac

I take this opportunity of writing to you by the Steam Ship *Pacific* in answer to yours dated August 12 and received by the Sailing Ship *Lightning* which made her voyage in 63 days, the quickest passage on record. You seem to think my dear boy that in the letter I sent you in April last that I complain of your want of affection, in consequence of your not writing more frequently to your Ma and myself. I do not for one moment suppose you do not have the same feeling for us that you always had, but the reason of my writing so was that we are most anxious to hear from you and every time the mail arrives and we get no letter we are disappointed. I assure you my dear boy it is the greatest pleasure we have to hear from you and to know that you are in health as that is the greatest comfort to us, for to have you return to us with an impaired constitution, however wealthy you might become, would be a sorry compensation for all the trouble and hardships our boy has undergone. We trust that you will return to us strong and in the best of health to enjoy the proceeds of your labours and industry which you are so highly deserving of.

You say you have not seen your Uncle Fred for some time. I hope by this time you have turned of (*Mr*) Christmas and if worth your while you have entered into partnership in the shoe trade with him. I never did like Christmas, there was something so repulsive in his look that made it unpleasant to be in his company, much less to have any dealings with him. I am sorry that trade is dull but am very much in hopes that it will revive again. Always after a glut things will be very dull but those who are fortunate enough to have money to purchase always reap the advantages of dull times and I trust my dear boy is one of those fortunate persons. By the bye you have never told me what business you have entered into but have merely said you have stores at the diggings. I have no doubt you purchase goods at Melbourne and sell to the diggers. I do not, my dear boy, my wish to be curious but I feel satisfied that with the industry you possess you must, with God's blessing, prosper.

I have written within this last fortnight received a letter from your Uncle John and he tells me that your Aunt and Julia and John are coming to England in the Spring. I hope that they will have a prosperous voyage and that they will enjoy themselves while in England. Your Uncle Charles has shipped some goods for you by the *Ida* which left the Downs last Saturday week. He does not know what to make of your Uncle Fred's coming home, he thinks he cannot mean it and now he has got rid of old 'C'. I trust he will write his letters so that they may be understood.

I see by the Melbourne papers that you are subscribing largely for improvements, such sums which appear almost fabulous to us but I am not surprised at anything you do where gold is so plentiful.

I see by your letter that you have had a fast day and a collection made on account of the war, I trust it will not last long but at present we cannot tell, we are expecting to hear every day of the fall of Sebastopol. There has been a very severe battle fought under the wall, with the loss of 9,000 Austrians. I trust this is the forerunner of their capitulation and that the War will soon cease, as it makes things very dear in England. Bread at 2 shillings the gallon, meat 9 – 10 pence and rump steak 1 shilling 1 pence per pound, butter 1/2 to 1/4, candles 8/9/10 per pound and everything else in proportion so you must think that where people have large families to support and a precarious income to live upon it makes them very anxious to know the end.

I am very glad to find by your letter that you enjoy the best of health and that you do not trouble yourself about the events of any undertakings and that the World rolls round very easily for you. I wish my dear Boy I could say the same for myself but I assure you with my large family I have a great many anxieties respecting their welfare but how to provide for them. Your Ma joins with me in kind love with the rest of the Family and believe me my dear Child, your affectionate Father

I Dyason

## 1854 December 3 Eureka Stockade.

One of the most significant events on the Victorian Gold fields. While some mention is made of other disturbances earlier in the year, the letters are remarkably silent on the events leading up to Eureka Stockade and its aftermath. The following image and quote are from Wikipedia accessed May 2013

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Eureka\\_stockade\\_battle.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Eureka_stockade_battle.jpg).

*The Eureka Rebellion of year 1854 was a historically significant organised rebellion of gold miners of Ballarat against the colonial authority of the United Kingdom. The Battle of Eureka Stockade (by which the rebellion is popularly known) was fought between miners and the Colonial forces of Australia on 3 December 1854 at Eureka Lead and named for the stockade structure erected by miners during the conflict. Resulting in the deaths of at least 27 people, the majority of which were insurgents, it was the most significant conflict in the colonial history of Victoria.*

*The event was the culmination of civil disobedience in the Ballarat region during the Victorian gold rush with miners objecting to the expense of a Miner's Licence, taxation (via the licence) without representation and the actions of the government and its agents (the police and military) The local rebellion in Ballarat grew from a Ballarat Reform League movement and culminated in the erection by the rebels of a crude battlement and a swift and deadly siege by colonial forces.*

*Mass public support for the captured rebels in the colony's capital of Melbourne when they were placed on trial resulted in the introduction of the Electoral Act 1856, which mandated full white male suffrage for elections for the lower house in the Victorian parliament, the second instituted political democracy in Australia. As such, the Eureka Rebellion is controversially identified with the birth of democracy in Australia and interpreted by some as a political revolt*



*Description Battle of the Eureka Stockade. J. B. Henderson (1854) Watercolour Source State Library of NSW Date 06:56, 18 August 2010 (UTC) Author J. B. Henderson*

**1854 December 7**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My dear Boy

We received your kind letter date the 19<sup>th</sup> September and on the 5<sup>th</sup> (instant) and very glad we all are to find that you still continue in health and that you still continue to progress in the right direction. I am very happy indeed that it is so and hope that you will realise all that you can wish for. When your Ma read that portion of your letter which says that you shall remain absent 20 years, a cloud passed her brow as she thought it was so long to look forward to with any degree of comfort or satisfaction. Of course my dear boy you must mean 20 years from the time you left England, you cannot mean it any other way for we would much rather see you without a shilling than have to wait so long a time for our long absent boy. Next time you write tell us that I am correct in my surmise.

I shall not write you a long letter this time as Ma and Fanny are both writing. I thank you for your opinion respecting Fred and Fanny and shall no doubt embrace the opportunity if I can manage it on the return of your Aunt Julia and Jack who are coming to England in the Spring.

Fanny has a great wish to go and so does Fred. I think the change will do her a great deal of good for she is rather delicate and I think a few years will quite restore her. Do not think we wish to part from her. I assure you it will cause a great deal of unhappiness to us but we think it will be for her welfare and if, as we expect, in a few years you will return and bring her with you.

I find by your letter that you are likely to enter into partnership with your Uncle Fred in the Shoe Business, I have no doubt but that with proper arrangements it will answer very well. You say (*Mr*) Christmas is coming home. You seem not to have any opinion of him, I never had.

Your Uncle Charles tells me they have been selling goods at a great loss because they were a little damaged, fancying because they were insured they would be able to recover but they are only insured against total loss and as they have been sold at considerably less than the cost price in England it will be a serious loss to him. Should any more goods arrive there in a damaged state and if you have anything to do with them you will do the best you can by them, remembering they are only insured against total loss.

We received a paper the other day from your Uncle Fred, remember us to him and tell him although we do not write we do not forget him.

Your affectionate Father  
I.D.

**(1854 estimated) December 27**  
**From Isaac's sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Isaac

The *James Baines* will leave England the 9<sup>th</sup> so I thought I could send a few lines to thank you for your very kind letter to me. I think if Aunt keeps in the same mind I should like to return with her as I have a great desire to see foreign countries, and I think this opportunity should not be neglected as it may never occur again. I have also to thank you for your proffered kindness in case I should not be happy there. But if I have my health I do not doubt but that I shall be comfortable with my Uncle's family. Besides, I shall be half way on the road to you and perhaps I shall trick Uncle Fred after all.

We have had but little frost and no snow as yet but our hands and feet are full of chilblains as usual. I wish Uncle Fred could just be left awake half the night as I and Fred are with them and then he would not want to be here in the Winter. Ma has sent you the Ages of us all since you have been in Australia but that letter as well as a great many others could not have reached you. With this request my dear brother I am able to comply more easily than the former. I, your humble servant am nearly twenty one (14 February) alarming idea, Lizzy nearly nineteen (30 December), Fred 15 (14 December), Julia 13 (26 February), Edward 11,(4 January), Charles 9 (17 April), Augusta was 6 last May and Baby alias Catherine 4 years old last July. We are nine in number with yourself Dear Isaac, and if George had lived we should have been an equal number five boys and five girls. I am glad you intend to keep up the practice of the Dutch language, the German very much resembles it. I am very fond of it and prefer it to the French. I should like to go to France for two months where I should hear nothing but French spoken and that would give me greater fluency in conversing.

Tell Uncle Fred we all send our kind love to him. I wish you would ask him to tell you the story of the scalpers. I hope Mr Christmas will come home and then perhaps shall have the long wished for likeness. How much I shall prize it. I expect I shall be quite an object of envy, and now dear Isaac I must conclude hoping you will excuse this very unconnected epistle, as it is rather late and I am getting tired. I hope dearest Isaac you will write to me soon when you send again if it is not too much trouble.

Believe me, ever your sincerely affectionate sister  
Fanny Dyason

1855

1855 January 13

Ramsgate from Isaac's father

My dear Boy

We received your letter last Even' by the *Lady Jocelyn* dated 30<sup>th</sup> September. She has made a very long passage home and I have no doubt Christmas must have been very tired of his voyage for I see by your letter that he has taken passage in her and no doubt he is by this time at Herne Bay.

I am happy to say we are all quite well with the exception of colds which are always very prevalent here at this time of year. Indeed your Ma, I think I never saw her look better than she has done these last few months, I hope and trust she will continue so. As for myself, I have not had recourse to the doctor for more than 3 months which is a thing I have not been able to accomplish for more than two years.

I find by your letter that you are entering into partnership with your uncle. I trust that it will prove advantageous to you and him, but I have no occasion to inform you that it will be quite necessary for you to take the principle management in your own hands for your Uncle Fred wants firmness in business and has not the tact to manage and conduct it as it ought to be. You have justly said that it is far better to be straight forward in business than beat about the bush, this is your Uncle's fault, he would rather do anything than to come to the point. It is not for want of principle or unfair dealing but it is a want of nerve, he would rather submit to anything than have anything unpleasant with those he might be connected with in business. He is a capital salesman and no doubt would get a good business together anywhere but has not the nerve to take the business part which I think you are fully competent to do.

I consider it my duty my dear Boy to inform you in what manner the partnership has been carried on between your Uncle and Christmas. It is to this effect, your Uncle Charles has purchased goods in the wholesale markets and has sent them out to Australia at a profit on the purchase of something like 20 or 30 per cent, the goods have reached Australia as prime cost goods and there have been sold and the profit equally divided between your Uncle and Christmas. Your Uncle Charles takes again a half of your Uncle Fred's profits. With that we have nothing to do, but now you are entering into partnership with them the case is quite different, the goods ought to be purchased at prime cost and the profits divided between the three. Although your Uncle Charles has very good judgement in buying it is not more than equivalent to your management and judgement in Australia. I shall of course have some conversation with him on the subject and am in hopes the matter will be properly arranged. You will have an opportunity of judging for yourself by reefing back to the old invoice prices of the late firm and seeing if the new prices correspond with the same class of goods as formerly, of course if it is not worth your while you will not continue with them but of course of that you will be the best judge.

I should like to know if there is anything I can send you that would be remunerative to yourself and me, if there is I will endeavour to do it as I should very much like to increase my living as our large family gets very expensive. Everything is very dear in England in consequence of the War and when we shall see the end is quite uncertain for it appears we have very much mistaken our Enemy and have held him too cheaply in our estimation.

I have written you several letters lately which I hope you will receive in due course and I should very much like answers if there was a chance of doing anything for the Family to come out myself for a few years, if not I must rest contented and wait for better times. We have received the 4 letters you mention including the one per *Lady Jocelyn* and are very much delighted with them for be assured my dear Boy we are always anxious to hear of your health and well-doing especially as you are so very far away from all your friends and connections and I do trust the time is not far distant when there may be a probability of seeing our long distant boy.

With regard to Fred, your brother, I do not know what to do with him, he is much too delicate for a laborious trade and would not succeed in it and if we do not send him out to your Uncle John, which is our present intention we think of putting him as apprentice to a Chemist and Druggist but that will all depend on your Aunt's view when she arrives in England. We are disappointed in not receiving your likeness which we should very much liked to have had, but we have one that was taken before you left and which is always before us. Your Uncle Fred must remember it very well, hanging over the mantel piece in our sitting room. If I have time I shall write a few lines to your Uncle Fred, if not give all our kind loves to him and tell him we do not forget him. Your Ma and all your brothers and sisters join with me in kind love to you my dear Boy, wishing you health and happiness and a happy new year and by the time this reaches you your birthday will be at hand so we wish you many happy returns of the day, the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1832

Believe me my dear Boy  
Your affectionate Father I Dyason

Write an answer to this that I may know you have received it.

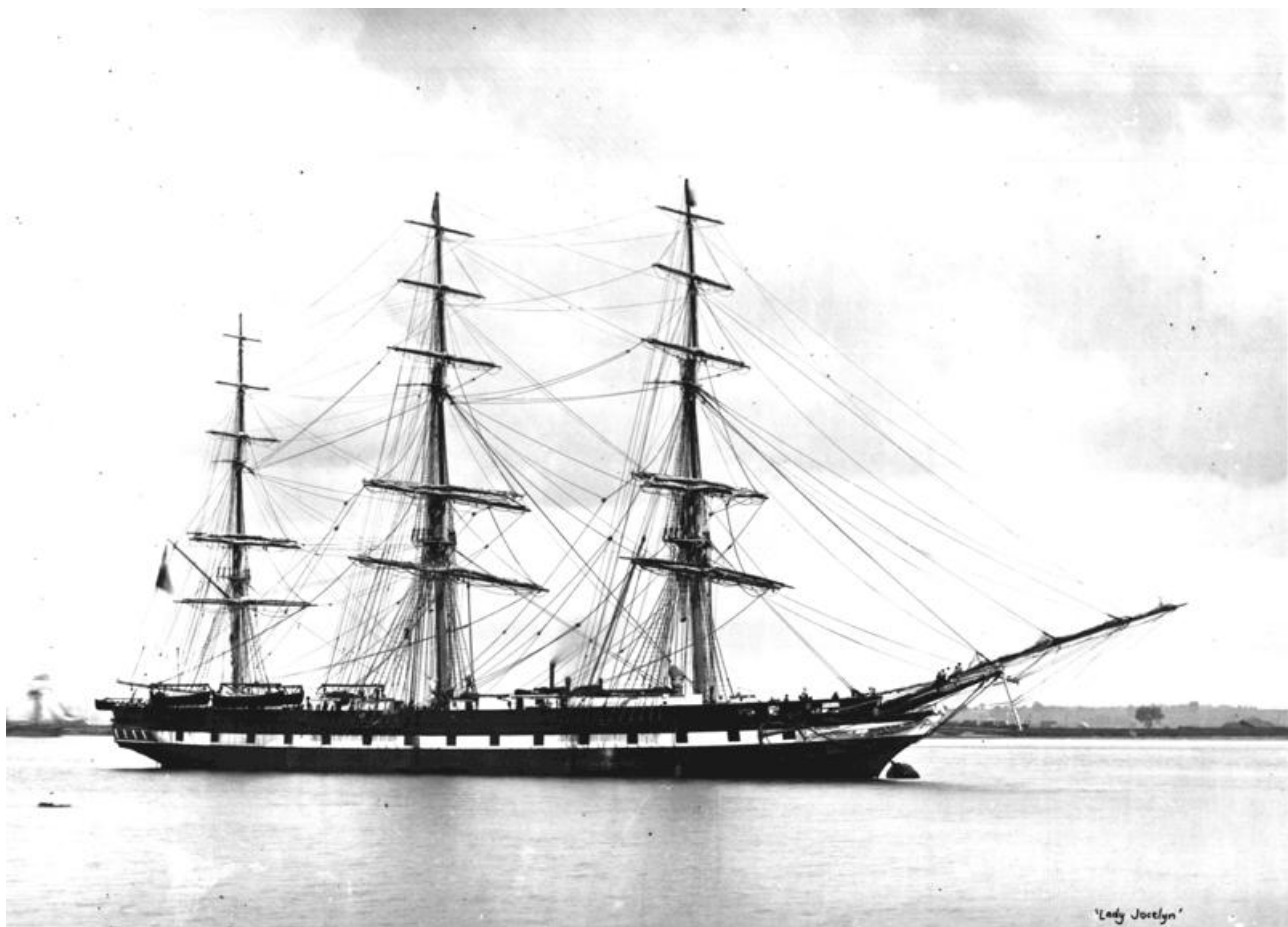


Image of the *Lady Jocelyn* accessed May 2013 from <http://www.cossar.co.nz/c-lady-jocelyn.htm>

**(1855 estimated) February 1**  
**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

We received your kind letter and are most happy to hear that you are still in the enjoyment of good health which I pray may be continued to you. I am sorry my dear child that business is so unfortunate with you, it is not an easy matter to provide for our various wants but take courage dearest Boy and all may yet be well. Mr Christmas called on us the day after he arrived at Herne Bay and brought his wife with him. I almost wish you had sent your likeness to him, I think he would have brought it safely as he would not have felt any interest in it so as to wish to retain it in his own possession. He spoke of you in terms of respect but I do not think him a kind, good-hearted man nor an honourable one. I consider his wife an affectionate, well-meaning person but I have not seen them more than two or three times so perhaps I may be wrong in my judgement in speaking about them.

No doubt you have heard of the sufferings of our poor fellows at the Crimea, it is heartrending to think of them and it is most unfortunate that they cannot get the supplies which our country has so abundantly provided for them. At this present time there are two vessels in our Harbour sent to take back the horses which were taken out of a vessel which was on its way to the Crimea but was wrecked by an Easterly wind on the Goodwin Sands. As the weather abated a little the horses and most of the cargo were brought into this Harbour. The Emperor of Russia says he shall be able to bring home all that are left of the English troops in one vessel after the winter, the mortality is so very great among them owing to their exposure to the cold. The French on the contrary are all comfortably clothed, sheltered and well fed.

Our winter is colder than it has been for many years, lately the snow covers the ground to some depth, to those who have never seen it, it must present a lovely appearance. We felt it a great deal at first but we do not mind it so much now. I have not heard if you have any snow in Australia in winter but I suppose it is nothing but rain.

I do not know how your aunt and cousins will endure a winter in England if it happens to be a severe one. I daresay Julia and John are full of delightful anticipations of their Father's country. I hope they will be fully realized but I can hardly think we will be, as young people's ideas are rather too high flown generally, as when the children went to see Kennett's Christmas Bullock walk down the road from St Lawrence. Fanny came home quite disappointed, she expected to see one as big as an Elephant.

We have received all those letters you mention and have sent letters from each in return. Your views respecting Fanny and Frederick agree with your Father's and mine, we think it would be better for him to understand a business before leaving this country, however we shall await the arrival of your Aunt before we decide for him. I always think the choosing a trade or profession is a very important era in a boy's life as much of his happiness or misery depends on his choice. I am writing by this mail to your Uncle Frederick. I am glad to hear he is free from Mr Christmas and sincerely hope that he will be prosperous and happy and should you unite with him I think it will be profitable to you both. I sent you a lock of Augusta's hair in your Father's letter and the ages of your Brothers and Sisters in another letter. This I have done more than once in former letters but they cannot have reached you.

Lizzie is at Walmer on a visit to Mrs Hurst, the first time she has ever been from home. It is a pretty place in Spring and Summer. You remember that Walmer Castle was the former residence of the Duke of Wellington. Aunt Brooke and Uncle White are both quite well, your grandma likewise in good health. She often talks of you and sends her kindest love. I hope her life may be spared many years, I am glad you have not forgotten the Dutch language, it is similar to the German, Fanny has not studied it this Winter but intends doing so in the Summer if all is well.

I must now say adieu for a little while and permit me to insert this little sentence which Fanny worked on her sampler when a little girl "*Keep innocency, and do the thing that is right for that shall bring a Man*

*Peace at the last*” and that every blessing may be yours beloved Boy is the constant prayer of your ever affectionate Mother

EI Dyason

Have you heard Miss Hayes and are you pleased with her voice.\*

*\*Miss Catherin Hayes toured Australia from September 1854 and was in Calcutta by January 1855*



*Miss Catherin Hayes* Image accessed May 2013 from <http://www.limerickcity.ie/Library/LocalStudies/LocalStudiesFiles/H/HayesCatherine/> *The Australian Dictionary of Biography* contains a detailed account of her life at <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hayes-catherine-3736>

**1855 April 9**

**Ramsgate from Sister Elizabeth Dyason**

My dearest brother

Many thanks for your kind letter which I received on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst. I am happy dear Isaac to hear of your continued good health and also that the great changes in the climate do not affect you much. We "old unripened beauties of the North" cannot realise the heat you speak of. Last Summer we had, some say we thought, hot days, when the thermometer actually stood at 96 or 97 in the sun. On one of those days I went with some friends to Dover by an excursion boat, so many of which run in the Season to different places, and we came to the conclusion that no one anywhere could ever be hotter than we. Perhaps if we bear in mind the figures at which you put down the temperature you enjoy it may serve to make us feel cooler during the approaching Summer but after all, imagination unassisted by anything tangible, is not much. Is it not Shakespeare who says "Who can hold a fire in his hand by thinking on the frosty Caucasus"\* I feel the force of this now, the hope of receiving help to my endeavours to make a portrait of yourself. I have tried hard to realise it, is gone for the present. I accept your excuses, brother mine, for the time but I hope when opportunity offers you will embrace it and let me have the shadow of your own dear self.

I have not been able to send you the likeness you ask for by this mail as the artist who takes them, Mr Fraser, is not at present in Ramsgate but he will have returned before the next vessel leaves England and then you shall have a representation of my charming self, very charming I assure you. Two brown eyes, two lips indifferent red, item the nose, item the mouth, though I do not expect penetrating as Phoebus\*\* is, he will be able to discover all my perfections. You say dearest Isaac you will make a certain young lady a beacon so that your back shall no more be driven against the rock of idleness. Now I pray you good brother to not employ the said strange young lady but elect me to the post (now do not think I propose from any inward consciousness of my eligibility to the office) for as your back will no doubt through the winds of adverse circumstances of course be driven to sight of those various headlands, rocks and shoals etc... etc... pretty often. I would willingly occupy any position which would bring me so frequently to your notice and remembrances. So you have a premonitory symptom that old times have begun to tread on your bachelor ties and oh dissembler, you say a lot that you cannot find a grey hair to send some home to me. Depend upon it you did not see clearly or something had dazzled your eyes, perhaps you had been looking at some flaxen ringlets and every thing looked light in consequence, or perhaps, in walking, the wind (you have high winds sometimes don't you?) had blown a stray hair from aforesaid ringlets on to yours which looked grey of white in contrast with the dark, or if in every deed and truth, it is not a veritable grey hair and no mistake as the Vulgate hath it, let me cast about for consolations - Grey hairs are honourable, also practical - witness all the allusions to "silver threads" with which poetry abounds but however as people in the third stage of human life will persist in thinking, any colour is preferable to white. I'll tell you for your comfort that a solitary grey hair is worst of all, for I found some in my hair at 10 and the other day I pulled one out of Fred's embryo whiskers. And if that much visited question, whether we take after our ancestors or they after us, is decided in favour of the former proposition, then we can reckon on a long vista of life even to the end crowned with locks of shining gold, black and brown, for both Mama and Aunt Polly have still beautifully curling hair, quite such angels, and even Grandmama's hair is thick and black.

It was passing strange the eclipse of the sun and the little effect produced by it, and though we had wonderful accounts from the country of cows coming home to be milked etc... I believe the most remarkable thing was that when it was at the height the milkman in London was seen proceeding with some haste towards the pump at Bayswater.

You have guessed rightly. I have never heard Spurgeon\*\*\*but have read some of his sermons, he seems to possess in a remarkable degree what no great divine has possessed since the days of Luther, religious humour, which and a very loud one seems to be his sole claim to popularity.

I am glad dear Isaac you like the Opera of Norma\*\*\*\*, it is my favourite 'par excellence' and I shall now play it with additional pleasure, there are some beautiful arias.

Our Sands are just as your memory depicts them and cordially do I reciprocate your wish that you were at our particular watering place where you could revel in the sea that guards your native land. I often avail myself of the privilege and assure you we get quite hot enough to appreciate a plunge in the element which “without a mark, without a bound, runneth the earth’s wide circle round”

Thank you in the name of all England for the devotion so prettily expressed, I think the old lion will have to rouse himself for the crowing of the Gallic flock has been sounding disagreeably in his ears of late for, as you will see by the papers, our volatile neighbours have been trying to dictate to us on the subject of our alien laws and as submission is a nice French word which they appear to have forgotten the meaning of, I suppose his Lionship must just re-teach it there.

I thank you dear Isaac for the papers you have sent us, they appear to have rather a radical tendency which I do not exactly approve, it is the tone which the cheap press takes in this country, I do not think it is a healthy one.

I am sorry to say that our dear Mama has not been very well this Winter but hope that as Spring advances she will be better. She told me to give you so much of her love that I think I shall keep some of it for myself and not send it all to you or you will get more than your share.

And now dearest brother, thanking you for your letter to me a I must bid you good bye till the 12<sup>th</sup> of next month.

With much love, your affectionate sister Libby Dyason.

We are all very sorry to hear of the untoward circumstances attending poor Julia’s marriage but I hope the cloud will soon pass away, also that her Mama has been ill, it accounts as you say for their not having written.

Fanny would have written but she has a sore finger, she sends her love.

*\*From Shakespeare’s Richard II*

*\*\*Phoebus – Sun god*

*\*\*\*Charles Spurgeon – a British ‘prince of preaching’ – 1834 to 1892, his sermons are still being published*

*\*\*\*\*Norma is a tragedia lirica or **opera** in two acts by Vincenzo Bellini with libretto by Felice Roman*

**(1855 estimated) May 3**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I wrote a letter to you some time since, enclosing one for your Uncle Fred which I intended to refer but I forgot till after it was sealed to mention it to your Father, I do not suppose he was offended at the omission, since which Fanny has received a letter from you and your Father has written one to you. He expects to hear from you this month and hopes you are still in health and improving in circumstances.

Our neighbour Mr Turmaine is dead, his furniture has been sold and his house will become the property of the Trustees of the Harbour, our Landlords, and as we hope now to accomplish the cheap bathing by building some new baths on the ground the house now stands on but cannot be accomplished this summer as his death occurred too recently. If we can but stand our ground till the alteration takes place there is no doubt that we shall realise a good living. The house is old and very dark yet we never could persuade the old gentleman to sell it to us. I suppose he was attached to it having lived there so many years. There were seventeen sovereigns found on a shelf at the time he lay dead and he had two watches, a gold chain, silver ditto and a silver keyed flute. Uncle Thomas went to the sale but did not purchase anything.

Your Father has often said, if I could but increase the number of baths so that I might have first and second class Baths I should find no difficulty in providing for my family. Our friends think the same which I trust will be the case. He like many others have such a great deal to struggle against especially during this last winter but I hope brighter days are in store for you, for us and for all. You say you have not heard from your Uncle John for some time. Neither have we, though if they carry out their first plan the family will be here shortly. I do not see they can be offended with you, neither are we sensible of any wrong we have done them. I should rather think they intend coming to England, so have no time to spare for writing letters.

We have had a long severe Winter and at the present time a strong Easterly wind prevails which will no doubt produce a healthier Summer than the last one was and in consequence a better Season. We have no Spring showers yet to make the radishes and crop grow but there is frequently a show for rain. Your father is painting up the Baths and Fanny is getting them ready. Aunt Polly is still with us, Uncle George her husband is coming home at Christmas. Your Father I think is improved in health and sends his kindest love to you and all your brothers and sisters send their love. Grandma and Uncle White are quite well, she with all your uncles and aunts send their kind love to your Uncle Frederick. I trust that He who has hitherto preserved you in all your difficulties and guided you through all your trials will still help and keep you my beloved Child, is the wish and prayer of your ever affectionate mother

EI Dyason

PS Fanny and Elizabeth wish me to say they intend writing by the next opportunity and hope you will excuse their seeming neglect. I hope dear Child that you will take every care of your health.



*Gold sovereign from 1855*

**1855 June 3**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

*(Written above beginning of letter)* The Girls are anxiously expecting a very large order from your Uncle and you in answer to their venture sent out last Xmas

My dear Isaac

I take this opportunity of writing to you as the mail ship leaves Liverpool on the 5<sup>th</sup>. I did not write by the mail that left on the 5<sup>th</sup> May but your Ma wrote you a few lines by that vessel. I am very sorry to find that the money you have sent to your Uncle Charles in a Bill drawn by Rothchild has been dishonoured and that you had the Bill returned. I hope and trust that you will get the money, I have been informed that you are not liable for the loss but that would fall on your Uncle, the Bill having been drawn in his favour and sent to England as he wished and he having retained the Bill some time after it being noted, but I feel quite certain my dear boy will not do anything that will cause him one moment's uneasiness respecting it. Your Uncle has not stated any particulars respecting it and therefore I cannot advise in the matter. I only know from him that he has bills to the amount of £925 drawn by the same parties and that he has sent them back to Australia in consequence of their not being paid in this Country.

With respect to your Uncle Fred, if you enter into business with him you must take the management entirely into your own hands as he wants never to carry on any Business and does not like to refuse anything to anybody however injurious it may be to himself. I dare say you have seen sufficient of that in his conduct with Christmas respecting his leaving for England, but that has been his fault through life. He is a capital salesman and would be a great acquisition to any business in that capacity. I think you would do very well together but the management must rest entirely with yourself.

I am sorry to find by the last letter to your Ma which we received by the *James Baines* that it is not your intention to visit England for some years. I hope and trust that you will be disappointed in that you may return much sooner than you anticipate yourself, that your undertaking may prove more prosperous than you expect and that you will return with your health a happy and prosperous man. Since we received your letter by the *James Baines* Libby and Fred have also received theirs and although (*they*) left Melbourne some time before, did not reach till a few days afterwards.

I have not heard from your Uncle John since last November, I cannot think the reason of it therefore do not know at present what to do with Fred, he having promised to take him. I shall await the event of this Season and then endeavour to apprentice him to a Chemist and Druggist or he says he will go to sea as he does not like any of the Trades. As he says, after working 5 or 7 years there is every probability of his remaining a journeyman for life. I trust that will not be the case for he is at present a very good boy and free from all vice. I trust he will continue so.

We are sorry to find also by your letter that it is not the intention of your Aunt John\* to visit England. I was very much in hopes that they would as Fanny would have gone back with them and that would have been a nice change for her, I am sorry to say she is none of the strongest.

I will not my boy refer again to that unpleasant subject but merely write now to say that old Turmaine is dead and the great and only obstacle is removed to my getting some cheap Baths which will greatly enable me to improve my living as the property which he had and would not part with at any price will now be sold and which, should I be fortunate enough to get, will allow me to put up 20 cheap Baths at the back of our house which in the opinion of everyone must greatly benefit me. It would have been done in Ramsgate some years back but there is no place to be had without incurring a very great outlay of capital and then it would not answer. But this property being at the back of ours – the same machinery, boilers, cisterns etc.. would do for the cheap Baths as we at present use for the others and should be able to stem my present difficulties this Season. I feel quite confident I shall be better able to provide for the Family better than I have before.

Give my love to your Uncle and tell him I am very much obliged for the papers he sends and although I do not write I do not forget him. Your Ma and the children desire their kind loves and accept the same my dear Boy from

Your affectionate  
Father

*\*Aunt John = Old fashioned but a correct way of saying Aunt Julia (Aunt Julia Dyason in South Africa)*

**(1855 estimated) August 31**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Isaac

It is some time since I received your kind letter in which you gave me kindly little messages to deliver to my cousin Julia but having had a letter from her stating that she had relinquished the idea of coming to England I am deprived of that pleasure.

Pa is writing to Uncle John respecting Frederick as he is very desirous to know whether Uncle will take him or not. As for myself I do not expect I shall go to the Cape as Julia refers to it, only once and merely says she wishes I was there. I cannot say but that I am disappointed at this termination of any high flown ideas.

I have something to explain to you dear Isaac. Uncle Charles has written a letter to Uncle Frederick which if he reads it to you may surprise you. It is about a box that we received from the Cape in return for some whiting that Pa had sent Uncle John and in looking over which Pa opened a parcel by mistake that was meant for Aunt Fanny. He apologised to her and thought no more of it, but Aunt Polly or Aunt Fanny for reasons best known to themselves thought it their duty to write to Uncle John who, thinking that Pa had done it purposely wrote him a severe letter. It annoyed us at the time, to think such meanness should be attributed to us, but we took no notice of it and the affair passed from our minds. What I have to request of you dear brother is that you will not mention it in your letters either to Pa or Uncle John as it would vex Pa very much to see the subject revived again for he does not know that Uncle Charles has written of it. Perhaps you dear Isaac may be surprised that Uncle Charles should know of it but Uncle Charles and Fred living so near us, and being about our own ages, seem like brothers, know about our affairs and we know theirs, but what made Uncle Charles write after so long a time I cannot think unless he had something to say just then, he likewise felt very vexed at the affair altogether.

Uncle George Groves has been home for six weeks and will join his vessel again the 17<sup>th</sup> of September. He is in the Oriental Steam Packet Company service and Aunt Polly says has £20 a month. He stayed in Ramsgate a week. I think the climate or time has very much altered him. He recommends young men to go abroad and prefers Calcutta to any other place he has been at but thinks he shall make a trip to Melbourne, he says it is easier to make money abroad than at home, but not so easy to keep it.

Frederick is on the tiptoe of expectation with regard to his going to the Cape. I hope Uncle John will take him, otherwise he will be greatly disappointed. He says he would prefer being a sailor to serve out an apprenticeship in England. He likes the business of a chemist very well. I hope whatever is decided on will be for his ultimate advantage, he is a very good boy and we shall miss him very much whenever he goes from us.

Ramsgate has been very well filled for a fortnight past and if we had had cheap baths this Summer we should have done very well as they would exactly suit the class of people that are here. We cannot lower our price sufficiently as we have not enough baths to give a warm bath on 2 shillings, if they will not give 2 shillings and six pence. But a shilling warm bath is what is wanted. The friends of Turmaine have lately offered his house to the Trustees for a thousand pounds which is much too large a sum. I forget how much Pa said it was worth but not half that. No doubt they will have it valued. I very much hope we shall succeed in getting it, how differently circumstanced we shall be from what we ever have been. I imagine we shall feel as the song says "Like prisoned birds let loose in air" but I suppose we must wait patiently.

The harvest has now fairly commenced and the fields look lovely, the rich golden grain interspersed with the sweet green clover, our little Island resembles a garden, every spot of land being so carefully cultivated and we have had such lovely weather lately, indeed the farmers say they have not had such for many years. We understand that several Australian vessels have arrived and we are as usual expecting a letter from you which is always a pleasing event to us all. I hope my dear Isaac you will write to me now in return for this and tell me all the news. How is Uncle Frederick, please tell him we intend to write him a nice scolding letter very soon. I am happy to say we are quite well, Grandma, Uncles and Aunts as well as Uncle White

are all in health and desire their kind love to you. We have had no sickness this summer which is a very great blessing. All the medical men in Ramsgate prophesied last winter that we should have a return of the Epidemic and I do not think some of them would have been very sorry if we had.

And now dear Isaac I must say Goodbye, hoping you are quite well and will write to me soon. Libby sends her kindest love. I hope you will excuse all faults. Believe me dearest brother your ever affectionate sister,  
Fanny Dyason

**1855 October 2**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

As the mail leaves England the 5<sup>th</sup> I thought I would take the opportunity to send a few lines to (*advise*) you of our general health and also to enquire after your own health which I trust remains good. Since I last wrote we have had a letter from your Uncle John which your Father has answered enclosing a note from Frederick to know his Uncle's determination with regard to himself. Julia also wrote to Fanny requesting her to select some wool patterns and a piece or two of music to which they have added some trifles of their own manufacture and are only waiting for the Agent in London to send for them as he will forward them to the Cape. I suppose you have heard your Uncle has left his Cottage which Julia thinks you will regret. She seems a lively, affectionate girl and they appear a happy united family. In the event of our not placing Fred to any trade here I should wish him to be with them for a time.

We are still at Haine but intend to return to Ramsgate in a fortnight as the Lady leaves our rooms at that time. The opposition boats have been running to and from London this Summer which has made the town very lively. The fare was as low as a shilling. We regretted not having cheap Baths as there were so many enquiries for them.

I suppose you have heard that part of Sebastopol has been destroyed, the news as you may suppose was received with general satisfaction. There were fireworks and guns firing and flags flying and when the victory is completed there will be a general "Illumination" and thanksgiving. What a dreadful scourge the war has been to this part of the world, how many desolate families are there who can never know happiness again in this world and many lives unnecessarily lost which you will find by the papers. Your Father would like to send you *The Times* regularly but there is no certainty of your having it so must wait till things are in a better train.

When you write we should like to know the present state of the Colony, whether it is progressing, the price of provisions, what kind of winter it was, if your health is good and if you are still at the diggings. I suppose you often see Uncle Frederick, do you think he will succeed in getting a good living, does he appear contented, do you think the affairs of Rothchild will be settled satisfactorily? I rather regret your having entered into partnership again. I remember an unwillingness to do so. I rather think it was our fault that you did. Your father was saying the other day he wished he had never mentioned it to you and thinks if you had been left to yourself you would not have sent the money through that channel. I am very sorry for your sake and for my brother's but I hope the whole of it will...

*(bottom of page has been cut off)*

...will not be lost. Your Uncle Frederick did not mention anything about the bead work that your sisters sent by which we conclude they do not take at Melbourne but we should like to know their fate.

The harvest which is over now has been a tolerable one and were it not for the war we should have no public calamity to deplore, for which we have great reason to be thankful. Uncle White is very well but Grandma was rather poorly last week but is better now, I suppose it was owing to the unusually warm weather. Your father is in better health...

*(bottom of page has been cut off)*

**1855 October 19**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's Father**

My Dear Boy

It is with very great regret and sorrow that I am now applying to you again for assistance to me. Nor would I do so now after your kind assistance to me last year did I not see my way was perfectly clear for the future but would allow things to take their course and pay The Bankruptcy Court and endeavour to begin the World again but the disgrace would be so great both to your Dear Mother and myself that I do not think I should be able to get over it. I'm sorry to say I have had another very bad season which is now finished. I can assure you my dear son I have not taken this year more than sufficient to pay the expenses of the Business without allowing me one shilling for the maintenance of the family and this follows after last season when I did not clear my expenses by quite £100 is the reason for my being in this very unpleasant position, combined with having to support your grandfather Dyason for the last 10 years at an expense of more than £400. I have written to your Uncle John stating that I am not in a position to do anything more for him any longer and he has written to say that he will allow him £40 a year for life which will relieve me from that difficulty.

I can very satisfactorily account for the very great falling off in the business for the last two seasons. Last year I should have had a very good season if the Cholera had not visited Ramsgate in the severe summer. It did just as we were getting busy and in a good swing the Cholera came and the medical men would not allow the people to bathe for fear the warm Baths would relax the system. Indeed for a time I might almost as well have shut up the Business the people leaving daily as fast as they could and before things quieted down again the Season was over. This year I attribute the bad season to the War. People not being able to leave their homes in consequence of the heavy taxes and dearness of provisions. Those who could afford to leave for a time were very economical and would not bathe so much as they usually do saying ours was a luxurious business and as they could do without it they must only take a bath now and then. I feel perfectly satisfied that those causes have had the effect of producing the two bad seasons which have I am afraid been my ruin without I can get some assistance. But even this year I should have done very well could I have given Baths for 1/6 the town was very full for a short time and the hundreds of applications have had through the season to give Baths at that price convince me that cheap bathing would pay exceedingly well but that it was impossible for I have not a sufficient number of Baths on the premises to make it pay at that price as people all want to bathe at the same time and as I could not bathe under 2/6 a bath we have had but little business through the season.

Now the manner in which I see my way clear is that an opportunity has offered this year, but too late for the past season to make any alterations. A Mr Turmaine who is now dead had some property at the back of our house every way adapted for erecting a large number of cheap baths which my landlords who are the Trustees of the Harbour are very willing to do and if I can only hold my position I feel quite satisfied that I shall be able to stem the torrent that is now rising against me. I have been in correspondence with them this season and they have agreed to find me the money to purchase the property and to build the baths on my paying them 5% for the outlay which will not exceed £1290 and that will add only £60 a year to my rental, my present rent being £300 a year which is considered by everybody to be high and I have heard that it is their intention to do it all for me without any additional rent as they consider that I am paying too much by £50 a year since I have had the lease but I do not take that into my calculations.

The calculations I make are these, that on the property which belonged to Mr Turmaine there is room to build 30 cheap baths which I could make at 1/ per bath and as I contemplate having First and Second class baths, reducing the present baths to 2/ first class and the new baths to 1/ second class. I should expect a very good business from them even with our present baths in season when we have been very busy we have had nearly 100 baths a day but that has not been very often the case but I think having two classes one will assist the other and from the immense number of bathers who bathe in the sea in consequence of the cheap bathing at the price of 3 and 4 a bath, I have no doubt if they could only get a warm bath for 1/ we should have numbers of them in preference to bathing in the sea. The number I calculate that would bathe in the cheap baths would, during the season, average quite 200 baths a day which would be very good return for the outlay and as we are at present the same expense whether we have 30 or 60 baths a day so it would be with

the cheap baths and as we have all the machinery and pipes etc... for our present baths and which is quite sufficient for all purposes no further outlay would be required than I have named for the purchase of the property, building and purchasing the Bath's new boiler and every other requisite for them and the only additional expense beyond the 5 percent for the outlay to carry them on would be an extra man and woman during the season at 15/ each and about £40 for firing and other expenses. It is the opinion of all that I have named that it will be a most excellent thing and I can but only retain my position it will surely be accomplished. I am so certain that my way would be quite clear for the future that I often tell your Ma that it appears to me that I have been struggling for many years to endeavour to support the family respectably and now when the prize is just within my grasp I am fearful shall sink before I shall be able to accomplish it. I calculate from the experience I have had in bathing that I shall be able to add at least £400 a year to my living which would enable me to support my family in comfort and respectability and able to repay you all that you have done for me. Could you spare me £200 for this time which I would repay you in two years, you would be the means my dear boy of relieving your parents of a great deal of anxiety and perhaps misery and also of being the means of enabling me to support the family until they are able to for themselves. If you are not able to do it without distressing yourself write and tell me so for I would rather suffer myself than you should seriously inconvenience yourself or that I should be the means of your not enjoying that repose which you are "so justly entitled to" after the hardships and perils you have undergone. Believe me my dear boy I would not appeal to you could I find a Friend here but I am sorry to say that your grandfather did not behave as he ought to have done and people are fearful to let me have any money. I cannot receive an answer till the Spring '56, somewhere in April and I shall endeavour to struggle on till that time and if you should not be able to render me the assistance I require to paying present deficiencies in consequence of the bad season I'm fearful the Baths will altogether pass out of my hands and I shall be left quite destitute not knowing any trade or having any employment for the support of the family.

Your Ma and all the family unite with me in the kindest love and believe me my dear son  
Your affectionate father  
Isaac Dyason

You Ma wrote by the Mail Packet the 6 October and the girls will write in November. The *Mermaid* has not arrived but is hourly expected, she has put into Pernambuco leaky and short of provisions but has sailed from there on the 16<sup>th</sup> Sept. She had, we hear, a heavy mail and a large quantity of gold. I hope we shall have letters by her.

Good bye, God bless you

The Mermaid

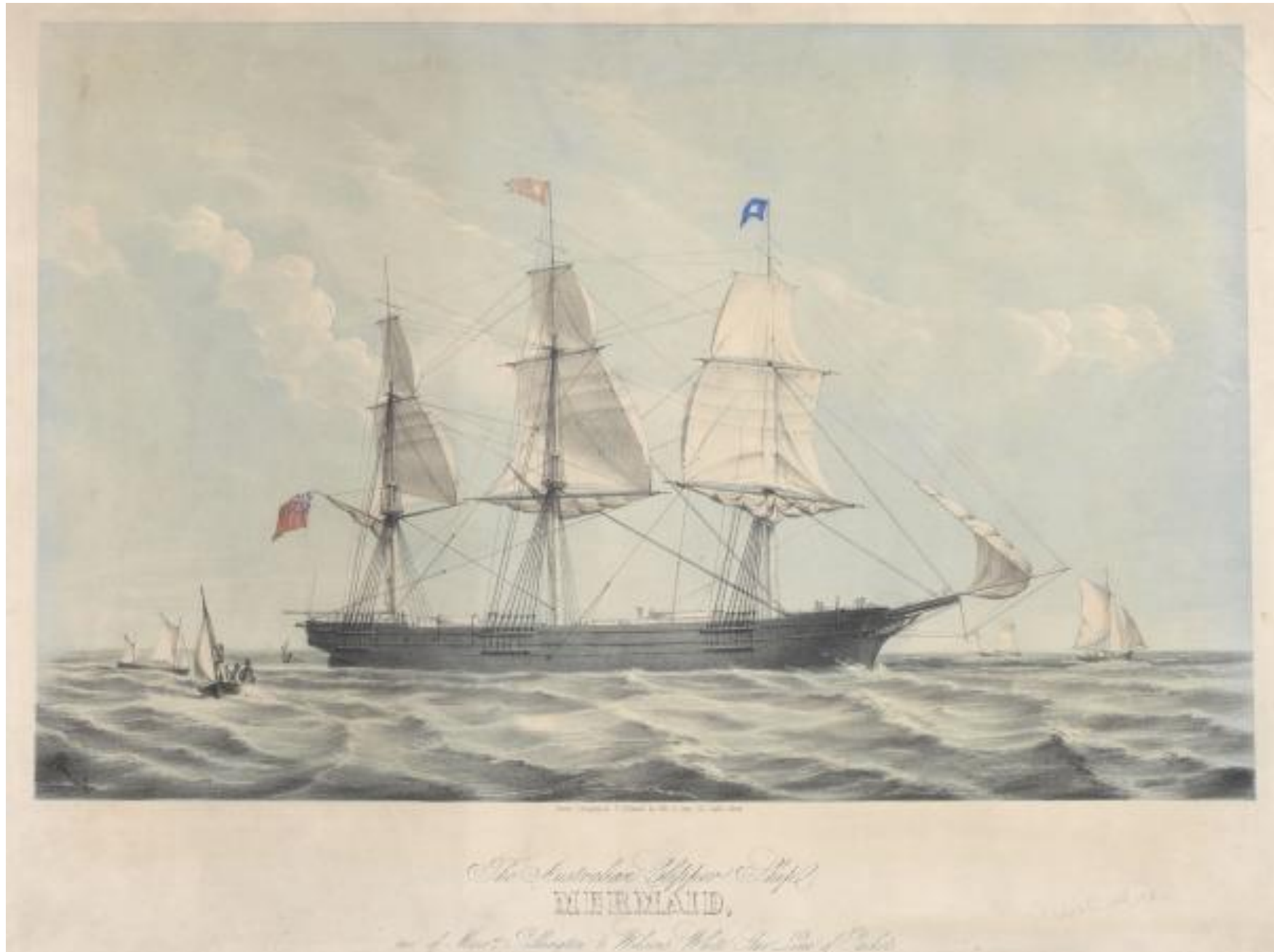


Image accessed April 2013 from National Maritime Museum Greenwich [http://images.rmg.co.uk/en/search/do\\_quick\\_search.html?q=mermaid](http://images.rmg.co.uk/en/search/do_quick_search.html?q=mermaid)

**1855 December 3**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I have to acknowledge the receipt of two letters from you dated July 7 and Sept 10 and am truly sorry that your affairs proved so unsuccessful but I trust your courage will not fail you and that you will soon experience a reverse of fortune. I begin to dislike the idea of the partnership, it seems safer to depend on one's own judgement and perseverance but I suppose something is due to experience. I am aware my dear child that I have not made business the subject of my letters until lately and in this I fear I have acted rather selfishly having reserved for myself the more pleasing subjects of correspondence and left the drudgery to your Father and however unkind it may appear in him to solicit your assistance a second time, nothing but fear of letting this present opportunity of doing well for the family pass would have induced him to write to you all on the subject, and now that he is acquainted with your own difficulties he much regrets having done so.

Had the last two seasons been anything like the mark we should not have been so perplexed as we had nothing to depend upon but the business to defray all expenses and if this prove insufficient for two or three successive seasons, of course it brings us into difficulties. Could we have accommodated ourselves to the times years ago by having cheap bathing we should not have had the anxiety to endure which has attended us I may say all through our married life, but now an opportunity presents itself to better our condition and I think I speak the truth when I say the first that has been offered and I hope we shall be able by some means or other to hold on our way so that we might be enabled the blessing Shakespeare says "There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at its rise leads on to fortune".

You will not be surprised my dear Child that your brother Fred knows nothing of our affairs and neither your Father's nor my brothers and sisters know really how we are situated. As they cannot assist us it is not necessary they should be burdened with our sorrows, we seldom make our affairs the subject of conversation. One thing I would earnestly beg of you dearest child that you will not make yourself unhappy on our account and as you cannot assist us we must do as well as we can and will let you know from time to time how we are progressing and let us each refer our affairs to Him who knows what is proper for us.

You mention having received letters from your Uncle John and family and learn it is your aunt's intention not to come to England at present and likewise that they have written to us respecting Fanny but we have received no letters from them for many months excepting a few lines from your uncle respecting his Father and one from Julie to Fanny but Fanny has deferred writing in return intending to write by the Parcel which has now been waiting these 3 months. Your father wrote to the Agents twice but as Uncle Charles is in London we intend to send it to him and he will take it to the Agents himself and as there is a vessel going to the Cape the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month there is a chance of its being sent.

We are expecting to hear from your uncle respecting Frederick's going to them, he is very anxious to be doing something and still adheres to the determination to go abroad if he can in preference to remaining in England and I suppose he will acquire from his uncle's tuition a knowledge of business which you mention as necessary to his future well-doing.

I intended to write to your Uncle Frederick but have not time, will you be so kind as to present our kind love to him and should like to hear from him as it is a long time since he wrote to us, and if he or you will mention if our venture came off safe to hand, your opinion of the same and its fate will be most satisfactory to the girls as it was rather an expensive affair and they worked many hours at the time in order to get them ready for Charles to send with his goods.

We are sending more troops to the Crimea and our Army is in a better condition there now. I wish the War was concluded but that will not be the case for a while. Uncle White was very poorly about a month past from over exertion but is better now. He is very industrious and is fond of gardening. Christmas is close at hand, how swiftly time flies, folly it seems to be so anxious for travelling in this World when we shall so

soon pass out of it. How solicitous should we be to secure a happy Eternity. My beloved Child we never forget you in daily prayers nor your Uncle Frederick and I feel assured that you do not forget us when you address your Heavenly Father. Kindest love from all friends to you and my Brother.

I remain beloved boy your Mamma.

We all wish you Many Happy Returns of your Birthday

**1855 December 3**  
**From Isaac's father**

My dear Isaac

We were very glad to receive two letters from you, one dated 7<sup>th</sup> July and one dated 10<sup>th</sup> September. The one dated Sept came by the *Kent* after a very successful run which she made in rather over 70 days. That was addressed to your Ma. The other dated July was in answer to my application for your assistance. I am sorry my dear boy that I have made it because I am fearful that it may distress you on account of your not being able to do it without doing great injury to yourself. I should never have applied to you again after your kindness to us before if I had not consulted your Ma on the subject, where after a great deal of consideration we thought it better to apply to you again than let our affairs come to a close when we were so near a probability of our circumstances being in a much better position. I was in hopes the Season would have been better, but the War has prevented that, ours being a luxurious business people could do without it and our price is almost a prohibition to most of the visitors who come to Ramsgate and without cheap baths it will never pay. But I am glad to say my Landlords will purchase the property and build the cheap baths, when there is every probability from the estimates that have been made to induce them to make the alteration for me to clear more than £4000 a year after every expense has been paid to carry on the business. They are now about purchasing the property so you may judge, my dear Boy, that I am very anxious to retain my position till the next Season when I shall be able to recover myself. I shall endeavour to do as you Say, hope and never despair, trusting that I may, through Providence, find some friend who will assist me till then and I shall have no fear for the future.

I am sorry to hear of your being likely to lose a considerable sum from your late partnership concern. I trust the bills which you speak of, when they arrive at maturity, will be duly honoured and that brighter days are in store for you for after the toils and hardships you have undergone you ought to meet with a better reward. Your Ma has written to you, she tells me about the small box of bead mats, bead glasses and other things of Fanny's and Libby's manufacture which they sent out as a venture from England last January. They sent it in their Uncle Charles' cases of shoes thinking they might sell. Uncle Charles tells them the vessel has arrived with the goods and no notice has been taken of their things at which they feel very disappointed as they were thought to be very pretty in England and were advised by your Uncle Charlie, your Grandma and other parties to send out. Perhaps you will have the goodness to make inquiry of your Uncle Fred and let them know about it.

With regards to Fred, I do not at present know what to do with him, he is determined not to remain in England. We are waiting anxiously for letters from your Uncle John which will decide if he will take him or not as after stating in his letter to me that he would do so, we have heard nothing from him for nearly 12 months. His answer will decide what Fred will do, we are expecting it about Xmas which will soon be here.

Do not again make yourself unhappy, dear boy, in consequence of the letter I sent you in October for I am quite certain if you had it in your power you would do it for us, therefore I am fearful you will relax in your efforts to succeed in consequence of my repeated applications. Dismiss them from your thoughts and let all your energies be turned towards accomplishing your wished for object, therefore I repeat again, if I knew you were unhappy on my account I can only say that it would greatly add to my present difficulties.

Your Uncle Charles is very much disappointed at not receiving any letters from your Uncle Fred, there are three vessels arrived this last week, namely the *White Star*, the *Oliver Lang* and the *Kent*, all of which have brought him no letters. He ought to have written to him or else how is he to know whether to ship goods or not, whether the materials are overstocked or what he is to do, for it requires a large Capital to work with wand I am only surprised how your Uncle Charles find the money to do it. Tell him to be more punctual in the future.

I wrote to you some time back to know if there was any thing by way of speculation that I could send for our mutual advantage. You wrote to know what I could send, there is no doubt if I am able to retain my present position I could get anything in the Ironmongery or Brass line or Linen Drapery and perhaps I could get

introduced into a connection of a firm that sells goods that would realise large profits in Australia. If I could write and say what description of goods would pay best I would endeavour to open a connection with a firm in that line. I am glad to say that my health is gradually improving, I have not been under the doctor's hands since last May, 12 months, but have been obliged to have constant recourse to medicine which I prescribe for myself.

The Family are all well and desire their kind love. It is rarely of ever a day passes but what your name is mentioned. The girls sometimes get quite jealous and say "I suppose when Isaac comes home there will be no one thought of but him," so you must endeavour to be quite up to the mark and retain the character that your Ma, myself and your Aunt Polly Pearce are continuously giving you.

If the vessel by which you receive these letters makes a good passage you will receive them a few weeks before your Birth Day on which we shall wish you many happy returns. You must excuse this letter, the way it is written, for I assure you my dear boy I have been in such a nervous state of excitement for a long time in consequence of my circumstances that I can at times scarcely write at all. I must now conclude, wishing this will find you in the best of health and more prosperous than you have been.

Believe me my dear Boy  
Your affectionate Father  
Isaac Dyason

**(1855 estimated) December 7**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your affectionate letter of Sept 19<sup>th</sup> and thank you most sincerely for your opinion and advice respecting your brother and sister. We shall now wait the arrival of your Aunt and Cousins before we finally decide as to their going to Africa or not, but if they go we think it will be better for them to wait till their Aunt returns so they will be perfectly safe under her protection. You think, dear Boy, that it would be better for Frederick to know a trade, at present he does not seem to have any taste for a mechanical business and in consequence would not excel if he were apprenticed to one. Perhaps it would not be of any advantage to him to gain a knowledge of your Uncle's business, I hardly know what is best. I believe it is on a much more extended scale than when you were with him and unless anything else offers, if he can acquire regular business-like habits and have knowledge of the world it will be worth a great deal to him. But we shall be better able to judge of this when his Aunt arrives and we have talked the matter over with her, and we will let you know by the earliest opportunity. I am happy in being able to say he is perfectly honest, truthful and steady at present but, as you say, the force of example might mislead him. Still, I trust he will act with the same resolution as you, beloved child, have steered in the difficult path which it has been your lot to tread and I have no doubt the same success will attend him, that of a peaceful, contented mind and steadily improving circumstances.

I do not remember, dearest Boy, you having set any time for your absence, possibly that particular letter miscarried, I expected to have seen you long before this and though your reasons are very good for remaining so many years longer yet it requires a great deal of patience and self denial to wait six long years before we can see each other. I hope that we shall all be spared and that we may spend many happy years together after the many privations you have suffered and the great resolutions and self denial you have practiced through all your youth, but which cannot fail of a rich reward in your own heart.

I have to state my dear boy that in the next goods which your Uncle Charles sends, your sisters will send a small venture in the bead and crochet work. He shall put the cost price to each article and the time in making and should you or Uncle Frederic have an opportunity of selling them you will know within a little the price to fix on them. They paid a guinea to learn the crochet and the same for the beadwork. Do not think dear Isaac that if it should not take they will be much disappointed as they are aware it is all a chance and there will not be much lost. They will be quite satisfied with making the trial let the results be what it may.

I am happy in being able to say your Father is in better health than formerly, he is now taking a small piece of rhubarb before dinner and before going to bed. I cannot think how you manage with your clothes, how do you get your socks and shirts mended and washed, who looks after your dinner and makes your puddings and pies? I hope dear Boy you do not go too long without your food as that is very injurious to your health. I trust that invaluable blessing will be continued to you my dear Child. Your Papa sends his kindest love and likewise your Grandma and Uncle White. I have not been since the receipt of your letter but they are both well. Your brothers and sisters wish you were here to play Blind Man's Bluff, Puss in the Corner, Forfeits – they will make you pay ever so many forfeits when you come so you must expect to be fairly teased by them all. I shall write again shortly, till then I shall bid you adieu and

Believe me

Your affectionate mother

EI Dyason

**1855 December 19**

**Ramsgate from Uncle Charles Pearce** (*Charles is aged about 28 while Isaac is about 23*)

Dear Isaac

I am much surprised by the contents of a letter from your Uncle Fred respecting diversion of profits with yourself. I know not what arrangements you & he made with regard to the "Lola" shipments. This was exclusively yours according to orders which I received. But the shipments which I made afterwards were to your uncle only. I shipped them at cost price all profit and loss would have been borne equally between your uncle and myself. I apprehend your % must have been unsure when he stated you expected a portion of the profits in any shipments after the "Lola" all such per *Elek Rosemary, Moverport, Kent, Cornwall*, were shipped at my sole Risk. If there had been any loss on these goods I alone would have suffered jointly with your uncle. Strictly speaking he is my agent.

Upon the face of this explanation you cannot seriously entertain any idea of partaking in the profits realised upon these goods. If you had been responsible for loss and allowed me a certain percentage for any capital employed that would have been an entirely different affair then the profit or loss would be equal 3<sup>rds</sup>.

When I proposed the partnership there was a certain sum to be supplied by each this has not taken place consequently no partnership exists. If I am to supply capital alone and ship at my own risk and realising only a third of the profits it would not pay me I am certain and know that I can do better elsewhere.

(written sideways)

You must my dear nephew, excuse the business of this letter but I wish it makes things appear in their proper light.

Should feel obliged if you would debit the remainder of cash four hundred and ninety six pounds six shillings. I have been obliged to pay a heavy interest on this amount for retention of credit which is very high at this time. The Bank of England charges seven percent on bills over sixty days. Country banks and discounters rise in proportion if you have not or fail to remit it on receipt of this.

I am happy to say we are all in good health we all join in love and wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

I cannot conceive why your uncle does not write. I have not heard only once during the last three months. Perhaps you will be kind enough to mention this fact to him. Wishing you will be successful in your speculations.

Your affectionate Uncle  
Charles Pearce

(1856 estimated) January 3

Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Julia Dyason (aged 15)

My dear Isaac

I felt disappointed at not receiving your likeness, though I did not much expect it by the Christmas, however I still hope to have it in my possession soon. We have not heard any more letters from the Cape but I suppose if nothing happens Aunt and my two cousins will be here by the time you write to me in return for this. I do not know dear Isaac if I shall go to the Cape. If it is left to me I shall most decidedly, but Grandma will not hear of it, and Ma begins to think she cannot spare me. With regard to Frederick we were thinking if he cannot go abroad of apprenticing him to a chemist if he should like the business. He says he will work his passage out either to the Cape or Australia rather than not go, however I suppose all this important business will be settled by next Summer if our business is spared.

I should like to have learnt the German language as I found it so very easy, but I could not go on with it as the teacher proved so bad. I learnt two months and caught up Miss (*Greenich?*) who had been learning eight. I gave myself the task of learning it in a twelvemonth, but I must have paid a guinea quarterly which I could not do. I wish Pa had a nice flourishing business, how different we should all be, but I suppose we must have our share of trouble as well as others.

The business is so very uncertain, neither do I think it will improve with the times as it is not necessary but merely healthful and pleasant, and can be managed at a person's own residence and people are all for economising now. I do not think Pa will bring up any of the children to it, he often regrets that he chose it for himself. I think he would have made an excellent lawyer, Fred often says so but you will not thank me dear brother for writing in this strain, so I will not fret but look forward with hope. I expect you will both laugh fairly at our grand venture of beads, for I daresay they will be all broken long before they have reached you. I think our next venture must be gingerbread hearts and sweetmeats, then those that are not spoilt can be eaten you know. Ma wants to know if you have tasted any of Uncle Fred's cookery, he is an excellent cook, and I think there is one dish he particularly excels in. He calls it Lobscouse, which I think is an original word being neither German nor French. You used to be very fond of it when you were at home and no doubt you would like it now. Uncle Charles often talks of your staying to supper and sitting between him and Uncle Fred, but I suppose you quite forgot it.

We have received all the letters you mention and have returned answers to them all. Ma sends her kindest love to you, wishes you many happy returns of your birthday and will write by the next. Pa says he does not know when there will be another vessel going. I daresay they will manage to get one, and no doubt you will be glad of a little rest from my tiresome and extremely insipid letter. I often say if I were Isaac I should look at the beginning and then put it in the fire.

Ma took tea with Grandma here yesterday and she drank out of your rosy saucer that you were so fond of when you were a child, and always had to drink out of when you were there. Can you remember it. Grandma is quite well and sends her kindest love to you and Uncle Fred, she often talks a great deal about you both and hopes she shall see you both some time.

I must now conclude as it is getting dark and I cannot see to write any longer. We are all quite well, they all join me in kindest love to you and believe me

Dearest Isaac

Your ever affectionate

Sister J Dyason

PS I hope to hear from you soon, if you can spare time to write, wishing you and Uncle Fred a happy new year and many of them.

I must say good bye.

1856 January 7

From Isaac Edward Dyason to Uncle Charles (this looks like a practice letter broaching a difficult topic)

My dear Uncle

It is with much regret I wish to inform you, that in consequence of several losses I have sustained and the impossibility of collecting certain amounts, in the receipt of which I had so securely calculated, I shall be unable to add to the amount I have already forwarded through Uncle Fred – and as that falls considerably short of the amount proposed in your letter of 3 Feb /53 as the contribution of each amount towards the stock of the proposed partnership – & it would be useless joining you with so small a sum as an importing business would require considerable funds to make it a payable speculation. I think it would be better, at all events for the present, to let the matter drop.

I have not seen Uncle Fred lately but, from the tone of some of his last letters I think he is under the impression that just now he can turn his attention & capital to more advantage in engaging in business here than he has hitherto done in entirely devoting himself to the importation of Boots etc..

In accordance with the forgoing I shall take the opportunity when I next see Uncle Fred – of settling our accounts in full – as I think that is a (*illegible*).

The large profits that have been made with importing English goods are not now to be looked for, & Business & business people are recovering from the fit of wild speculation they have been plunged in. Business is rapidly finding its proper level. People now buy no more than they know there is consumption for & do not overload their stores with goods at extravagant prices trusting to some other speculator giving them a profit – very often finding their mistake only in the Insolvent Court.

Should Uncle Fred & I (as things being entirely settled) again in seeing a chance of carrying out an import business with advantage and be in a position to do so – I apprehend there will always be an opportunity of turning our energies to the required end.

(Attached is an itemised list of goods sent to Isaac in Uncle Charles' writing with the amount that they cost)

5 Harbor St Ramsgate  
Mr Isaac E Dyason  
1854 October 20

Forward Sales

100	Patent Riding Boots	32/ =	160
150	do Napoleons	24/ =	180
130	Plain thigh Boots	18/ =	117
229	Watertights	10/ =	114 10
4	Trunks	23/3	4 13
4	Casks (of wine?)	21/ =	4 4
3	do Oilcloth	14/ =	2 2
	( <i>illegible</i> )		12 5
	Dock Charges Clearing Bills of Loading Entry Harbor		<u>-1 12 2</u> £596 6 2

**1856 January 18**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My Dear Isaac

Your mother and I wrote by the December mail which letters I hope you received. With regard to our affairs I am sorry we are not progressing. The Trustees having declined the purchase of the property for the building of the cheap baths we are consequently thrown back upon our old resources. We feel the disappointment more keenly as they had promised to do every thing for us. As it is expected they will resign their Trust to Government next June they may not wish to be hobbled with our concerns, should Mr Turmaine's heirs make a second offer of the property to the Trustees they may feel inclined to purchase, at least so your Father thinks, but they estimate the cottage and ownership of grounds at four hundred pounds. Mr Turmaine's demand is seven hundred and eight pounds, it does not seem likely that he will sell at such a reduced price, but should any movement be made in the business I will let you know the first opportunity.

Your Father and I took tea with Uncle White last week, he enquired very kindly after you. I told him you hoped he did not forget you, he said he did not. I am fearful he is deteriorating in health, he has been very poorly at times and should weather set in cold I am afraid he would not endure it. Aunt Brooke is likewise very poorly having dislocated her shoulder some little time since. Your grandmamma feels about them very much, they are aged people now, Uncle is 96 and Aunt 92, you are aware that they are your Grandma's brother and sister.. Uncle has been a very kind and generous friend to us, he has again made us his annual present of ten pounds which your Uncle Fred has told you of no doubt but which he always requests us to make no mention to anyone.

You made enquiries of your Uncle Edward, he is living with his wife and relation in the capacity of farmer. I suppose as he says, they are in the heart of the Country and are all agriculturalists, he has not heard from his friends for a twelvemonth though several letters have been sent to him. Fanny wrote to him in August and received a letter from him last week. His address is Mr E H Pearce German Town Philadelphia Ca Pennsylvania N. America. She likewise wrote on the outside of the envelope:

“To the Post Master. Sir, will you oblige me by placing this letter in the window of the Office as the person to whom it is addressed resides at a distance”

This is the only letter he received out of the many that were sent to him. He does not talk of coming home but is quite well and desires love to all his friends.

Your Aunt Polly says she wrote about Fanny in her letter to your Uncle Fred as being an accomplished girl knowing two or three languages but this is not really the case, the French being the only language she has learned, the German she discontinued as she told you but Aunt Polly was not aware of that.

It is in the Times paper of today that Russia has accepted terms for peace offered by the Allied Powers. It is thought to be true and the funds have risen to ninety in consequence. It will be a good thing if it is so. We are going to send the box to the Cape this month and pay the freight ourselves as Uncle John's agents do not know when they will be shipping goods there. Uncle Charles has shipped it for us and seen that it is safe. I daresay poor Julia is tired of waiting for her music. We have had no letter from your uncle but your Father thinks of waiting till March and he must place Frederick somewhere without delay, he was sixteen in December last. He is very anxious to be doing something, he is clever at music, by this I mean he could be fitted to teach in that branch of education and if he could be sure of a good commission afterwards it would be worth the trial but this is very uncertain.

My dear Child I do not know if you have made any enquiry about the box of bead works which your sisters sent this January two months. I mentioned in my last letter to you. I thought I would again refer to it in this and take not more notice of this subject, If the articles realized a little it would be a little encouragement to them and would defray the sum laid out in the materials and in learning to do that kind of work. I fear that

you will think that I am very covetous but I think it very pleasant for young people to be able to realize a little money by their own industry.

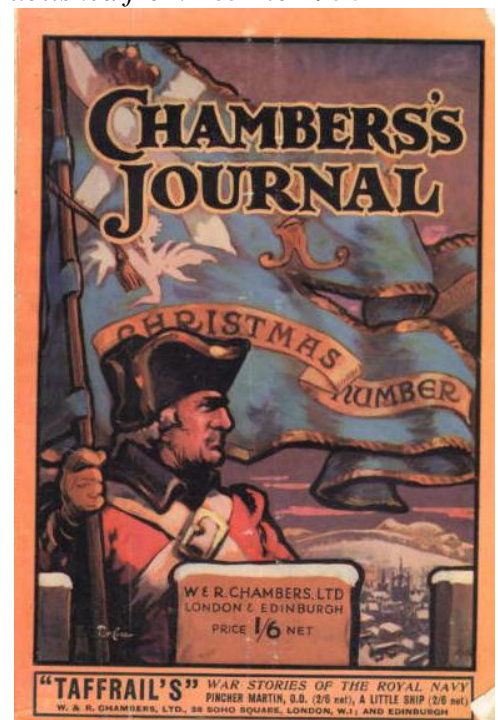
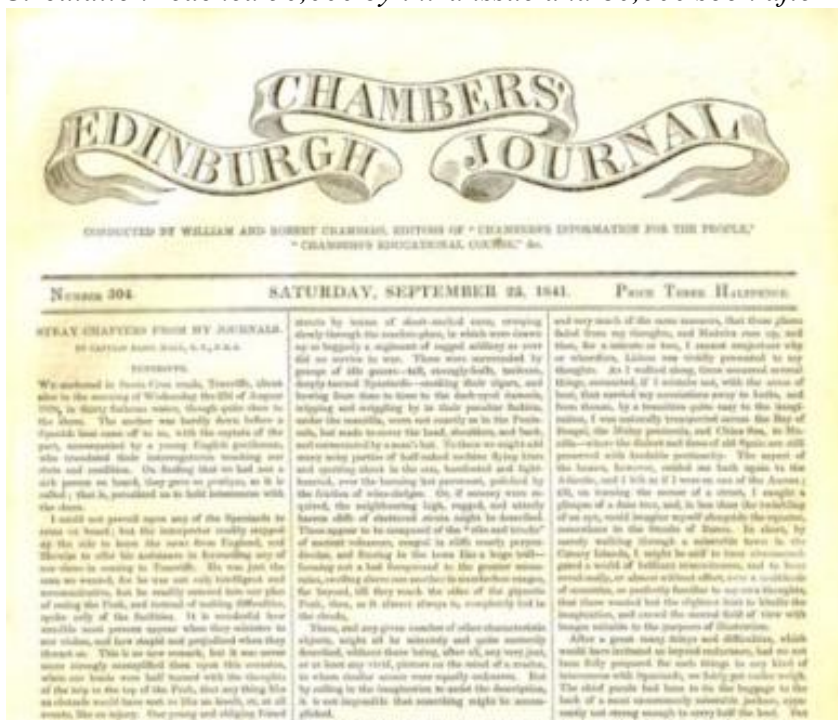
I am happy dearest boy in being able to say that we are at present in health and hope that you and your Uncle are in the enjoyment of this most inestimable blessing. I hope that business is on the improving scale. The *Ben Nevis* that just arrived bringing 45 thousand ounces of gold which is a treasure but still not to be compared with health and peace of mind. I was thinking the other day if you had any time for study and what kinds of study you liked best, it is recommended for young men to study mathematics in order to strengthen their minds and to enable them to make correct notions of things in general. It is a great advantage to have a sound judgement which Bacon says are best acquired by the study of Mathematics. I should like to know dearest Boy that you have entered on this subject, do not forget to inform me when you write in answer to this. We still take in your favourite Edinburgh journal\*, it is very interesting, is it circulated in Melbourne.

(this next is probably the concluding page)

Aunt Fanny and Aunt Polly, Uncle Roger and his family are all quite well. I shall now conclude this epistle praying that your Heavenly Father will be your counsellor and guide. Your sisters and brothers send their kindest love. Grandmamma desires her kind love and each of your uncles and aunts. Aunt Brooke is recovered from her fall and is cheerful and well again. She is 92, she is just like your Grandmamma.

My beloved Child, I remain ever your affectionate  
Mother Elizabeth Illenden Dyason

\**"The first cheap popular middlebrow magazine, with emphasis on short tales and occasional serials. Circulation reached 50,000 by third issue and 80,000 soon after"* Published from 1832 to 1956



Quote and image from <http://www.philsp.com/data/data077.html> accessed August 2013

**1856 March 5**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Boy

I take this opportunity of writing to you by the mail which leaves Liverpool on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst and which I trust will find you in the best of health and spirits. We are anxiously expecting a letter from you by the *James Baines* which has arrived but the letters are not yet delivered. I sincerely hope there is one amongst the number for us or else your Ma and sisters will be grievously disappointed for we have had no letters since you wrote by the *Kent* which letter was dated 10<sup>th</sup> September last.

I am disappointed at not receiving any letter from your Uncle John as I have written two to him respecting your brother Fred who is now anxiously wishing to be doing something himself. Your Uncle wrote home to me now nearly two years back in answer to an application of mine to know if Fred could be of any assistance to him at the Cape as he had a very great desire to go abroad. Your uncle said he would take him with a great deal of pleasure but would rather he wait another 12 months. Your aunt also wrote a letter to your Ma respecting him and we thought everything was arranged for your uncle to take him and have only been wanting for a letter to prepare him for his departure which I am sorry to say we have been looking for now more than 12 months and are still disappointed at not receiving it.

It has so unsettled poor Fred, I really do not know what I shall do with him for he is determined not to stay in England, for he says he will not stay in this country to be a Mechanic but if he could only get abroad he would not care what he did for a living. Will you ask Uncle Fred whether he would be of any use to him, his Uncle Charles thinks he might and although he is your brother I assure you my dear Boy there would be no difficulty in doing anything you like with him, he has a very mild disposition, tractable in his conduct and I feel proud in saying that he is free from all vices and, as far as I can see at present, no inclination to enter into it.

I wish I had the means to forward his welfare, nothing would give me greater pleasure but I am sorry to say that is quite out of my power. I feel very much for his disappointment and am fearful he will take some rash step as he has told his brother if he cannot get abroad he shall go to sea and some morning when we get up we shall find him gone. I trust he will do nothing of that kind for it would make us very unhappy. I hope his Uncle will yet send for him, but should he not, would it be asking too much of you to take him and if he could not be of any use to you, you might by your knowledge of the Colony get him into something, he would not care what he did, his only ambition is to get abroad.

I am fearful my boy will think I am asking too much of him and that all of my letters are on the same theme but I also feel sure he will forgive when I tell him that the welfare of the family and to see them well and happy is the only pleasure that I aspire to and the only return I look for, all the anxieties I have undergone in endeavouring to make them so.

I am pleased to say that there is every prospect of peace being proclaimed in the course of a few weeks, it will make a great difference to me for provisions of all descriptions will be much cheaper, indeed wheat has fallen since negotiations have been entered into more than 15 % per quarter but the country generally does not desire peace but would much rather have another campaign for they say we are much better prepared than we were at the commencement of the War. There can be no doubt of it for our Army is much larger than it was and our Navy has been equalled in the World.

By the by we have heard your Uncle Fred is married, is such the case, write and tell us. Your Uncle White at St Peters is very ill and I do not think he will get better, he is 96 years of age and I do not think at his time of life there is much chance, he having ruptured a blood vessel. I am sorry to say since beginning the letter the mail has been delivered and there is no letter for us by the *James Baines* she having left Melbourne 25<sup>th</sup> Nov last. I hope my dear Boy you will not delay answering this at your earliest convenience, that poor Fred may make up his mind to bear his disappointment, should it be so, as best he can. Consult with your Uncle Fred respecting him and if it be possible I think he could be of use to you when out there.

Your Birthday is approaching but long before you receive this it will be, but still we shall wish you “Many Happy Returns”. Give all our love to Uncle Fred and tell him although we do not write we never forget him. Your Ma and I never go to Pegwell Bay for a walk but we think of him. I am sure you will excuse the tenor of my letter, always troubling you.

Believe me my dear Boy I remain your affectionate  
Father

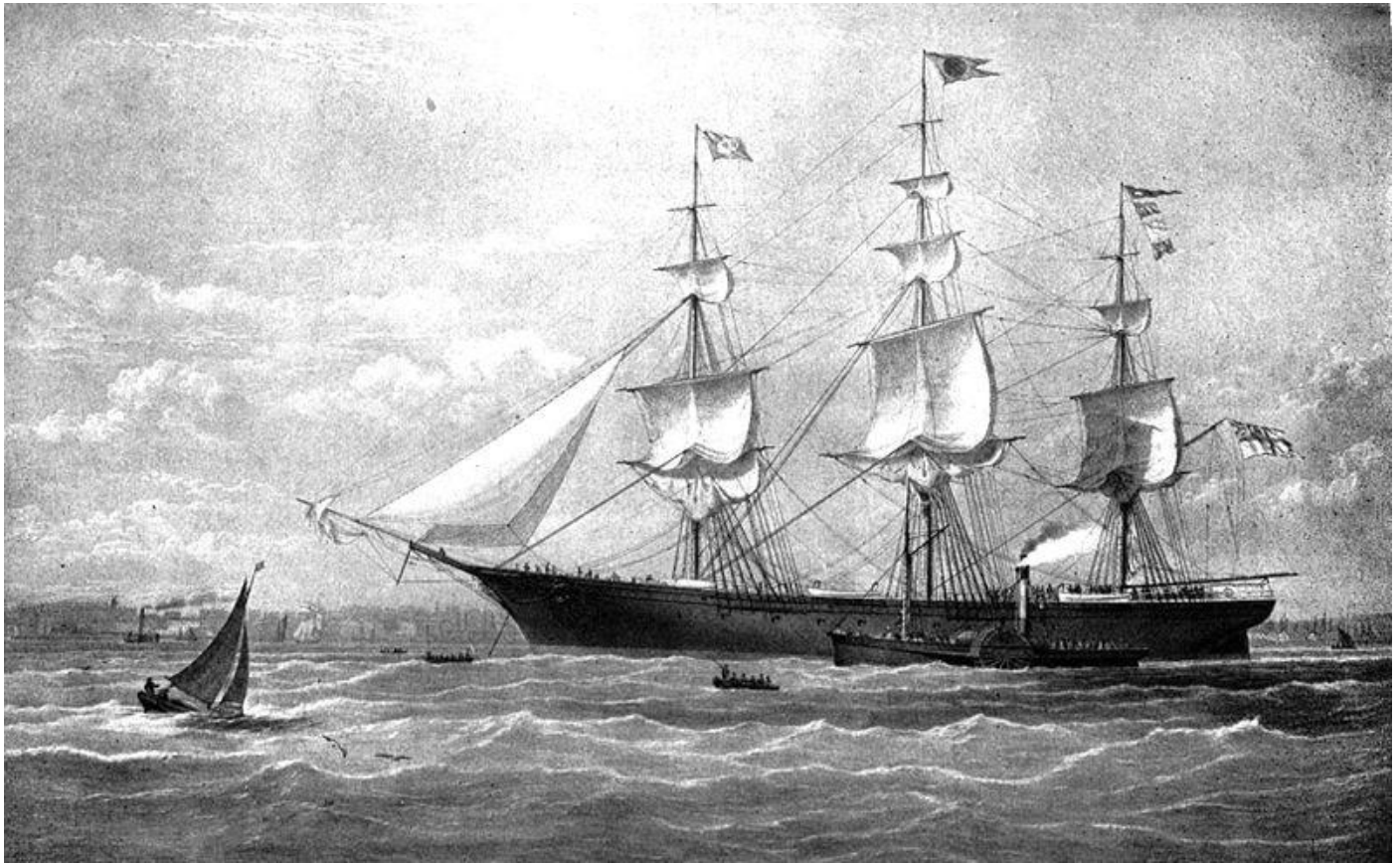


Image of the James Baines from Wikimedia Commons accessed April 2013

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jamesbainesclipper2.jpg>

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**(1856 estimated) March 5**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances (aged 23)**

Dear Isaac

A long time has elapsed since I heard from you and as Pa has not quite filled his letter I thought I would write a few lines begging you not to forget me. The *James Baines* which has been so long expected arrived in Liverpool last Sunday but there has been no delivery of letter here yet. Uncle Charles is anxiously looking for some from Uncle Fred and Ma expects one from you. And now please Isaac I have a very important question to ask you, which you know you need not fear answering as my letters are now private property, it is this; is Uncle Fred really married or not? We have heard from several people that he has a large wife called (*frustratingly illegible!*) and that he has a nice little wife. I think there must be something in it for he has lately been so remiss in writing which makes Uncle Charles very anxious, he generally used to write long letters by nearly every vessel but now when he does write it is merely a hurried business letter. I wish you would solve this mystery for me dear Isaac. I have asked Uncle Charles but I can't find out whether he knows or not.

I think Ma told you I received a letter from Julia last July in which she asked me to send her two wool patterns and some nice music which she said to me to send to her Papa's agents in London who would forward it. We selected them and got them ready by September when Pa wrote to the Agents who said they were not sending them but would let him know when they should be. Since that Pa has written Julia and Uncle Charles has called several times but they never know when they are going to send. It is very vexing is it not and I am afraid Julia will attribute it to carelessness on my part but it is not the case. Uncle Charles has taken the parcel to London with him and I hope he will send it by some other means for I do not think we can wait any longer for the agents.

You remember Kennett Martin? He has been married two years and has one child, he has been living at home with his wife for some time but last month he went to America to try his fortune there.

Uncle White has been very ill lately, he was chopping some wood some time ago and broke a blood vessel, he had a great quantity of blood and for a long time we did not expect he would live but he got better and the Doctor said if he kept perfectly quiet he might last some time but it seems impossible for him to remain in bed and keep quiet, he is of such a very active turn of mind. Last week we had a very fine day and he would go out in the garden, the consequence was that he had a return of illness. We shall all be sorry to lose him for he is so cheerful and pleasant and it seems so dull when he goes to St Peter's (*to live*) he has a relation there. Grandma frets a good deal about him, he is the only relation she has with the exception of Aunt Brook.

We are all quite well and all send their kind love. We shall not forget that the 30<sup>th</sup> of this month is your birthday dear Isaac, how much I wish you could attend it with us. I often wish when walking on the pier that you were with us, how jealous all the girls would be.

And now dear Isaac, I must say goodbye. Wishing you very many happy returns of your birthday and believe me dearest brother, your ever

Fanny Dyason

If you have time dear Isaac and it is not too much trouble will you write me a few lines.

**1856 April 4**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

The *Black Wall* has not yet arrived and as we did not receive a letter by the *Lightning* which has been here, we anticipate one by this vessel. We heard from your uncle John about a fortnight since, he says that the Firm having been great losers by speculating in the Copper Mines cannot increase the number of hands employed in their business therefore decline taking Frederick. I do not think your Uncle has acted as he ought in this affair having written to us in November 1854 not to place him anywhere nor direct him to Australia till we heard from him again which we did in the following Spring when he wrote to say your aunt would be coming to England shortly and we could then discuss the matter since which time we hear nothing till the arrival of the above letter.

Julia's parcel so far is on its way to the Cape, we thought it better not to wait any longer for your Uncle's regards and as your Uncle Charles was going to London he took it with him and sent it by his own shipper.

You will be pleased to hear that the Treaty of Peace is being signed by the different powers so that we may now consider that the war is terminated. I suppose we shall have an illumination. The Empress of the French has given birth to a son which event was greeted by the firing of guns, flying of flags etc at the different ports of England. We had a French Gun Boat in the Harbour at the time. It was interesting to see the flags of the two nations flying together on her mast as well as on our own vessels and the French sailors assisting our men in firing the salute. I think the old animosity is gradually dying away. We thought of you on the thirtieth of March, it was a lovely day here, the sun shone brightly all the day. Though the children had a feast of eggs for breakfast in commemoration of the day, I hope dear Child you were well and happy and will remain so for many, many years. I am sorry to inform you that our dear Uncle (*White*) is gone, he was a kind friend to us all, he retained his faculties to the last though he suffered at times a great deal but his end was peaceful. A little before his death he prayed God to bless all his friends. Your father, Mr Hunt and your uncles attended his funeral which took place yesterday. Your Grandma feels a great deal, she thought he would recover, relying on the strength of his constitution but his time was come to exchange worlds.

We think of taking your Grandmother for a little change as it would divert her thoughts from the subject. Aunt (Brook) is not quite recovered from the accident I told you of in a former letter. We have not heard from your Uncle Frederic for a very long time but understand he is married, if it is the case I sincerely wish him every happiness. I do not doubt but that he will make a good husband. I find I have made a mistake with regard to your Uncle's (*John*) letter, it is he who is the sufferer by the Copper Mines and not the Firm having taken a number of shares in them and their having proved a failure he will be obliged to do with less assistance. I am very sorry for him. I had hoped his prospects ever brightening but his will be sometime before he can recover from these losses.

We shall soon be preparing for the Summer. I hope it will be a healthy and prosperous season. We are all quite well, the four youngest children have the whooping cough – Edward, Charles, Augusta and Catherine. Charley has it the worst, the others but slightly, it a very good kind. Do you remember how badly you had the cough when you were at the Cape? How are things progressing with you and Uncle Fred – slowly and surely I begin to think is the best, all endeavours to become suddenly rich seem to prove fruitless as steadily increasing business is the safest. I wish my dear Boy you are in health and are still enabled to pursue that path of rectitude which you chose so early in life. I am truly rejoiced to be enabled to say that Frederic, hitherto is upright in his conduct and should you decide on his coming out to you I have no doubt you will esteem as well as love each other. I must now conclude so the morning post takes this letter.

Rest assured dear Boy you are often present with us in thought. Your Father sends his kind love to you. Sisters and brothers do the same and may your Heavenly Father protect and guide you is the prayer of your truly affectionate mother. Your Grandmamma, your Uncles and Aunts and all friends send their kind love and good wishes.

**(1856 estimated) June**  
**From Isaac's mother EI. Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter dated May 21<sup>st</sup> in which you express your regret at not being able to remit us any further supplies, we entreat you not to suffer this to make you unhappy, as that you have already done is greatly beyond our expectations and which no doubt you could ill afford to spare, but if it please Heaven to enable us to carry out our views it will be our first endeavour to refund to you that which you have so generously and to the detriment of your own affairs forwarded to us. You say dearest child you do not wish us to keep our affairs from your knowledge I am therefore free to say I do not think it possible for us to have maintained our position up to the present time had it not been for your assistance and the small sum left me by my dear uncle, you will not therefore my dear child regret having put yourself to an inconvenience for our sakes as you have the satisfaction of knowing the money has been well applied and has prevented much distress. Our trial has been the want of a larger income or business, and as years have rolled and expenses increased there has been no increase of business but rather a depression. Our family though a large one has not been an expensive one yet the necessary amount for food, clothing, and something for education is required. Providence having blessed us with health, medical attendance has not been often required excepting for the usual complaints attending on children, yet it has been a great struggle for your father to provide honestly for our necessities and comforts which I am quite sure has undermined an originally good constitution so that he seldom enjoys two days health together. His father likewise is entirely dependent on him he never having received any assistance from any other part of the family since he left the Cape with the exception of twenty pounds which Uncle John sent last summer. Aunt Fanny conducting part of the business of course derives her support from the same source and Aunt Polly finds a shelter here, her husband\* not supplying sufficient to maintain her independently of her relations.

I wish your aunt from the Cape had paid us a visit we could have represented things as they really are as I cannot help thinking your father has been misrepresented to your Uncle in some way or other by some one, as why is there such an altered tone in his letters to him, there is a decided coldness in his manner, very different from that he used to write in but the old saying "the poor is despised of his neighbour" has a divine authority and is therefore true, but your letter comforts us and assures me that it may not be always thus, and we will still persevere while God grants us health and ability, let us endeavour to trust him and with the issue whatever it may be.

With regard to Frederic I am sorry he could not get to the Cape but we shall be perfectly satisfied to place him under your care, you will find in him those qualifications you require as they are constitutionally his – he is naturally quick, thoughtful, and reserved, patient, honest and truthful, an obedient son and an affectionate brother. He has had few associates I may say not more three who are respectable well educated boys, at the same time he knows nothing of business has not the polish you may expect as we have never kept any society "we dwell alone" in the true sense of the word. I wish he had had the benefit of a good education but that was impossible. I would entreat therefore my dear child that you and he would enter upon a course of study that will improve and strengthen your minds so far as time and circumstances will allow, if I may advise with you I would not read novels, they certainly vitiate the taste and unfit the mind for useful reading, he will bring out with him "*Cassells Popular Educator*". Freddy has commenced the French and German languages which I think would be well for you to study together, in two years you would both be able to speak and read the languages correctly the study of Geometry will train up your mind, proceed on to Mathematics, intersperse with lighter studies such as Geography, History, Astronomy, Botany, Geology but you will say what is to become of business, you know dearest there are many hours of leisure which if properly improved will yield an abundant harvest. "Life is short" but much may be done in that short space of time, and it will be a comfortable reflection if we have fulfilled the design of our Creator by improving the time he has given us as much as possible. I would not dream away the Sabbath, but study the Scriptures. Endeavour to understand thoroughly the nature of salvation, what it is that God requires of man, with your whole heart to do what he requires. This above all things is our highest interest. I have some little books which I think will be useful to you; Mason on "*self knowledge*" Locke, Bacon or Leighton's essays are all as you know of the first order but perhaps you have them already by you. I do not know my dear child how I

shall part with Frederic though to come to you three of my children will then be lost to my sight, one I can never more see on earth. If he leave us I trust no accident will happen to him on the voyage. He is a beloved child ever kind and attentive to me. This being so I can the more consign him to you, your evenings will not be so lonely. I am glad you have not discontinued the practise of your flute and singing as Freddy can play a little on the violin. You are both young with a trifling dissimilarity of age and will be alike no doubt. Your father thinks he will leave by one of the Mails either October or November but he will write on this point by a previous mail. We are all quite well. I thank you dear boy for taking charge of him, I realise it is a charge upon you, but I hope it will be a pleasant though a serious one. His Grandmama knows nothing of it at present. I do not like to tell her. I am happy to say we are all quite well with the exception of Pa who cannot feel quite well. This which I intend as a copy if the mail sails tomorrow I shall not be able to rewrite it. It is almost dark I shall therefore bid you adieu for a short time.

Your truly affectionate mother EID

*\*Polly's husband is George Grove*

**1856 June 17**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My dear Boy

It is with much pleasure I sit down to thank you for your kind assistance rendered to me and the family. I assure you I should not have sent so pressingly to you last Autumn could I have seen any way at all clear. When I wrote to you the Season had just finished and I am sorry to say a very bad one we had, it was in every respect like the one before, and that in neither Season did I any thing more than clear my expenditures without allowing one shilling for our maintenance so you must suppose with our large family and provisions being so very dear that things must get into arrears. I have not yet made use of the money as it is my intention (*not*) to do so until the alteration takes place of which I wrote to you. It would have taken place this Season but the Executors of the late Mr Turmaine will not sell the property that will be required to build the cheap Baths upon unless they have a most exorbitant price for it. The property has been valued by surveyors and they estimate it at £250 - £300 but the Executors, having heard that we want it and must have it, they have asked the enormous price of £1000 for it. The Trustees of the Harbour who are my Landlords will not give it as they say it will increase my rental so much more than there is any occasion for and they have wished me to wait until after the Season and see if the Executors will lower their price. The Trustees have power under their Act of Parliament to purchase it but they do not at present wish to put it into force. I have given them notice to leave as my lease expires in Sept next which will soon be here. It is not my intention to leave if they make the alteration as there will be a most excellent living to be had from the cheap Baths. The Trustees do not wish me to do so as they say there is no one so able to manage them as myself but I have done so mostly as a reason for them to put the Act in force. I have no doubt my dear Boy that if I can but once get them erected I shall then be able to provide very comfortably for the Family, it is the opinion also of one of our chief Civil Engineers that the cheap Baths will be everything for me and that they will realise me a nice competency, his name is Sir John Rennie, no doubt you have heard of him.

I hope the next time I write to you on the subject it will be to inform you that they are erected. I thank you kindly for your observation that you make with respect to purchase the property, but the Trustees have no power to sell under their Act of Parliament, therefore the property must pass out of their hands into the Government, which in all probability in the course of a few years it will, as there is a great stir being made with respect to all Harbours in England. Therefore I shall have an opportunity by that time of judging if it will pay and should it be the case I could make arrangements for the purchase of it but I should not think of doing so without I was fully convinced that it would amply repay me, which with my knowledge of the business and the experience I have had that by being able to give baths at 1/ a bath is a certain road to independence. Why I am so positive is that there is no other place in Ramsgate where they could put them or else a company would have been formed here four years ago, but they gave it up as in consequence of not being able to get ground to place them on and also the Trustees of the Harbour would not allow them to draw the sea water to the injury of their own property.

The Season is just now commencing. I trust we shall have a prosperous one. I have written a very long letter to your Uncle John respecting Fred and your Grandpa Dyason, I have asked him to do something towards his support. I have been obliged to maintain him ever since he has been in England which has been the principle cause of my getting into arrears and has cost me more than £400. I think as he is in a better position than I am he ought to do something towards it. I have told him that if it had not been for your kind assistance by the amount of £350 I must have stopped. I have also told him of the great disappointment it has caused Fred in not to have him at the Cape, it is a thing we were all quite unprepared for after his faithfully promising to do so and telling us not to seek out anything for him in England, but I hope it is all for the best. Tell your Uncle Fred when you write to him that your Uncle Charles has not heard from him since last October and his continued silence put him to great inconvenience. I wish he would write and state everything to him.

And now my dear Boy allow me to thank you for your timely assistance and to assure you that you have been the means of causing both your Ma and myself to spend a much more comfortable Spring than we have done for some time and have relieved me from a great deal of anxiety and by the blessings of God will, with

a good Season, enable us to enjoy a comfortable Winter. Your Ma will write by next mail, she is very busy getting ready to go out for the Summer and then we let the place we live in and the change does the Family a great deal of good and not at all expensive. I have received 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Bills for £100 just as the mail was leaving or I should have written a fortnight back. The Family are all quite well and desire their kind love and accept the same my dear Boy

Your Grateful  
Father  
I Dyason

**1856 July 3**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

N.B, We have received the Bill for £100 as well as the one for £50. I name this in case the other letter should miscarry, date June 17.

My dear Boy

We received your note containing the Bill for £50 for which amount accept the best thanks of your dearest Mother and myself. I assure you my dear boy your kind assistance will be the means of my being enabled to provide for the Family in a much more comfortable manner than I have been able to do before, provided the alteration takes place that I have written to you about. I shall be able with the assistance I have received to enter it nearly free from the world. I cannot write more particulars at present, but I hope my next will contain a satisfactory statement as I shall have an interview with the Trustees of the Harbour on Monday next, who pay their annual visit to Ramsgate on that day.

Your Ma is at Haine and I believe is writing to you by this mail, but I am not certain till I go home this evening. I know she is very tired for she has only just put the part of the House to rights that we have left and as she has to walk 6 miles besides working all day I am sure you will excuse her if she does not write you a very long letter. I will take care she does so the next time. We are just beginning the Season, I hope it will prove a prosperous one. Your Uncle Charles has heard nothing from your Uncle Fred. Your Uncle Charles has heard nothing from your Uncle Fred since a letter he received in October of last year and which must have left Melbourne in July 1855. He is very uncomfortable about it and cannot think the reason why. Tell your Uncle Fred when you next write or see him to be sure and send home to England.

I trust my dear boy you are steadily progressing in business and that you will realise all you can wish for yourself. I feel certain that the kind assistance you have rendered your parents will never go unrewarded by our heavenly Father. Do not, my dear boy, forget him for it is to him that we owe all that we have.

I heard that you are well and in good spirits and I hope the time will not be far distant when we shall have the happiness of thanking our dear boy in person. It is a subject your dear Ma and myself are frequently discussing and when it does come be assured my dear boy it will be one of the happiest moments of our lives. I shall now conclude with kind love and believe me my dear Boy,

Your affectionate  
Father I Dyason

**1856 July 3**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My Dear Isaac

I am moving the Family into the Country for the Summer so shall only have time to write a few lines to you at present with the promise of a longer letter some little time hence. In the first place allow me Dear Child to return you my sincere thanks for the assistance you have afforded us, it is a very large amount and thanks are a very poor return for that which has caused you so much care and toil to secure, and perhaps privation. Your Father intends if he can to reserve it till the new Baths are erected should the Trustees decide on purchasing Turmaine's cottage, but this he could not have done had not your Uncle White left me a small sum which served for present emergencies.

I regret exceedingly the being obliged to mention our circumstances to you. I should like to write nothing to you but that which would afford you pleasure. Perhaps as you say, our affairs are about taking a favourable turn and we may become a prosperous family. At least let us strive and hope on and leave the event to Him who knows what is good for each one of us all. The Trustees are coming to Ramsgate this week and your father is to have an interview with them, we will write you the result which I hope will be favourable. I am very glad to hear (*of*) your health which I think must be very difficult to retain considering the intense heat of summer.

The price of provisions at Melbourne is not so very exorbitant taking one thing with another but charges for the washing of clothes are very high. I should think that a Laundry Establishment answers very well there. Our summer is commencing as usual, we with others are looking forward perhaps too anxiously but certainly with better prospects than if the War were still going on, as trade on the whole is much better and provisions are cheaper. The country looks beautiful just now, the land in our little Isle is mostly arable and every part of it is highly cultivated. Vegetation is much more forward than last year at this time, wheat and barley are in ear, beans are in full blossom, the clover looks very pretty, fruits and roses smell sweetly. The country is a very pleasant change for us and benefits our health which I am happy to say is good. Your father has not general good health as the liver is very frequently out of order but still he looks very well generally excepting a little like bronze in complexion which is a brown yellow.

I believe my Dear Child you have expressed a wish that Fanny should resume the study of the German language, she shall do so without delay you having so kindly assisted with the means. It has been the endeavour of my life to have the children well educated but this is a very difficult matter to accomplish, however we will still persevere. You are under a little mistake I think with regard to my decision about Frederick. When your Uncle wrote to say he would take him we accepted the offer and only waited for him to name the time as he wished him not to come just then. He says he cannot remain here after Summer but he must go either to the Cape or to Australia. He knows something of the French and German and will soon be a tolerable violinist. We had some thoughts of placing him with a Music Master but his wish is to go abroad. For two years past he has been fluctuating between hope and fear expecting to hear from his Uncle telling him to come and has written two letters to him enclosed in his Father's and at last his Uncle wrote to say he could not take him at all. I am sorry it has so happened, but this time he would have served part of an apprenticeship to some business or profession or other. I hoped a gentleman whom your father was acquainted with would have taken him about the time when his Uncle and Aunt mentioned about his coming out to the Cape. I dare say you are quite tired of hearing about this subject dear Boy, let us leave it for the present.

I am glad you practice the flute, it will be a pleasant recreation for you and you will not neglect your voice. I am taking in a publication which will enable young persons to acquire a very good fund of general knowledge, it is published weekly at three halfpence and styled "*Cassels Popular Educator*"

(*Missing pages*)



THE BAOBAB TREE.—Botany.

THE  
POPULAR EDUCATOR:

A COMPLETE ENCYCLOPÆDIA

OF

*Elementary, Advanced, and Technical Education.*

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NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

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VOLUME I.



CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN,

LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.;

AND 596, BROADWAY, NEW YORK.



**1856 August 18**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Boy

We have just received your letter by the *Royal Charter*\* addressed to your mother acquainting us with your determination to take your Brother Fred. I assure you my dear boy, it was with feelings of regret and pleasure that we read it, regret at having to part with him and the pleasure of knowing that he would with your assistance be more likely to succeed in life in Australia than he would in England. For I assure you without a Capital in this country it is impossible to succeed however industrious or persevering one may be.

I think you will have no cause to be under any apprehension as far as the condition which you have named with respect to Fred for although I say it, he is of a very quiet, industrious and persevering turn of mind, strictly honest and firmly adheres to the truth. The only thing that I find any fault in him, is, that he is almost too reserved, but your dear mother who is writing to you respecting him, I have no doubt will tell you every thing. Fred himself very much wishes to come and would rather be with you than with your Uncle John, although if he had sent for him he would have gladly accepted the offer, and I am only surprised that after the letters we received from the Cape both from your Uncle and Aunt respecting him, that they did not send for him more than 12 months back, but I have no doubt it is all for the best. I feel quite certain that you will find him very useful to you after a little time and any thing that you may name to him in confidence will be strictly adhered to by him.

We purpose getting him ready some time in October or November, and sending him by one of the Liverpool ships which sail at that time, we shall endeavour to send him second class and to fit him out as well as we are able. I see the vessels that leave in October next are the *Donald McCay* the 5<sup>th</sup> October, the *Arabian* the 20 October, and the *Champion of the Seas* the 5<sup>th</sup> Nov, all of them Royal Mail ships and I believe have been to Australia before. Such is our present intention, without I can get any thing for him to do, so that he may make himself useful in his passage out, as I know some Gentlemen who are connected with the shipping interest and I shall apply to them to see if they can do any thing for him, but at any rate we shall wait the arrival of your next letter which will be in a month from the date of the one received by the *Royal Charter*, as I have no doubt that will contain further instruction respecting him, and we shall then decide by what vessel he is to go in, and let you know directly.

With respect to myself my dear boy, I can only say that I am truly thankful for the assistance you have rendered to me, without it I must have sank, and I would not have troubled you for myself, but I could not bear the thought of your dearest mother and the family suffering, while I thought it was likely you might have it in your power to assist them. I am sure it will be a satisfaction to my dear Child to know he has been the means of saving me from ruin and the Family from a great deal of misery, and should I have it in my power to repay you, which I hope to have the pleasure will be as great to me as I know it has been to you in rendering assistance to me when so much needed.

I am pleased to say that the business with respect to the cheap Baths is settled and as soon as the Season is over we shall commence alterations and I feel quite satisfied that when complete it will fully return all my expectations. I shall write to you more fully on the subject by and by, your Ma being at Haine I know she is writing to you, but what she is writing I do not know, as I never see any of her letters till just before they are posted, but she often tells me when I read mine to her, that they are very much alike. I did not intend writing by this mail but thought I would wait until I received your next letter, so you will excuse the slips of paper on which it is written.

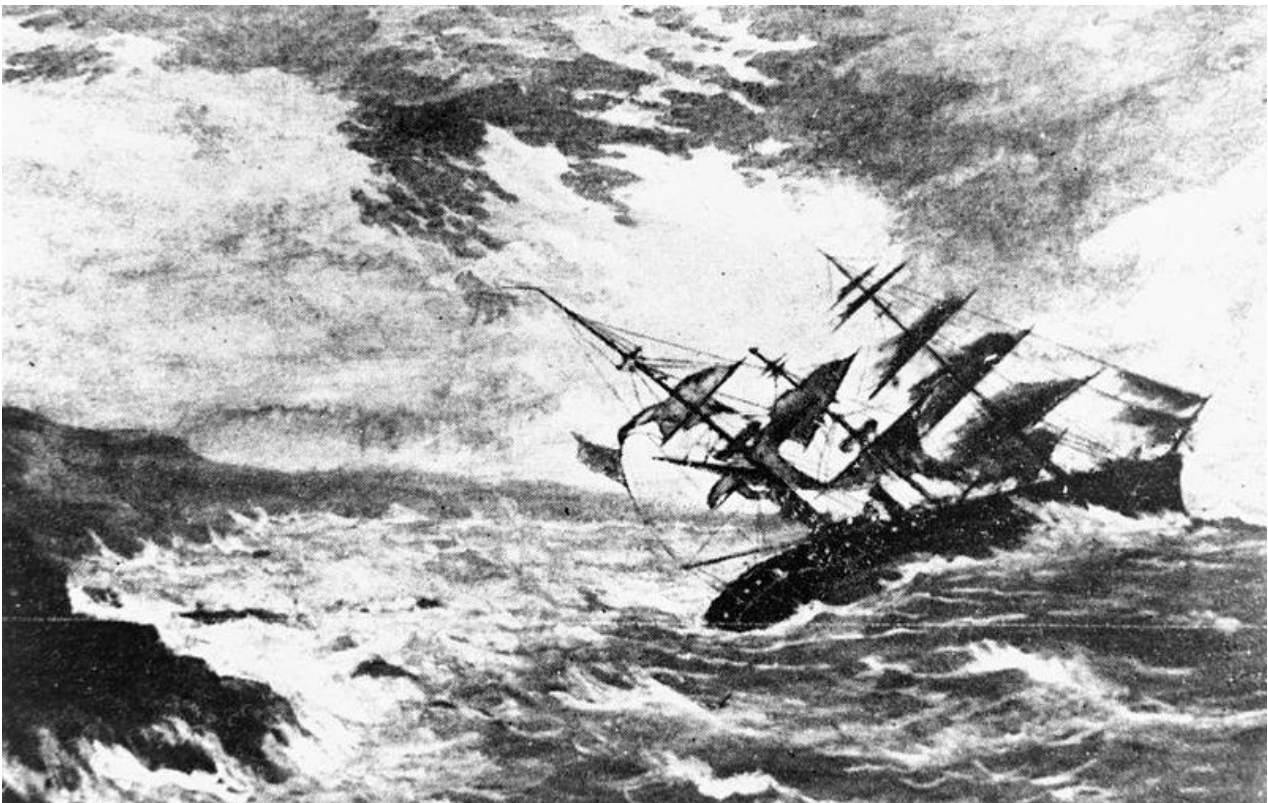
As the time draws near for Fred's departure, I am sure it will be a trying time for us, for we do not like our children to be separated so far away from us and did not we think it was for his welfare we should not be able to part with him, for when you left my dear boy it was like Death to us and could we by any chance or any means have got you back there is no doubt but what we should have done so, for we were weeks and months before we could reconcile ourselves to your absence. I must now conclude with my best wishes for your welfare and believe me my dear Boy, your affectionate Father I Dyason.

*\*This ship was wrecked in October 1859 off Anglesey in Wales with great loss of life, and loss of much gold.*

## Royal Charter



Image from <http://www.old-merseytimes.co.uk/ROYALCHARTER.html> accessed May 2013



Wikimedia Commons image via the State Library of Queensland accessed May 2013  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StateLibQld\\_1\\_186783\\_Royal\\_Charter\\_\(ship\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StateLibQld_1_186783_Royal_Charter_(ship).jpg)

**1856 October 3**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's Father**

My dear Boy

Since my letter to you by the Royal Mail Ship (*Tipton?*) acquainting you of our intention to send Fred out by the *Kent* which I find is to sail on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November. We have altered our minds and we shall not be able to send him till February or March 1857 when I hope, please God, all will go well and that you will see him in May or June following. I have no doubt but that you will agree very well together for he is a boy you may do just as you please with and I have no doubt but that in a short time you will find him very useful to you. We have just heard from the Cape. Fanny has a short letter from your cousin John acquainting us with news that Julia is married to a young Irishman who is a storekeeper in one of the inland towns of the Cape. I hope she will be happy with him. I have not heard myself from your uncle for some time but hope to do so as I wrote him a long letter in June last, respecting your Grandfather Dyason, requesting his assistance towards his support as I do not think the whole of the expense of his maintenance ought to be born by me as your uncle is in a position to do it. I have told him that your Grandfather has cost me since he has been in England nearly £500 and I do think with my large family it is a hard case that the whole of the expense should fall on me. Your uncle has sent once £20 nearly two years back and promised to send me some regularly but I have heard nothing from him since. If our Uncle Charlie hears nothing from your uncle Fred and has not had more than two letters for more than 12 months he is getting very anxious about the matter and if he does not hear more regular it will put him to great inconveniences. When you write to him tell him to be more punctual in writing home. You will excuse the shortness of this letter as I had quite forgotten the vessel sails on the 4<sup>th</sup> when Sunday comes on the 5<sup>th</sup>

Our season is now drawing to a close and it has been with me about an average one, which with the assistance you have rendered me will enable us to spend a far happier Winter than we have done for many years past, as I shall not be in the dreadful uncertainty of knowing that I have payments coming due, and it has been quite uncertain whether I should be able to meet them. I thank you my dear boy for all that you have done for the family, without your assistance I could not have gone on but with it you have enabled me to relieve myself from my most pressing liabilities and I hope will enable me to go on with the alteration which once accomplished I have no doubt but what will realise a good living. Your dearest mother and the family join with me in kind love, wishing this may find you in the best of health and spirits. Believe me my dear Isaac your affectionate father Isaac Dyason.

We shall be sure and send you word which vessel Fred will come by as this in all probability will reach you about Christmas we wish you a merry one and a happy New Year.

**1856 October (10?)**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's Uncle Charles Pearce (*aged 29*)**

My dear Isaac

The *Champion of the Seas* is in and I must reply my severe disappointment in consequence of not receiving any communication from you respecting the balance of the Lola shipment. It is now two years since that order was executed and the only remittance received off that account is a bill on the NS Wales Bank for £100. Leaving a Balance of 4 / 6.6.

I truly relied upon your promise to send the goods without the slightest hesitation and yet the balance has remained open this unreasonable time. You are well aware of the necessity of preserving one's name as regards that punctuality on pay outs. How is it possible that such can be the case when I have to give almost two hundred credit.

I have had several serious losses which have very nearly shipwrecked my frail back. I have looked upon your Balance for some months past looking with great and very great anxiety for the arrival of every mail. Also according to the tenor of your letter (Jan 1856) I was led to expect your Balances, for therein you also kindly stated your intention of settling the A/C which now I have not had any further advice upon. I sincerely trust if you have not forwarded the amount you will do so without any further delay.

This disastrous Australian venture has wrought upon me almost a total loss of business at home by straining me to the utmost in monetary affairs so that twas next to an impossibility that I could stock my business, added to which the inconvenient task of discounts attendant upon renewed acceptance has paralysed all my efforts from want of means.

My dear nephew, I look to you for the settlement of my just demands upon receipt of this, they were shipped in full confidence and I hope you will not shirk it. I am happy to say all the family both branches are in good health, wishing you are well

I am your affectionate  
Charles Pearce



**Champion of the Seas**

East Boston about 1854. By Southworth and Hawes, American, 19th century, daguerreotype. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston <http://www.mfa.org/collections> from Wikimedia Commons accessed May 2013

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ChampionOfTheSeas\\_ca1854\\_EastBoston\\_Southworth\\_Hawes\\_MFABoston.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ChampionOfTheSeas_ca1854_EastBoston_Southworth_Hawes_MFABoston.png)

1857

1857 January 12

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason (*aged nearly 54*)

My dear Isaac

It is some time since I had the pleasure of writing to you and have therefore determined to put aside everything and devote this morning to you. I am aware dear Child that you will be anxious to know how we are proceeding in our affairs. I am happy in being able to inform you that the Trustees have purchased Mr Turmaine's property and we are to make the alterations and put what they term the plant on the new premises and they will grant us a lease of one and twenty years at a reduced rent of eighty pounds a year. The expense of erecting and completing the cheap Baths has been estimated at fourteen hundred pounds by their own Surveyor and your Father is writing to two or three Attorneys to know if they have money that they can invest in the building. We are awaiting their reply with some anxiety being fearful of delay as there are parties in Ramsgate and Margate who are talking of uniting their capital to erect a cheap Warm Bathing Establishment in this Town to accommodate the class of visitors who arrive here by Cheap Boats and cheap train and no doubt there is a large business to be done, at least so everyone says, and if there are improvements in this line of business I think we are the persons who should have the advantage of the same. However, I will write to you as soon as the affair is settled.

I have to thank you, my dear child, for writing to your Aunt Susan which I regard as a kindness to myself. She is very much pleased with your attention but Aunt Polly is very jealous. She says those who have cared for others meet with no return of love, by which she means she who loved you so much as a child is forgotten but I am aware this is not the case, she desires me to send you a continuation of that love which has remained unbroken. I have likewise to thank your Uncle Frederic for his kind letter to your Grandmamma. I hope he will often write to her as her mind is much set on him.

The honour done to him is very gratifying to us all and I hope he will be enabled to fill the office he is elected to with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of the public over whom he may preside. Will you be so good as to present our loving remembrances to him when you write and thank him for us with regard to Freddy who will leave England in March if possible to come to you dearest Boy, his Father purposes as much and if nothing presents he will commemorate your Birth day on the wide ocean. Fred desires his kind love to you and says he knows exactly what you will require of him and is determined to remain no longer in England than March, and if his vessel makes a good passage he hopes to see you in June. We hope his voyage will prove a propitious one. I am aware, dear Boy, we are imposing no small task on you by consigning him to your care but I do not know what he will do if he remains at home and there is no chance for him at the Cape and should he prove to be what you wish him and endeavour to make him, a good and prosperous man, what a source of happiness will it be to you all through your life my dear child, and should the case be otherwise which we will not entertain for one moment, you will have nothing to reflect on, nothing to accuse yourself of, nothing to condemn yourself for, he is wishing to go forward, wishing to provide for himself, has not as yet stooped to crime and is old enough to see the necessity of exerting himself in order to success, and if my heart and judgement tell me rightly he will be a comfort to you in return for your care of him.

I hope my dear Isaac that you are in health and that you will take every care of that inestimable treasure. You will shortly arrive at your twenty fifth year, how quickly time passes, what a short space it seems since I was that age and now I am moving off the stage of 'human life' which you have just entered. At present how happy am I in my children, though they have their faults there is nothing materially wrong. I earnestly pray that each one may be kept from every snare, that they may remember the Creator in the days of their youth, which will ensure them a happy life and a peaceful death. I hope, dear Boy, your affairs are prosperous but do not be overanxious which I think you are not.

Your sisters and brothers desire their kindest love to you. Your Father has not time to write by this mail but will write shortly, but joins me and the rest in wishing you many happy returns of your birthday and a happy

new year. Grandmamma and all friends sent their kind love and hope to hear from you shortly. Thanking you for all your kindness and wishing you every blessing, believe me to remain your ever affectionate mother

EI Dyason.

P.S. I have (*not*) mentioned any of the little affairs of the family in this letter but hope to write to you again shortly when I will (tell) about them. We understand your cousin Julia is married so Fanny's mind is at rest in that quarter, she is expecting a letter from you.

Goodbye Dearest for a little time.

**1857 May 11**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your letter of January 18<sup>th</sup> and your Father's of February both at the same time, and as the post takes this letter this morning, I have risen early that I may send a few lines to you, your sisters will write by the next mail. I am truly thankful that you are still in health and hope it will be continued to you being superior to every other good, peace alone excepted, that you meet with reverses in your affairs. I am not surprised at that, you are young and I trust will bear them with fortitude, but I fear the remittances you have sent us at different times may be partly the cause of retarding your success.

I had hoped to be in circumstances to have paid some portion of it back, but this cannot be done now, as we have not been able to carry out our plans with regard to the enlarging of our business. The house is not a sufficient security to induce any one to advance a sum required for the alteration. Next year it is said the Trustees will resign their Trust into the hands of Government and all the property not immediately connected with the Harbour will be sold, which includes the Albion Hotel and the line of houses reaching as far as the Royal Oak and on the west side of our house, and two houses adjoining ours.

I told you my dear boy that we intended to send Frederic in March, but the money that was put by for that purpose was unexpectedly wanted and must in consequence defer his departure some little time, but he is very anxious to be gone. With regard to your Uncle John. I think it is better that he did not take Fred, neither do I wish to blame him with regard to the prospects held out to the children. The disappointment is past, and I sincerely hope that your uncle will still be prosperous and happy. They have done me a lasting favour in their care of and kindness to you my Child which I would not be ungrateful for. I am aware he has had many great trials and is still under a heavy cloud, but I hope it will soon disperse. I will not say what I intended with regard to your sisters. They will write all their hopes and fears to you. I am glad to say we are all in tolerable health and they all send their kindest love to you, you would like to romp with your roguish little sisters Gussy and Cassy, one seven the other nine. They imagine you are a little Brother that will come to see them shortly. Edward and Charley are eleven and thirteen, Julia fifteen and is quite a person of consequence.

We have had very cold winds all through the month, many elderly people have died. I was very fearful of your Grandmamma but she seems in better health now. My brother does not write, you say he is well. Please remember us to him. Tell him he must not forget home and his promise to write. I am glad you passed through the hot Summer unscathed. We sometimes read news relative to Australia, not always satisfactory, but I wish we were there for the family's sake.

Your father desires his kindest love to you and will write to you shortly. Our Summer is approaching. We do not expect the opposition boats to run and I think it will be better as it introduces so many people that rather do an injury to the real interest of the Town.

I must now conclude. I cannot help thinking my letters must be a great tax on your patience, and you have already there on hand but your sisters will commence soon and your correspondence will be more equal.

Hoping to hear shortly I remain your ever  
affectionate mother  
E I D

**(1857 estimated) May 9**

**Ramsgate from sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your very affectionate letter and thank you a thousand times for it and every other demonstration of love for me and for us all. These days I am jealous and I am afraid, I am for I do not much like those many endearing expressions which Julia uses when writing of you. How much I long for the promised likeness and hope soon to see the original. What do you think of my going to the Cape. I much wish to have all your thoughts on the subject, I am preparing myself so that if I can get a good recommendation from my generous minded Uncle, I might realise a little fortune and we could return home together.

Do you think Aunt and Uncle and John and Julia would love me as they do you for I would not be happy if they felt no regard for me, I know they will. I should not deserve their affection as well as you but I would try to behave as well as I could for your sake. I am rather given to fretting, but that I must try to conquer if not, I must keep it to myself. I am going to tell you a secret dear Isaac. I have begun to learn German which I can accomplish in a twelvemonth. I have a good Master and Ma thinks it will be as necessary to know that as the French as there are so many German families scattered around in all countries and at present it is studied in most schools. We want to surprise Pa, he doesn't know of it, and I think it will be a good thing if I can teach the two languages and music, but of the rest I am rather fearful lest I should meet with better players than myself. My cousins for instance may be more advanced than I, therefore they would not recommend me unless to junior classes. But however, I will try to improve all I can. You have imposed a task on me dearest Isaac, I do not much like – I mean our circumstances. I did not know much of them till about two years after you left, then there always appeared a 'Difficulty' in meeting our demands and Grandpa's return to England which he left in an insolvent state and who is entirely dependent on us for support and our increasing family of course did not improve our affairs. Our house too is highly rented being two hundred and eighty pounds a year but they have taken off forty pounds a year and it is now two hundred and forty, leases and taxes in consequence are high and it has not been without many a struggle that Pa has kept on business, not that we have ever wanted either food or clothing but have so far maintained a respectability, and I think we are progressing. Pa says he shall be able to conquer the Romans at last if he has only his health.

This is dear Isaac as things are at home though but imperfectly sketched, but anything further you may wish to know I will endeavour to inform you of as well as I may. A little bird has whispered something to me, who is the sly little Puss now? I know all about it and it will indeed add greatly to the comfort of our dear parents and to our general well being and allow me to thank you in the name of my Brothers and Sisters who of course do not know anything of it with the exception of Elizabeth. But now dear Isaac I shall patiently await another letter at your earliest opportunity. Oh! If I could take a look at the diggings, how we should enjoy each other's society, perhaps it will be your lot to pursue at the Cape.

Elizabeth sends her kindest love, all my brothers and sisters send you many kisses. I thank you for the assurance that your heart is still your own or mine if you wish but now dear Isaac would it not be a pitiable circumstance if all your happiness centred in a stranger, and now I must conclude wishing you may return safe and prosperous from the diggings.

I remain dearest Isaac  
Your ever affectionate sister  
Fanny Dyason

(I hope will excuse the extreme badness of this but the paper is so very very thin I can scarcely write on it at all)

Grandma is quite well and sends her kindest love to you as well as all our Uncles and Aunts, Uncle White is still alive and well. Do not forget to write as soon as you can.  
Good bye

**1857 July 10**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter by which I was happy to see that you are quite well in reply. I am sorry to tell you that Fred has not yet left England. We had fully (*expected*) on being able to send him in March as we thought the trustees would have made the alterations in the baths which would have put a little ready money in your father's hands (for as I have told you in my former letters that the money you so kindly sent us we have been obliged to take to keep our affairs together owing to the decline of business for the want of cheap baths) but instead of which they have not only declined making the alteration but your father has had to furnish a new copper, reservoir and furnace himself, and the London tradespeople he was obliged to employ required ready money which took all he could get together, the income of this season which is now fully far advanced and business being very dull will do no more than cover the necessary expenses, so I do not see how we shall be able to send him even in the Autumn.

If you my dear Isaac could possibly spare the sum required for his passage his father could through a friend procure his outfit and everything necessary for the voyage. If you would do this Fred says he would pay it back to you either by working for you or by his wages as soon as he will be able to earn any. He is very anxious to get out and be doing something as he is now nearly eighteen and it makes him very uncomfortable to be at home unemployed. I hope my dear Isaac you will not think it unkind in me to make this additional demand on you as I know how hard it must have been for you alone and unassisted to have realised the smallest sum and how difficult it must have been for you to have spared that which you have already sent us, but indeed I do not see how your brother can be sent unless you can assist us.

I shall anxiously await your reply to this as I should very much like him to leave England at the commencement of the year. All your friends desire to be kindly remembered and send their kind love hoping you will write at your earliest opportunity

Believe me I remain your truly affectionate Mother,  
E I Dyason

**1857 September 9**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My Dear Isaac

I received your kind letter of the 23<sup>rd</sup> June in which you say you have been expecting to hear from home, with regard to Uncle Charles whom I called on the evening of the arrival of your letter which was the 5<sup>th</sup> Sept. He told me all your letters had arrived safely and that he had written to Uncle Fred acknowledging the receipt of the same which you will have known some time previously to the arrival of this. As to myself, I think I wrote to you in May having purposely delayed to write hoping to be able to tell you that the cheap Baths are being erected and to inform you of a fixed time for Frederick's departure. I wrote again in July and Fred a few lines in August containing a request that if you could possibly spare him the money sufficient for his voyage he would endeavour to repay it. I fear my Dear Boy you will think me unreasonable if not to say unkind in making such a request particularly when in looking over your last letter I find business is very indifferent with you. I beg dearest Boy you will not make yourself unhappy on account of your inability to accede to our wish but hope with us that at some time we shall be able to send him to you. We had the chance of placing him with Mr Phipps, Organist and Music Master when he was about 14 years of age and by this time he would have known a business or more properly, a Profession, but we thought he had better apply to his Uncle at the Cape as he had always expressed a wish to go abroad.

Uncle together with his Aunt invited him to come, of course we accepted the invitation and waited only for them to fix the time but your Uncle's affairs proving too unfortunate, he could not have him at any rate and so fluctuating between hope and disappointment poor Fred had been from the age of fourteen to the present time. He thought we should have procured him a situation in London for a few months till he could have sufficient for his voyage, but the people have decided to part with their business. You do not say if you have heard from your Uncle. I should like to know if they are all well and if their prospects are brighter and if you find out if Julia has any family. Fanny has not heard from her since her marriage. I suppose her time is fully occupied now. Well, they were all very kind to you my Dear Boy in which I shall ever feel myself their debtor.

I am sorry to hear there are so many people out of employ, it is a sad state for them to be in and I daresay a great many of them regret leaving their native country but as you say numbers will be required for making the railroad. I have to thank you for the papers accompanying your letters and also for a newspaper which we received in August, provisions do not appear to be cheaper than they were. Does the climate seem to be making any inroad on your own situation? 'Tis a pity that the country is so subject to drought, it seems to me an unaccountable way of getting a living, digging for gold and quartz crushing every day so truly uncomfortable, but your Father is very sanguine and says he should not mind working at the mines as he might be the fortunate one and find a huge nugget of gold. You mention having heard from Uncle Fred, I hope he will continue to have his health and be successful in his undertaking. He is very lazy, not to write oftener. I do suppose it is in vain to expect a letter from him but we send him our very kind love and good wishes which please present to him when you have an opportunity.

I remember the vessel you speak of being in the Harbour and should have sent letters by her but Father said letters sent by such small vessels seldom reached their destination, she lay in East Jetty which perhaps you remember is closer to the Watch House at the end of the East Pier. The passengers were complaining then of the badness and scarcity of their provisions which I do not expect improved as they proceeded. We hear Captain Watts is nearing England and has left his eldest daughter in Australia, his friends say his reason for returning is that the climate does not agree with the family.

I do not think the people who figure in that scene which heads your paper much resemble the Opera dancer in London. The children were quite amazed at them. I delivered your message to Aunt Polly who laughed and said she believed you had grown too fine a gentleman that she must try and make her fortune and pay you a visit. I do not believe you will ever have a letter from her, it would indeed be a mountain of labour. Grandma says she has your little mug that you used to drink your tea out of and she hopes you will some day

take tea out of it again and asks if you have any chooks as you used to have when a child and whether you remember a man saying "oh Grandma, that man has not such rosy cheeks as I".

I should be most happy dearest Boy when I can write you good news but your Farther has had a most anxious summer, scarcely having any business till August when we thought after a great deal of deliberation we would lower the price of the baths from 2/6d to 2/. We had a little more to do in consequence but owing to the weather it is falling off again. I hope one day we shall be so fortunate as to command sufficient for our wants but after having them all within our power I suppose we must wait and hope.

And now dearest Boy I must conclude wishing you success in Bendigo.

I remain your affectionate Mother  
Your Father sends his kindest love.

**1857 October 10**

**Ramsgate from Sister Elizabeth Dyason (aged 22)**

My dear Brother

Mamma tells me that you say in your letter to her that your sisters are to write to you and not to give way any longer to laziness. Now, brother mine, why do you suppose so naturally, that laziness is a peculiar besetment of ours, do you know when the above quoted paragraph was read to me by Mamma, being of a reflective turn of mind, I fell into a train of thought and taking into consideration the doctrine of family resemblances wondered if a slight repugnance to the development of the principles of active locomotion lurking somewhere in the courses of your own philosophy might not have suggested the idea that your sisters look after you.

And now my dear Brother I must tell you which I have the honour to be so that you may know when you are reading this letter who it is that is addressing you without waiting till you come to the signature so then it is your second sister Lizzie who is now writing to her unknown but not the less loved brother. Do you dear Isaac at all remember me. I can remember you but that of course would give me no idea of what you are now. I remember how fond you were of drawing and your dividing your pictures between Fanny and me before you went away. We have them now and I need not say how much they are prized, but my recollections of you are at best very indistinct though we can love each other quite as well as if we had been brought up together for we are too nearly related for association to make any difference, there can be no nearer tie than that of brother and sister.

Do you know I was once very jealous of Julia----, Dyason now no more and glad was I to hear of her marriage for I concluded that she in whose thoughts you stood not first would not stand first in yours and so she has tied the fatal knot and writes herself 'Mamma'. I say my dear brother it behoves us to look out for precursory symptoms of grey hair etc when one of our own generation enters upon the list of maternals and brings forward living proof that we no longer belong to the rising but to the risen race. We have not heard from her since her marriage, some time before she wrote requesting us to send her some music and a few other things and John wrote a short note acknowledging the receipt of them and telling us his sister was married but we have not heard from her since. May she be happy.

Captain Watts has arrived home. He was six months on his passage. We did not see him for he was not in England more than a week before he left again for India and will be gone two years. He told a friend of ours that he had seen you but only for a short time, do you remember?

Is not this Indian war an awful thing. It shows pretty plainly how the Government has been employed for the hundred years we have had the rule there. In England it has caused as much distress as the Crimean war did, there is scarcely a family but is involved in some way. It makes one's blood curdle to read the news papers. I have been teaching in a family lately returned from India and they have received letters from their friends there in which they say only the most favourable accounts are published, the details are too horrible, too sickening to write home, that the soldiers are mad with rage and in the camp before Delhi they have sworn to exterminate every living thing when once they enter the city. I think that if they don't put that personal incarnation of the fiend Nene Sahib through a few of his own pleasant exercises, they will not do him justice.

Yesterday was set apart as a day to be kept as a general fast. It was strictly observed, the shops were closed and all business suspended. Some say what is the use in the abstract when it is the fault of the Indian Government but we know after that the 'prayer of the righteous man availeth much' and after the fast day kept in the Crimean war, I think I write it advisedly, our armies did not suffer one reverse. Do you not sympathise with our 'tight little island' she has had a good deal of rough weather for the last few years though she has a very able pilot in Lord Palmerston, who considering he is 75 and has the gout brings her through indifferent swells.

I suppose some fine morning your children down in the far South East will be requiring a separate establishment (you have it now partly I believe) but don't follow the bad example of your elder brother America but come with your caps in your hands and ask dutifully (the old lady likes a little respect) and no doubt you will get all you want and the maternal blessing into the bargain.

Now for home news, we are all quite well, by all I mean your friends from the oldest relation you have, your great great Aunt Brooke in her 95<sup>th</sup> year and who the last time I saw her enquired very kindly after you and sent her love, she is in full possession of all her faculties, can see to read and work without glasses, and can remember things that occurred 87 years ago. She gave me a piece of the coat her father wore when he was married 125\* years ago, down to your youngest on this side of the Equator your baby sister Katherine a pretty child with such beautiful eyes but who is of course a stranger to you, as well as the four others of whom Julia is the eldest, just sixteen a very important personage in her own estimation, she was born the month after you left England. I often think what a dreadful thing it must have been for Mama to have parted with you then. I have heard her say, her head used to throb so violently at night she could not lay it on the pillow but was obliged to get up and sit by the bedside night after night when she used to think she could not let you go, though as she thought it would be for your ultimate good she bore through it all, but dear Isaac you can have no idea of the excellence of Mamma's character, who were so young when under its influence, so kind, unselfish and gentle she is worthy all the love you give her, she is very fond of you dear brother and I think you are very lucky in being the eldest born, for taking mamma's, Grandma's and Aunt Polly's evidence you have had the usual luck of such and come in for a double portion of nature's bounties.

The summer, with its bathing and boating and its visitors of all classes from the hon. Mrs Anybody who takes lodgings on the Cliffs, to the Italian boy with mice who takes lodgings nowhere, with all its wealth of music from the 'German Band' paid by subscription, to the hurdy gurdy paid by occasional halfpence has taken to itself wings and fled, and the Autumn has set in with very rough weather, it blows tremendously today and two vessels which were trying to make the harbour struck the pier, head filled and went down, their crews saved by means of lifelines, our house being opposite the harbour commands a splendid view of the sea which situation I very much approve of as sailors and all connected with them are my delight.

My dear brother there has been a great improvement made in photography lately, that is they take portraits on paper by which means they can be sent without care or anxiety to any part of the world. Now doubtless you are wondering to what this announcement lends, I'll tell you I see no reason in the world why you should not avail yourself of the said improvement, enter the domicile of some portrayer of the human face divine, exit leaving your shadow made into a substance and enclose it in a letter to me thereby rendering me the happiest of mortals, but seriously do dear Isaac let me have your likeness and if you do I will send you two in return, mine and baby's. I would send them now but being rather suspiciously inclined want to get yours first.

Mamma wishes me to thank you for the two letters she has received from you, and to tell you she will answer them by the next mail. I will now conclude this long, long letter for I am quite tired, so no doubt are you, I hope you will feel industrious when you get this, or perhaps you won't read but you come to my request Pray don't ship that. I shall faint before I open your letter (if I get one) and when I come to, if the likeness is not there I shall die,

Yours with much love  
Elizabeth Dyason

*\*The letter says 25 years ago, but seeing as Aunt Brooke is 95 years old and the cloth came from her father's wedding gown, then 125 years is the correct age.*

**1857 November 10**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances Dyason**

Dear Isaac

I have only time to write a few lines as the mail leaves tomorrow morning. It was Ma's intention to write but she has taken cold in her eyes and cannot look at anything without hurting them, so you must put up with me (a very unworthy substitute). I have not had a letter from you for a long time but I suppose I cannot complain as I must plead guilty in having been very lazy though I thought I would give you a short respite as you had so many of mine on hand. I suppose you are again looking forward to the last days of Summer. I think they must be very trying, we had a taste of them this Summer, and did not know what to do with ourselves. I am very glad the climate agrees with you.

Captain Watts said he should have lost all his children if he had not left. Directly he came home he was appointed to take a larger vessel with 500 troops to India. Fortune seems to shine on some people all through life and to persecute others, I suppose he is one of the favoured ones. You have no doubt seen by the papers our amount of the splendid harvest. We have had people say there has not been such a one for 40 years, the fields used to look most magnificent but with all things still continue very dear. I suppose it is owing to the Indian Mutiny. We are but slowly recovering from the effects of the Crimean War and this will throw us all back.

Do you not think it rather strange. I have never heard from Julia since her marriage\*. We should not even have known of it had it not been for a very short note I had from John stating that she had received the things she wrote to me to send. I cannot write to her as I do not know her address. I hope they are getting on better than they were when Uncle John last wrote to Pa which was about two years ago, he has not heard from him since. I am glad to say we have all been pretty well excepting Pa who has had another of his attacks which I think are chiefly owing to anxiety, it being such an extremely difficult thing to get on with a large family. I suppose you do not often see Uncle Fred but when you do please give our love to him.

And now, dear Isaac, I must say good bye as it is getting late, all send their love to you and believe me with best wishes for your health and prosperity, ever your truly affectionate sister

Fanny Dyason

*(written sideways)*

We all wish you a happy new year.

*\*Cousin Julia Dyason who married John Alfred Honeyborne from South Africa*

**(1857 estimated) November 24**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Augusta Dyason (aged 9)**

My dear Brother

I beg to introduce you to Katherine Agnes and Augusta Georgina Dyason. As the subject of their merit is rather a personal question I forbear any comment only, if the presentation is pleasing to you, will you send us in return a likeness of yourself? If on the contrary you are displeased at having them sent of course I shall not expect any. You will say you have already sent some but we want a "full length". Those we have are very nice as far as they go but don't go far enough. We want to see as much of you as we can so, if you please, send by return a full length *carte de visite* then I shall know you like ours.

You must answer this short letter. We waited till the last, hoping to hear from you, and now it is Saturday night which is always rather a busy time. Mamma is quite anxious about you and cannot be quite satisfied with repeating "no news is good news". I hope however it is true in this case. Will you also tell us how Uncle Fred is as he has not written.

With kind love from all, believe me my dear Brother

Your dear sister

A.G.Dyason

All wishes for a happy New Year

**(1857 estimated) December 19**  
**Bath House Ramsgate**  
**From Isaac's sister Augusta Dyason**

My dear Brother

Mama, who is not well, having a bad cold which has produced inflammation in her eyes, wishes me to write a few lines to you as she thinks you might be anxious if you were not to hear from home by this mail. I will begin by thanking you very much for your kind letters which I ought to have answered before but I really had no opportunity of so doing. You complained in your letter to me of the cold in Australia – I do not know what you would say to the cold here. The ground is covered with ice and snow and we have an additional discomfort in a strong cold wind. It is quite impossible to keep really warm but in Winter we must expect Winter weather.

We hope to see Lizzie and Edward this week, the others will not come home this Summer. The School, in which Julia is a teacher gave a grand concert before breaking up for the holidays. The concert room was very prettily decorated and they had a raised platform for the singers and finalists. Julia and another young lady opened it with a duet *Marsaniello* which was very much admired. They had a great many songs and prizes besides, but Rosemary and "I'm not in a hurry to marry" were the most loudly encored, the last of which Julia sang. She will spend a portion of the holidays with some friends in Coventry. I was much pleased to hear that you liked the hymn I sent you. I have sent you another which is very much liked here.

And now my dear Brother I will close this letter with much love and by wishing you a very Happy New Year

I remain, your very affectionate sister  
Augusta G Dyason

1858

1858 January 9

Ramsgate from Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My Dear Isaac

I have received two letters and a paper from you and I am glad to hear of your continued health but at the same time am sorry at the depressed state of trade. I very much wish that business affairs would prove more satisfactory to you and to us all. The past year has been a very trying one to us, everything we took in hand proved a failure. I do not remember ever having such continued anxieties, liabilities coming due with scarcely any business and at the close of the season we had every prospect of wanting a home and what is yet in store for us we cannot tell. You must be aware dearest boy that it would in some measure lighten our trials were Frederic in a situation in which he could have the prospect of providing for himself. We should have sent him out to you last Autumn as a friend promised to lend us sufficient for his passage but afterwards declined which was a sad disappointment for poor Fred who feels his position keenly. He is no longer a child and would gladly go to sea or do anything in preference to remaining at home. The only thing to be sure is to get him into a Merchant's office as Clerk but everything that is worth having in England is eagerly caught up by numbers which make it no easy matter for parents to place their children in anything advantageously. Your sisters are doing what they can, they are professedly morning or daily governesses and in three years have made £30 which is not a great sum but a little is better than nothing. They have not been systematically educated but if their Father could purchase them a school they would be able to conduct it very well. We have not heard from the Cape for a long time but I am expecting a letter from your Aunt in February or March as I wrote to her to know if she could take one of your sisters for a time till our affairs are improved a little. As she has one daughter at home now perhaps it would be a mutual advantage. The Trustees have had the old boilers taken down and the rubbish taken away but what they intend to do with the ground we do not know. This is not a pleasant letter for you dearest boy but the times may change to you and to us. In the meantime we must hope on and make every exertion that we can and let us be thankful for the keeping of health and that we are spared those awful calamities which have befallen others both in their families and in their possessions and let us put our faith in Him who knows what is best for us. And now my dear Boy I must conclude, wishing you and ourselves a happier year than the preceding one. Your Father, sisters and Brothers join me in love and best wishes for your health and happiness and believe me my dear Isaac your ever truly affectionate mother EI Dyason

PS. Grandma has received a letter from Frederick\* which pleased her very much. I think if he were to write to her oftener it would give her a great deal of pleasure. Will you give my love to him when you write, I hope he is getting on better then when we heard last of him.

*\*Uncle Frederick Pearce who was with Isaac in Australia*

**1858 February 10**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> November and from the statement of your affairs and the state of the colony generally I think it rather fortunate than otherwise that Frederick did not come out to you, as it is we must wish for a more auspicious time and in the meanwhile we must get him in to some situation. I most sincerely wish Dear Boy that instead of distressing you by our repeated solicitation we could have assisted you in your toilsome, lonely life but though situated at the extreme end of the globe your Heavenly Father has been observant of you and has enabled you to preserve a right line of conduct hitherto and I trust will keep you safely all your journey through till you reach your heavenly home.

You say dear Child the smallpox has reached your Colony, it seldom attacks those who have been vaccinated and then in a very modified form. I have nursed and played with my brothers and sisters who were all inoculated excepting your aunt Susan and myself therefore were not affected by it. It is well to attend to the health and to avoid a chill if attached by it and it seldom proves dangerous.

You mention not hearing lately from the Cape and that your cousin Julia is a mother, do you regret her being married dearest Child, tell me, it shall go no further, but if you do not wish me to know you need not mention the subject to me. I mentioned in my last letter to you of having written to your Aunt respecting your sisters. The Cape mail arrived last week but I have had no letter by it, perhaps they cannot comply with my request. When I wrote to her, I was fearful we should not retain our home for them and I do not like to send them among strangers but I could trust any one of the children to her care who cherished you so kindly, so carefully, but I must not burden her, it would be ungenerous indeed. We must have patience all is I am convinced for the best and that merciful providence who assisted us through the difficulties of the past year will I trust still maintain our lot. I have great reason to be thankful for the numerous blessings we still enjoy. Let us my beloved Child cultivate a grateful thankful heart which is well pleasing to our Heavenly Parent.

Your Grandmamma desired her kindest love to you, she was talking of the little events of your childhood and of your pretty golden curls and sparkling eyes and seemed to live those days again. But a change has come over the spirit of the dream, now we see a young man toiling up the rugged hill of life and if care and perplexity overshadowed his house may this address evermore be heard "My Father thou art the Guide of any Youth". Yes my Child, He is a safe counsellor and a kind saviour. I pray that each one of my beloved children may remember their creator in the days of their youth, it will save them from much bitter remorse in after life. I am truly grieved that so much distress prevails in the country, I hope things will speedily take a change for the better.

I told you that the old premises had been taken down, nothing more has been done. I do not think they will build cottages on it as it would not enhance the value of this property but considerably lessen its value, we must wait and hope a little longer, in the meantime what is to be done. *Chambers Journal* says "work man work". How much I wish I could send all those numbers (*of the journal*) out to you, never mind they are all in store for you as well as the *Pictorial Paper* and "*Cassell's Education for the People*". I think most persons have been too enthusiastic with regard to emigration and if Uncle Fred had remained in England he would have realized a good living as salesman. I am glad he is in good spirits, please present our kindest love to him. He must not forget his promise. I am happy to say we are all well, the girls are expecting to hear from you.

Libby is wishing to have a small space in this letter so I must conclude. Your father joins me in kindest love to you, the little ones send you a kiss with their love and believe me I remain Dearest Child your truly affectionate mother.

(From Libby – Elizabeth Dyason)  
My Dearest Brother

These few lines are to keep the request contained in my last letter fresh in your memory. The request respecting your likeness. I know it would have been very difficult to have sent it home as a parcel but now it could be taken on paper and easily enclosed in a letter (at least they do so in England). My dear Isaac, nothing would give me so much pleasure as to be able to present your likeness to our dear Mama or her as much pleasure as to received it and Grandmama wishes me to tell you that nothing can do as much to compensate for your absence as having a good likeness, you know that. I promise in return portraits of any member of the family you may choose.

Your affectionate little Lizzie

**1858 May 11**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason (*Isaac is now aged 26*)**

My Dear Isaac

The newspapers you sent come safely to hand and also the letters to your sisters and I was very glad to hear that the Summer heat had no bad effects on your health. We are just entering on our summer, it is a pleasant time of the year if not too hot. It was rumoured that we should have some of the invalid Officers at Ramsgate but this was only rumour. It would have benefited the town no doubt as their families and friends would have come with them but we hope to have a good season nevertheless. I see by the papers one can get a bath for sixpence at Melbourne. I should think there would be no danger of competition in that line.

How is business with you, do you find it improving and is your Uncle Frederick succeeding. I am glad you intend to pay him a visit. I heartily wish him every success and all happiness. The representation he sent of his cradle apparatus hangs in the parlour. Grandmamma wished he had made himself visible in some part of the picture.

We are trying to get your brother Fred a situation in London as Clerk, his name has been entered some time and we have the promise when a vacancy occurs to be informed of the same, but if we should not succeed in getting anything for him can you have him with you without any detriment to yourself as we would not wish him to be a burden to you my Dearest Boy, if you will therefore write by return of mail what is your decision or I would rather say what is to be done, we can act accordingly. There is a lady who is going to Australia in October who would take care of Frederick during the voyage and who will be expecting letters by the same mail as you will write by, to decide his plans. She is a very lively, cheerful woman and if it be decided for him to go, we should prefer his going in the same vessel with her. I shall dear Boy await your letters.

I am truly grieved to hear such bad news from the Cape but hope by this time their distress is past. I have sent you your Grandmamma's Family Arms, rightfully and lawfully got from the Herald's Office by G.G.Uncle Roger Huggett and copied by your brother Edward Huggett Dyason. He has sent it to you with the kindest love and hopes you will be able to wear it in your watch as a watch paper, of course this is a miniature of the original. You will excuse this short epistle my dear Child as I am not in very good health just now. Your Father joins me in kindest love and who, I am thankful to say, is improving in health. Your sisters and brothers send kisses and that you Heavenly Father may be your comforter and Guide at all times is the daily prayer of your ever affectionate

Mother



**1858 September 10**

**Predominantly from Isaac's Mother but with additions by sister Elizabeth (Lizzie) aged about 22**

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter of May 12 and am truly glad to hear of your continued health but you do not appear to be in good spirits. You remark that you cannot help thinking that your best years are passing away unprofitably, I cannot quite agree with you in that point. I suppose you are not negligent in your business, but are diligent and faithful in the management of your affairs, if so it cannot be said you are passing your time unprofitably, especially as you have provided for yourself for so many years without a helping hand being extended towards you, but you on the contrary have assisted others. You know dearest boy that it is not for every one to make a rapid fortune, but patient industry seldom fails to secure a competency sufficient for all our wants. I remember a remark you wrote in one of your letters some time back, that you did not make yourself unhappy about the result of years of speculation, this is just as we ought to be, and we must do as well as we can and leave the event to Providence who is wiser than we are, and knows what to withhold and what to bestow.

I am sorry to hear that there is so much distress still in the Colony and so many hands out of employ. I suppose the railroad is begun. That, as you said, will find work for some. I do not know what can be done for those who are still flocking out in such numbers, we have heard that there were four hundred young men that went from Canterbury about a month since. A neighbour of ours by the name of Young was amongst them, he has served his apprenticeship to a farmer and intends to buy land when he gets abroad. His father has supplied him with a good sum of money for any purpose. I should think if he is careful he should do well, I am sorry your Uncle Frederick is not doing better, I think it is a pity he left home, but as we are not gifted with foreknowledge we do not know what will be advantageous and what not.

There was a young man just arrived from Melbourne, in coming to Ramsgate met with an accident by the train injured his spine and jolted his arm which he had the misfortune to break when in Melbourne and being badly set had it reset in England. He was telling your Grandmamma that he had passed 10 years in Australia and had just acquired a sufficient competency to make him comfortable. He liked the climate but the fleas, mosquitoes and dust were perfect nuisances. He recollects the name of Dyason but does not personally know you. He is about 30 years of age or rather more. I suppose you have no knowledge of him.

I dare say you laughed when you read in my letter that Frederick was coming out to you this month as we have so often fixed a time for his leaving home but if we can get him an appointment in England we shall give up the idea of sending him abroad, but we must be content to wait a little, as a good situation is not always to be had, but his own wish is to go abroad.

Edward will be 15 in January. He is beginning to wonder what he shall be, his mind has no lean for any one thing in particular. He is rather clear headed and excessively fond of drawing but of course that is not business. It is a good thing when a boy can choose for himself and his friends are able to carry out his views. I am happy in being able to say that we are all in tolerable health. Grandma is well and sends her very kind love to you.

We have had some lovely weather this year, so very bright, as bright as yours without the excessive heat. Our harvest is an average one, the potatoes not quite free from disease but better, but in Ireland it is said they are very good and plentiful. Apples, your favourite fruit, will be cheap this winter as there is an excellent crop, flour is 13 pence per gallon, butter 15d per pound. I do not know the cause of butter being so dear unless our supplies from Holland are lost, I remember having Dutch butter many months in the year and I used to like it better than fresh.

There is no apprehension of war with France, it has all passed away, though they have an immense fleet at Cherbourg, yet no one knows why they have got it together. We have had two French excursion boats in here from Calais, one this week and one about three weeks back, They brought a large band of musicians, it played an hour in the pier yard and the same time on the East Cliff and the West Cliff. The money that was

collected was to be given to the poor of Ramsgate. What do you think of that – it does not look like war does it.

There is a nice fleet in the Downs, outward bound waiting for an easterly wind. The harbour looks very nicely this afternoon, the rowing and sailing boats are moving about, but the scene will be changed when Winter makes his appearance. There is a comet which makes its appearance every evening at 7 O'clock just under Ursa Major. Do you remember that constellation. You have brilliant starlight nights, cannot you tell me the names of some of the groups and we will look for them on the globe.

I have told Elizabeth that you have not forgotten her. She is gone to have her likeness taken. I do not know if it will be ready to send by this post. You have not heard from the Cape lately you say, nor have we not, but the vessels are constantly going and coming, but friends seem to lose sight of one another or I should say when they do lose sight of each other with the sight the recollection oftentimes -----

*(Written sideways on second page)*

Lizzie could not have her likeness taken yesterday being too cloudy. She is gone again this morning but as it is again cloudy I do not know if it can be done. If not she will send it by the next post. I suppose you have heard the Atlantic Telegraph is completed, is it not a most wonderful achievement.\* I must bid you good bye as the post is nearly ready.

Adieu Dearest Boy  
Yours affectionately  
EID

*(Written sideways on third page)*

My dearest Brother

I have just had my likeness done, it is a very common one, but I'll send a better if you get this, but above all bear in mind I'm a great deal prettier, I do not look so stern only on extraordinary occasions. One hand and arm are very bad, but the light was not good, however I've sent it with all its imperfections, and now I'm going to put your love to me to the test, for if you do not send me your likeness as soon as possible I shall think you do not care to hear from me again, for from this time silence will reign over me till the spell is broken by your portrait. Be sure brother and believe me with much love,  
Ever your Most affectionate Sister

Mind I am far better looking

*(Written sideways on fourth page)*

Dear child

You mention that the small pox is still hanging about you. It was the curse at Ramsgate and Deal a year or two ago but it has entirely disappeared. It must have been the glass pock you had as you were vaccinated. No surgeon here will inoculate as they are under a heavy penalty. I never cease to remember you my dearly beloved boy in my prayers and you are often the subject of our thoughts and conversation.

I must beg of you in conclusion to excuse this letter as I see it is a very unconnected one. Your Father joins me in very kind love to you and each of your sisters and brothers hoping to hear from you again soon and consigning you to the call of him who will never leave you, Believe me to remain

Your ever affectionate mother  
EID

*\*This first cable was slow and broke down within the year. It was not replaced until 1866.*

**1858 October 14**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

The post having arrived at Malta the letters would be delivered in England in a few days when I hope to have the pleasure of receiving one from you advising me of your health which I trust will be continued though the approaching summer. Our summer is now at an end and it has left our circumstances in such a state that I feel it my duty to write to you on the subject.

I am dear Child extremely sorry that I should be under the necessity of saying anything that would cause you any misgivings but I don't think I should be doing my duty if I did not lay before you the state of our affairs especially as in one of your letters you expressed a wish that I should let you know if things came to an extremity. You are, my Child, aware that we have no business for 8 months out of the year, it depends entirely on the four months of season and if it should happen to fail during that short time you can easily understand the state our affairs would be in. Such has been the case with us this summer, whether the monetary panic had affected the class of visitors that frequent Ramsgate I do not know but though the tradespeople have in general done so much we have had comparatively speaking poor business, no season and we have been equally unsuccessful in letting the house. But of course our expenses which are large have gone on all the taxes, a rent of £200 a year and the maintenance of a family of ten and we have bills out to the amount of £150, we have no means of meeting these but must service them as they become due as we cannot get anyone to lend us the money, having no security to offer and in short, unless you my dear Child can assist us I see nothing for us but that we must sink. At the same time could we but keep on, I have not the slightest doubt that after a time our circumstances would improve because we should be in a position to lessen our expenses and the business might come round again. Frederic, who has been fortunate enough to get the promise of an appointment in the Customs would be out, and we should endeavour to get Edward into something such as our Post Office that he might earn something or miss his living as his salary would be £40 a year.

But nothing could be more unfortunate than our failure; we are not situated as most businesses are where money is coming in through all the year but our Season being over we should even in the event of our being able to remain in this house, take nothing until about next June. The best we could hope for if such a thing occurs (and it is not improbable) is that the children would get situations in a manual capacity and so support themselves. As for the younger children I know not what is to become of them for we have no friends with whom they could stay. The chance of Frederick getting a situation in the Customs would be destroyed as they learn we have no vote to give them. It is expected there will be a general election in February and these others have promised to join their votes with ours. Our failure would be attended with more than the usual amount of distress as our debts lie amongst the tradespeople in our town, the circumstances would be known immediately and of course we should be refused credit as well as the blighting of the prospects of the family just as they appear to be brightening – and if you cannot assist us there is no hope for us. You will think it very, very bad that I should hassle you thus my dear Child. I had made a vow I would never, never write you a miserable letter, but after much deliberation I thought it better to let you know our situation, feeling assured (if it were in your power) you would do what you could to save us.

I am thankful to say we are in health which is a good blessing. We have had delightful weather all through the year to the present time. I hope you will not experience much distress during the hot months, I suppose you take the precaution to screen yourself as much as possible from the sun and to preserve your eyes from its glare. I thought this letter was to go this evening but I find I have another day in referring to the subject of this letter, if you cannot help us do not suffer it to make you unhappy, dearest Isaac. I think it possible your Father might get a situation as assistant to some Bathing Establishment in case of our vacating this which in the Season would produce a guinea per week. All through the Summer he has been endeavouring for a Collectorship (in coal dues or water rates) one or two having become vacant but was not successful. I need not say your Father has used every means to meet the demand but for want of business could not. Had we only have had an average Season we should not have been in difficulties.

Dear Child whatever our lot may be let us endeavour to bear it with fortitude and patiently submit to our heavenly Father's will, who will not appoint to us more than is necessary, commending you to his care and love, I remain your ever loving Mother. Your Father desires his kindest love likewise your sisters and brothers adieu dearest Child

**(1858 estimated) November 2**  
**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

We received your affectionate letters by the *Marco Polo* which performed a marvellously quick voyage and has allowed us the pleasure of hearing from you much sooner than we would otherwise have done. I am very glad Dearest Child that you enjoy both good health and spirits. I hope you will still endeavour to cultivate a contented mind which will always produce cheerfulness to yourself but will make you pleasing to others.

I feel much better satisfied that you have now a bed to be on and have your meals more regularly. I could not bear the idea when snuggling down in our warm comfortable beds that you my child were lying on the bare ground, and yet I gloried in the thought that you had nerve and strength to endure it, it reminded me of those words "your young man strong to labour", but it also required a noble willing mind to engage in the hazard.

Your father wrote you that we have had a rather indifferent season which at the commencement was owing to continued rain and afterwards to prevailing sickness which frightened all the people away. It has deprived us as well as others of the benefits we derive from the business visitors but I trust we will weather the storm and if Providence permit we shall soon be preparing for another Season which I hope will be more auspicious. And here let me again thank you for your kindly assistance. Though your Father intends to apply it for a very different purpose than that of making up a deficiency in business, but I believe it has saved us from much trouble, but I hope my Dear Child it has not impoverished you, or put you to any inconvenience or that it will retard your return to your own Country, your own house. How much I should like you to visit your aunt and two cousins, which the girls are writing to you about, but I suppose that is impossible. I feel a kind of sympathy for her and I hope to spend some pleasant hours with her but as she has known much of life and mixed in good society and I on the contrary, have had no other than that of my children, may be wearisome to her but I shall esteem her as having been the guide and friend of my beloved child when so far, so very far, removed from home and all that loved you so dearly. It was a hard sacrifice to let you leave us but perhaps you do not regret it now as you will be coming home instead of leaving home. I am looking forward to the time Dearest Boy with something like impatience. Tell my dear Brother that he must find time to write a few lines unless he is on his passage home, if so he will be sure to bring letters from you and your likeness which will be a kind of anticipation of your own arrival.

I wrote to you of Fanny's and Frederick's going to the Cape, I do not think I can let them go but I will not enter on that subject now. Your letter arrived by the *Lightning* and performed the voyage in 63 days, is not that a very good voyage.

I have not heard you mention anything about the flute. Do you find leisure to play at all. We have left Hastings, I think we have all benefited by the change and Pa likewise as he used to walk every evening and return in the morning. He thinks of finding a free little Beach Business into which (*he*) may take Uncle Charles (*if he*) wishes us to try. If they do succeed they will realise a good profit. Your Father sent a letter to you by the Overland mail the 9<sup>th</sup> September and by the *Argo* the 7<sup>th</sup> October which he hopes you will receive. Freddy thinks of writing to you by the vessel, he and the rest of the children send you their affectionate love. Grandma desires to be kindly remembered to you and to your Uncle Frederick. All your aunts and uncles send their love. I should like to hear from you at your earliest leisure.

Thank you dearest for your expressions of love. We all wish you a pleasant Christmas and a happy New Year. Your father joins me with the kindest love  
Your sincerely affectionate mother

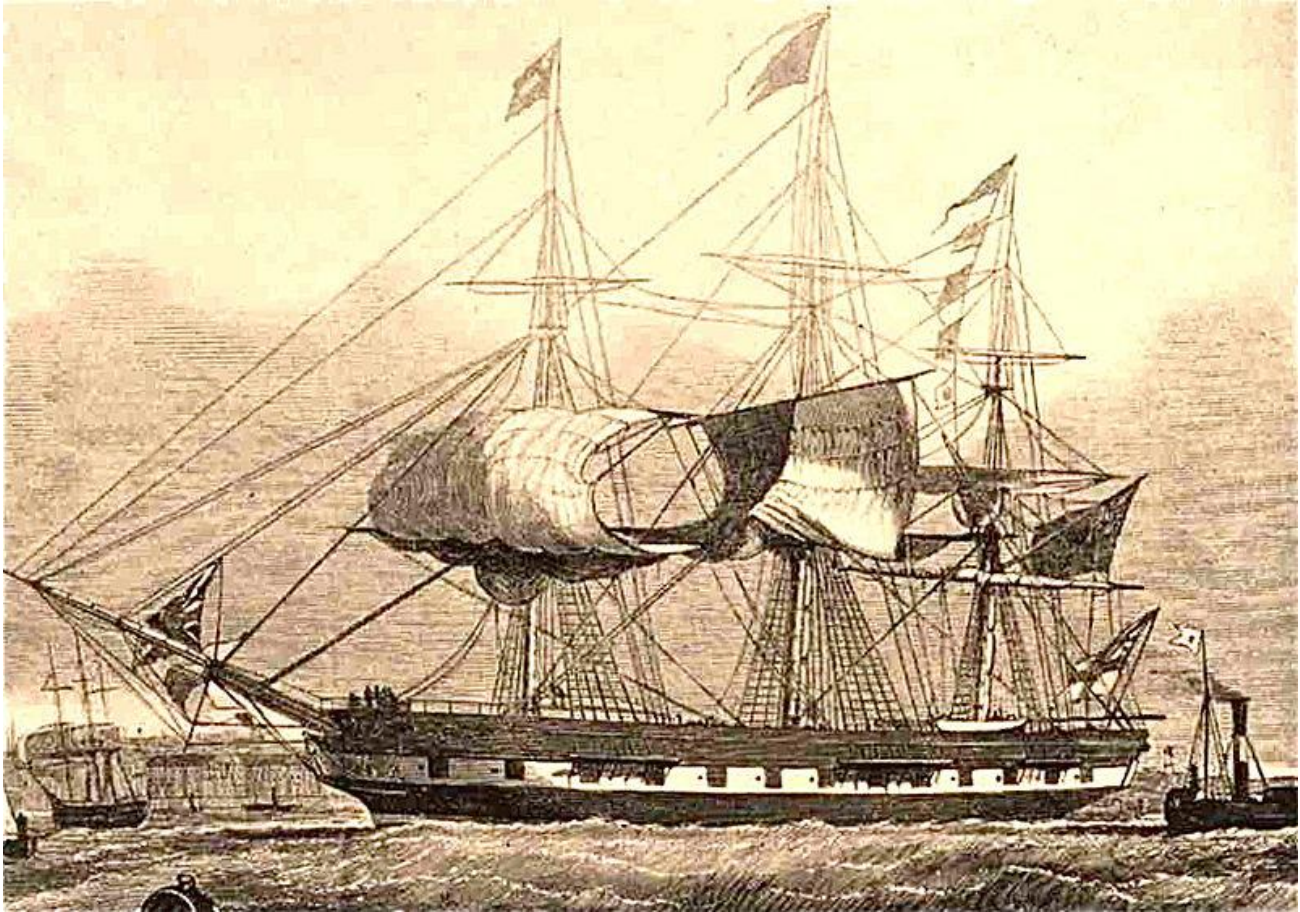
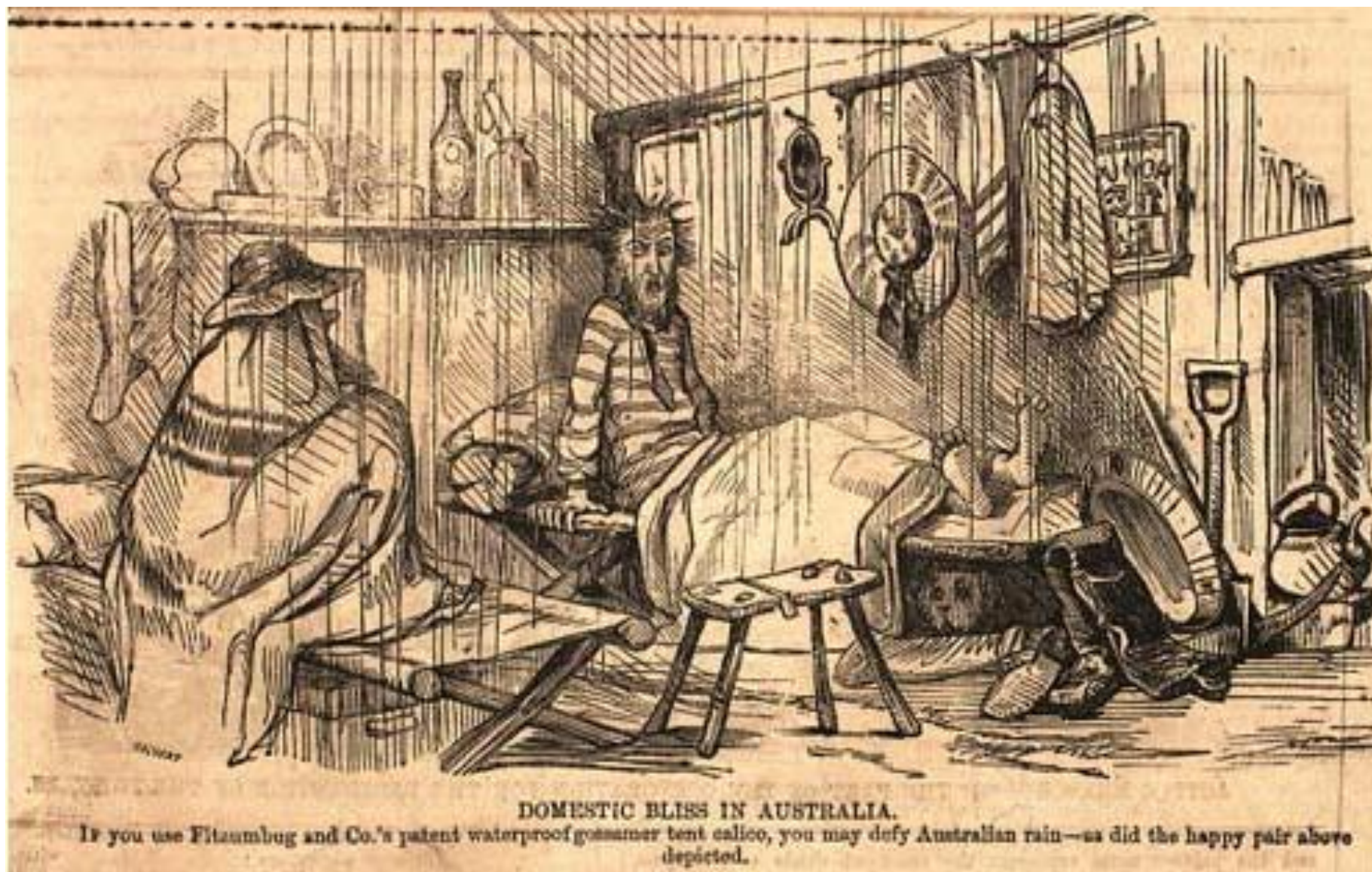


Image copied from Wikimedia Commons <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Marcopoloclipper.jpg> accessed 10/03/2013 *Marco Polo*, Quebec timber ship "built by Smith of St. John's, N.B.", "built for the passenger trade."



[Bruce Von Stetina](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vonstetinalightning.jpg) - "Clipper Ship Lightning" website from Wikimedia Commons accessed on 10/03/2013 <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vonstetinalightning.jpg> (at 63 days the voyage in the letter is faster than that mentioned in Wikipedia!)

Isaac finally gets a bed 8 years after arriving in Australia.



*Caption: Domestic Bliss in Australia. If you use Fitzumbug and Co.'s patent waterproof gossamer tent calico, you may defy Australian rain – as did the happy pair above depicted* Title Domestic Bliss in Australia Artist Samuel Calvert Description Published in Melbourne Punch, 1856, p105 accessed May 2013 from <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/41739/20040505-0000/www.statelibrary.vic.gov.au/slv/exhibitions/goldfields/canvas/living.htm>

**(1858 November 2 estimated)**

**From Isaac's father** (same paper as the above letter, no date indicating that it was enclosed with another)

My Dearest Child

If you can provide for Fred do, and he will repay you in servitude when he gets to Australia. God knows what will become of the Family, I am fearful of dire mishap and what will become of your dearest Mother and the younger branches of the Family. I know not. I have tried to succeed till I can go on no longer, my heart is ready to break at the thought of our position and could I have been in Australia these last few years I'm sure I should have succeeded in doing something, my only anxiety and trouble has been that I have not been able to do for my Family. Should Fred get out he will explain to you all and he will tell you how I have tried to do for them.

Good bye dear child from your distressed but affectionate Father

Your mother and all the Family join in best love.

**(1858 estimated as above) November 2**  
**Ramsgate from Isaac's sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I was very much pleased with your letter and I hope it will not be very long before I have the pleasure of again receiving one in the writing which is so dear to me and to us all. I am very glad that your teeth are in such nice order. I think it is such a great advantage and it is what most of the young people about us are deficient in. Also I am perfectly satisfied with the present answer to the all engaging question and I hope dearest Isaac that the fair individuals will not yet at least appear and that when you come we shall be the whole and sole proprietors of your love. Only think now dear Isaac, how would I bear to know that you liked me very well but that the best part, indeed all your love was given to another who of course you really think perfection. O, after thinking of you, dreaming of you and loving you all these long years I cannot contemplate such a catastrophe with anything like complacency.

I suppose Ma has told you I received letters from the Cape the other day and that we expect Julia, John and their mother in a few months. Julia says they intend to leave the Cape in March and think of remaining in England about eighteen months. I wish we could see you with them, with what intense delight I should look forward to the time, how impatiently I would count the weeks and days but I suppose you say that cannot be yet, and we must live and hope and wait a little longer.

Julia seems to be delighted at the thought of visiting England, I wonder if she is anything like me. I am a little older than she, about eight months I think. She says she cannot recover her health and the doctor says that nothing but a sea voyage will do her any good. I hope they will have a safe and pleasant trip and that we shall soon see them.

We are all quite well, Grandma, Uncles and Aunts and their families. Uncle White enjoys excellent health, he was talking of you the other day and told us to send you his kind love. And now I must conclude, the pen will scarcely write. I suppose it thinks it might, vulgarly speaking, be put on the shelf for a little while and I suppose by this time you are quite tired of this and thinking it will never come to an end. Hoping you will write, from your affectionate sister

F Dyason

**1858 November 15**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Your letter dated August 14<sup>th</sup> came safely a few days after I had sent to you. You will find by that letter and also by the preceding ones that we have at last extinguished the idea of sending Fred to you it being our intention to get him an appointment in England if possible. I am very sorry dearest Boy that your affairs continue so unpromising, I earnestly hope that the summer may prove more propitious and for you own sake and partly for ours as you will not be able to assist us. You will think it strange dearest child that I should still solicit your aid when you have repeatedly informed me of your inability to deliver us the assistance we require. Believe me it is in the fear of our being homeless that compels me to write to you at all on the subject. I know it is not fair that I should trouble you with our grievances, neither do I expect you will have it in your power to help us unless by some fortunate turn in your affairs you may find yourself possessed of a small sum which you are able to spare to help to meet those bills which we have received till the Spring and which must be paid then or we shall get into trouble. It would be a most serious affair for us to be refused credit though people in general, I mean our neighbours, are aware that it is no small matter to provide for so large a family and have frequently made the observation to your father, but they are not all aware of our real position. Until this Summer we have never received a bill and our being reduced to this strait now is partly owing to the want of business and partly owing to the loss of friends of your Father who have been accustomed to lend him money when in want of it, not to mention the assistance we have had from our own dear Child.

I think I told you that the rent of our house was £280 yearly, some 3 or 4 years since the Trustees took off £30, this year they have taken off £60 more reducing it to £200 per year, having done us the service they expect the rent, and they as a body will not be trifled with. Unfortunately we are in arrears with them. The money that has been taken in the business this year has been used for current expenses and paying back borrowed money and the meeting of some bills that became due in the Summer and we are depending now on a little uncertain business to defray expenses which require to be paid when due, such as for rates, taxes, gas, water, washing etc... We have the recommendation of the principal hotels in Ramsgate and also that of the Medical gentlemen, particularly one who is in high repute at the present time, but as if to add to our troubles, now instead of advising them he now reprobates them. Several bathers in consequence have discontinued bathing and we must bear the loss added to which we are obliged to reduce the price from 2/6 to 2/ a bath. Still with all these disadvantages there is no doubt things will come round if we can but stem the tide. I very much wish my dear son that you had been brought up at home that you might know our affairs thoroughly, not that you would have extricated us from our difficulties, but that you would have had a true idea of things as connected with ourselves with regard to the family. I mentioned in my last letter that a situation has been promised Frederick in the Customs which we were expecting to hear about shortly as also a situation for Edward is partly promised. And respecting your sisters, we think of placing Libby in a school in France for a short time where she might learn the French language in return for her instructing in English. She will then be fitted to take a situation as Governess in a family or conduct a school with Fanny, who would then take charge of a pupil whom Libby is instructing at the present time. Julia continues to teach 3 little girls. Of course if two or three of the family are provided for it will make a difference to the expenditure and will give us an opportunity to recover ourselves. Though at present there seems a prejudice against warm bathing, no doubt there will be a change in its favour.

I have, my dear child, endeavoured to give you a true statement of our affairs and if you can spare us a small sum it will assist us materially, if you do not I know you cannot. I know you will believe me when I say it is with much grief of heart that I am continually troubling you in this measure. I would it were in our power to assist you rather than take from you, it being the duty of Parents to provide for the children and if Providence favours us I will hope to pay back some portion of the money you have spared to us already. I shall leave this subject with you dearest Boy hoping that you will be able to grant us our request.

I have to thank you for the paper which accompanied your letter and I hope you will not receive my last letters till after Christmas, that it may not influence your feelings at that festive time, and I heartily wish you

a happy Christmas. You mention the delays of the Mail ships, they are often overdue with us. I do not at all charge you with remissness in writing home but on the contrary have to thank you for the attention you give to home correspondence. I am glad you liked the little paper of the Arms. I have the Genealogy of your Grandma but not on either of the Father's sides. I will get a copy for you by the next letter and we will think of a device for you in case of you having to take arms in defence of your country.

I must finish as the post is closing. Accept of our kindest love from all to you.

Believe me to remain your truly affectionate Mother.

We are all quite well and rejoice to hear you are well.

1859

1859 January 12

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My Dear Isaac

I informed you in my last letter that Frederick had been nominated by the Member of the County as a competitor for a situation in the Customs. I am very glad to be able to inform you that he has lately passed his examination at the Treasury before the Civil Service Commissioners\* and has received an appointment as Clerk in the Receiver General's Department and is now waiting for orders to join and enter on his duties. So you see my dear son, all our anxieties and troubles on his account are at an end, for if anyone is so fortunate as to get a situation under Government, of course he is provided for for life if he conducts himself properly and the branch of the Service Fred is in is a very good one giving him the position of a gentleman.

The work is not particularly arduous with steady promotion beginning with a salary of £70 or £75 per annum but he draws no salary for the first six months, he must be provided for during that time. It is very fortunate to have procured the distinction as they are eagerly sought after and the competition at the examination is so great. At the one Frederick was subject to there were 45 competitors for 15 places and the gentlemen were mostly his seniors and of good education, some having been educated in a College so it was no small praise for Fred to have been successful who was entirely self-taught. Is it not a bright ray in our otherwise dark horizon which allusion brings my thoughts back to our circumstances. I feel Dear Boy we shall be in great difficulties, bills are becoming due and the Trustees told your Father a few days since unless he paid the £100 by the 25<sup>th</sup> of March he must be prepared to leave, and I do not know what we can do as I told you in my former letter the friends who used to assist us are dead. Mr Baine and Mr Streahan, perhaps you may remember them, and there is no one to help us.

There will be no business to any amount til the Summer unfortunately. You see my dear son that our failing would not be benefiting as we should be refused credit, and the nature of our business is such that it does not bring in any thing but in the Summer months. Consequently we should have nothing to supply our necessities, perhaps we could clear ourselves by the sale of our furniture but then how could we let the house. I am sure, dear Child, you will help us if you can for you know a little will keep a family from sinking, but when once they are down a great deal is required to raise them again. I believe this is a crisis with us, if we can get through the present difficulties and should have a tolerable season I think we should gradually clear ourselves. Frederick being provided for, the girls getting four and twenty pounds yearly and in a year or two we shall most likely get Edward into some situation.

I think there is every probability of our doing better than we have hitherto done, but if we cannot be assisted we must be brought to a standstill. I am very sorry to write in this strain dearest Boy, I would I could do otherwise. It is very disheartening for you for us thus to be constantly troubling you and I am well aware of the fact but I do not know what is to be done. We will hope and work on and if God in his mercy has granted success to you my Child I feel assured you will not suffer us to fail, but if your affairs still remain unsuccessful it will be impossible for you to help us and we must endure patiently whatever ills betide us notwithstanding I cannot conclude without wishing you my own Dear Boy a happy New Year, all happiness for time and eternity, the struggle will soon be over and we shall be ushered into a new existence. Let us think of this and prepare for it and at the same time let us not be unmindful of the gift which, accompanied by many others, our heavenly Friend has presented us with at the commencement of this New Year in the appointment given to your brother, in all our trials let us still remember our mercies and be grateful for them.

I trust you are in the enjoyment of health. We are all well at present. Frederick will write to you shortly, your Father is not in spirits to write but desires his kindest love and wishes for your happiness. The girls will write next mail. Our wishes for many happy returns of your birthday.

Believe me to be my dearest Child your truly affectionate Mother.

*\*The following exam examples are quoted from <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/a-partial-history-of-the-civil-service/the-origins-of-the-modern-civil-service-the-1850s> accessed August 2013. The site also provides background information on the reforms to the Civil Service in 1855*

## **Sample Examination Questions from 1855**

The Civil Service looked for young men ‘of superior education’, although individual departments had different requirements. While not all departments demanded that candidates ‘must be unmarried and without family’ (a precondition for being considered for appointment as a Lieutenant of Revenue Police), most required high standards of attainment in arithmetic, English grammar and composition, history and geography along with excellent handwriting and spelling. If you wanted to join the Treasury, though, you also had to be prepared to answer examination questions on the first three books of Euclid and translate a passage out of Latin, French, German or Italian.

Here are some sample questions from examinations for junior clerks:

### **Elementary Arithmetic**

- A person having £5,704. 18s. 4½d lays out one third in good which he sells for £2316 5s 10d, how much has he at last, and how much has he gained?
- Find the income tax on £2382.7s.6d at the rate of 16d in the pound

### **History**

- What were, at different times, the titles of the Chief Magistrates of republican Rome? Name the first and last of the 12 Caesars and the principal writers of the Augustan Era.
- What were the Petition of Right, Instrument of Government, Act of Uniformity, Act of Settlement, and Act of Navigation?

### **Geography**

- Draw an outline map showing the overland route to India
- Mention seven colonial possessions of Great Britain, specifying wherein their political and commercial importance to this country.

### **English Grammar**

- Construct sentences exemplifying the use of the relative pronouns in the possessive and objective cases.

**1859 March 15**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

You have been silent a long time. I hope nothing ill has befallen you, but we received four papers by the February mail, we hope all is well. I informed you in my letter that Frederick had received an appointment in the Customs as Supernumerary Clerk in the Business General Office with a salary of £80 a year. He has served seven weeks of his six months probation and finds himself equal to his duties which are light at present. He wishes to say he is comfortable in his lodgings which are in an open, healthy part of London.

The assistant Receiver General having retired from office, all those employed in that department have in consequence risen a step higher, Fred with the rest but it does not affect the salary, I believe that remains for some time but is ample for the supply of his wants, is it not good news to begin your year with.

Edward says he shall study hard to make himself competent for a similar situation, he is now fifteen and in two years will be eligible as regards age. Charles is thirteen, he is thought a pretty boy. I will not say whom he reminds of; Catherine the youngest is like him. The girls are with me at home, Elizabeth is employed as a morning governess to a little boy, the son of the American Consul. Julia instructs three little girls of the Jewish Pireski family at twelve guineas a year, Libby the same sum and Fanny has a little girl to instruct at home at £1.15 a quarter. They likewise assist me in domestic affairs, they are obedient, industrious girls.

Last Autumn there was a vacancy in a school at Brussels for an English Governess, we answered the advertisement and everything seemed satisfactory but they gave the preference to a young lady in London. If Fanny or Elizabeth had filled the situation she would in return for her services been taught the German and French languages and in two years would have been fully competent to give lessons in them. There is no resident Master in the German language in this town. The one who teaches it came from Canterbury but his terms are five shillings a lesson which is much too high. The one who taught Fanny a few years back we found was not capable of teaching it, which we very much regretted as she could have taught the text, her ear being good she can the more easily acquire a language. My principal object in their education is that they may have it in their own power to provide for themselves in the event of our not being able to do so, either by misfortune or death.

So I understand that beautiful, brilliant object\* which shone so resplendently in our northern sky last autumn is making its appearance in your southern latitude. Oh, I hope it will be as propitious to you as to us and appear in all the glorious majesty, it is indeed a sublime mystery.

I should like to visit your clime that I might see those gorgeous sunsets which I have read of. Often when my mind has been perplexed with care I have looked out upon the starry sky and as I gazed peace and tranquillity have been restored to me and long and earnestly have I prayed that you my own sweet child with the rest of your beloved sisters and brothers may, when this short life is over, become inhabitants of that bright world when you will shine as the stars for ever and ever.

We have had a mild pleasant winter but it has been a little stormy of late, the vessels from the Downs have been glad to put into the Harbour for shelter. I hear they are fortifying Dover in case of the Navy's approach but it is a general received opinion that Napoleon wishes to keep peace with England, perhaps he may need it for a refuge as in former times.

How do you progress at Melbourne, have you begun your military practice, has the Corps been formed and have you joined it\*\*. Surely the Russian foe will not invade you, his ambition will not extend so far, but you are Britons and will not be beaten, will not tamely submit to tyranny. They know that too well but I hope we shall not be plunged into a war either for ourselves or others. I think it is a slur upon the present enlightened state of the world.

I should like to hear from you soon. Have you had much severe heat this summer, does the climate at all tell on your health, have you had a tolerable season, do your eyes feel at all affected, bathing them in the morning in cold spring water is very good as well as the face and neck but I suppose you are accustomed to bathe in cold water every day. Are your teeth firm, perhaps you will smile at all these questions but though you are absent from us you are always present, you and your brother Frederick are always remembered in our daily prayers.

We are all quite well. Grandmamma sends kind love, since I last wrote she has lost her only near relative, her mother's sister, Aunt Brooks of Walmer. She died at the advanced age of 96. Your uncles and aunts on both sides are quite well and desire to be remembered to you. I'm sorry to say that we have received an official order from the Trustees to leave the premises in September next. Nothing but the payment of the whole of the rent due them will alter their determination. Tho they have not said but I expect they would not reject us if we do that, but a miracle must be wrought to enable us to do it as we shall owe eighteen months rent next September, it seems impossible to realise so alarming a situation, we have made up our minds to drive with all our energies to keep the enemy at a distance, by industry and economy but if we have little or no business what can be done, we can but wait the event. I ought not to say anything to distress you dearest boy, you have enough to do and to think of and it is no small comfort that two of the family are, I trust, able to provide for themselves. I think Fred would be pleased to have a letter from you so soon as you have leisure. I will give you his address.

And now dearest Child I must conclude begging your patience for this long epistle and that every blessing may be yours is the sincere wish of your ever affectionate Mother  
EI Dyason

PS Have you heard from the Cape lately, how is Julia? I do not know her present name. Is your Aunt quite recovered and your Uncle and John, how are they? Your Grandpa is well and lives at St Lawrence. How is my brother, if you write please present our loving sincere kindness to all. Adieu Dearest Your father is pretty well in health and desires his kindest love to you.

Fred's address: 13 Martin's Place, Mason Street, New Cross, Peckham, London

*\*The brilliant object was Donati's Comet. This image captures it as seen by Ludwig BECKER at Melbourne, on October 11th, 1858. Accessed July 2013 <http://cs.nga.gov.au/Detail-LRG.cfm?IRN=151940>*



*\*\*Both the Ballarat and Bendigo Volunteer Rifle Corps were formed in 1858, but on the condition that they were virtually self-funded, the government only supplying weapons. Source <http://www.bendigorsl.com.au/150years/rifleRegiment.php> accessed August 2013*

**(1859 estimated) April 15**  
**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Your letter and papers came safe to hand having been overdue a fortnight. I am sorry you cannot assist us. I fully believe dearest Boy that you would do so were it in your power and it would have prevented the disgrace which I fear will come upon us at the close of the Summer Season unless we could have more than an average one or we could meet with a friend who would lend us about 150 for 2 or 3 years which would allow us time to extricate ourselves from the difficulties occasioned by the dullness of the last two seasons. You will perceive by my last letter that our prospects are better inasmuch as Frederick is provided for and the girls are assisting a little and if we could have the sum required there is no doubt we should be in a better position than we have been for years past, but though our necessities are thus pressing I do not for one moment wish to make a sacrifice of you, it would not only be unjust but the height of folly as it would reduce you to the very state which we wish to avoid ourselves, and I am fully aware that it is the want of capital that retards your progress but as you say you cannot tell what a month may bring forth. I have been induced to write to you again on the subject of our affairs, that should it be in your power to lend us a small sum without seriously inconveniencing yourself you will perceive it will greatly benefit us, but of course you cannot do impossibilities and we know well by former experience that you will not withhold your aid it is in your power to assist, it makes me very unhappy to write on this subject to you, how much more grateful it would be if we could add to your little stock, instead of endeavouring to diminish it. Rest assured dear boy that is a great happiness to Parents to be enabled to contribute to the support of their children and to supply their several demands and it is but right and proper that parents should lay by for their children and not children for their parents, as it says in scriptures. But this gratification is not allowed to all and therefore we must submit to circumstances.

You mentioned about Bessie's likeness, she did not send it, it could not be sent in a letter without breaking it but in a frame and as it was a very imperfect likeness we thought it not worth the expense of forwarding it, but you shall have one if we can get one done like her. I am glad you have seen your Uncle Frederick, we have been very neglectful in writing to him, when you write be so kind as to tell him we often think and talk of him and send him our very kind love. I should like to see your garden. I suppose you retain your love of flowers, as a child you loved them. We received three papers, they are very interesting, the Illustrated News has given us a drawing of the Wesleyan Church at Melbourne and the design of the new Post Office, very handsome buildings indeed.

We are going to perform all our promises as soon as we can, the Genealogy, the likeness, the music – the latter must be sent by the single sheet or the posting will cost so much. I hear you have a nice voice now and can play the flute really well, Fred can sing a little, bye and bye we may hear you together. There is an admirable song "Oh firm as oaks" which the girls intend to copy out and send to you as this is not in print now. Fred sings it very nicely and your Uncle Fred likewise when he was here. You must excuse our apparent neglect in attending to your requests but we have been very busy with Frederick's affairs and now bringing the children to their works as Edward and Charles will require a great deal of care to bring them forward as it is your Father's intention to try for a similar situation as Fred's for them.

I hope you will not remain so long silent as you have done lately. I am happy to say we are all in health. They will deluge you with letters shortly. I expect they all send you their kindest love, your Father joins in the same, wishing every good I remain dearest Boy your sincerely affectionate  
Mother EID

(Written sideways)

Your Grandmama is quite well and the family. She was much pleased to hear from her son\*. The Season is very forward, the fruit trees are in full bloom.

*\*Uncle Frederick Pearce*

**(1859 August estimated)**

**From Isaac's mother EID Dyason**

*(Beginning of letter is missing)*

...Fred came down on Sunday he has passed his six months probation and is now entered as an officer in her Majesty's Customs which flatters him a little I think. However I am happy in being able to state that he has conducted himself well since leaving home and has received the commendation of his superior officers. I hope and trust he will maintain his ground firmly, but he is young and surrounded with many temptations. You, my son, have set him a noble example and why should he not imitate it. But still I have something to complain of in you, that you have not sent your likeness but I will forgive you if I can see the original. It is the Ramsgate Regatta today, sloops, sailing boats and rowing boats, each in their turn are striving for the prize. The starting point is the mouth of the harbour, they keep within sight, turn the white buoy on the east shore about half a mile from the Harbour. In one of the large boats there is the German Band and the signal gun. The pier, sands and cliff are very gay, it being now the height of the Season. In the afternoon there will be a duck hunt and a trial of skills between two men, one dressed as a woman and the other as a clown. There is a rope attached to two boats, the clown in one and the woman in the other, each tries to drag the other along till they both tumble into the water. After that several boys will run along a greasy pole for a leg of mutton which caused a great deal of merriment. Our house being situated on the harbour we have a very good view of the whole affair, it makes a little change for the visitors.

The harvest is nearly over, it is not quite so full a one as it promised to be owing to the frequent storms we had in the early summer being much laid at different places. The cold easterly wind in the Spring nipped the blossoms on the trees in consequence of which we have but little fruit, which was very plentiful last year. There are a great many Jewish families in Ramsgate at present, I mean visitors. I suppose Sr. Moses Montefiore (*see image*) is an attraction who is at his lodge occasionally which is on the East Cliff about five minute's walk from the Synagogue. Louis Philippe second son the (?\*) and family are staying at the Royal Hotel next house to us. Do you not think our little town is a very accommodating one. On the West Cliff there is a Romish Church, on the East Cliff a synagogue then Protestant churches, chapels of every persuasion. I am sure we cannot be called illiberate.\*\*

I have thought of your little garden, how is it progressing, do you grow sufficient vegetables for your use? Your Aunt tells you play very well, I hope to hear you some day. Can you get good music? We have all kinds of music published very cheap but the difficulty is in getting it to you. I should have sent the promised letter but could not get it written with regard to the state of our affairs. It appears there will be no alternative but to offer a composition after the season is over, cold sea bathing and sponge baths have taken place of warm bathing and we must do as well as we can, people cannot blame us. Dear boy do not be unhappy, let us look forward to better things, we have the blessing of health which I hope you are in possession of. A door may be opened which we know not of at present. I hope to hear from you shortly and if you can leave, to see you in the Spring. Your Father sends his kind love and your sisters and brothers the same. I fear I have tired you. Excuse the shabby paper I began with and my many faults of penmanship, praying for every blessing to descend on you believe me your affectionate mother

EI Dyason

*\*illegible but may be a reference to Prince Louis of Orleans the Duke of Nemours who was the second son of Louis Philippe of France*

*\*\*illiberal defined in Mirriam Webster dictionary definition of not liberal: as in not broad-minded*



Synagogue at Ramsgate. Image accessed May 2013  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Montefioretomb.jpg>



**Sir Moses Haim Montefiore, 1st** (24 October 1784 – 28 July 1885) was an English financier, banker, philanthropist and Sheriff of London. Image from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Moses\\_Montefiore.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Moses_Montefiore.jpg) accessed May 2013

**1859 August 16**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father (aged 48)**

My dear Isaac

I've received four papers by the last mail and are thereby led to hope you are well, but I shall be glad to have a letter from you soon. Your Grandmamma had a letter from Uncle Fred who seems in very good spirits and is looking forward with pleasing anticipation of success.

I suppose you are aware your aunt, John and cousin\* are in England. Your aunt came to Ramsgate for a few days. I spent an evening with her. You of course formed the principal theme of our conversation and she is without doubt a strongminded woman of firm upright principle. She is much attached to you and you were fortunate in having so sensible and kind a friend to guide you in your youth.

I have not seen John, but it is your aunt's intention to see us again before she leaves England and to bring him with her, they are at present in London with Mr and Mrs Smith and are going into Devonshire and will return to the Cape in about two months. It was a great pleasure to see one who had been so loving and good to you my son. And now I have a proposal to make, do you not think dear Isaac that you could put your affairs in care of someone, and pay us a visit, arriving here after Winter is over, and returning before the cold sets in. I think you might contrive it, I should so much like your Grandma to see you, and if you wait many more years it cannot be expected you will see her in this world. I do not see why you stay away from us till you have realised a fortune, we all want very much to see you, and I think it would do you good as well. Tell us in your next letter if it is possible, you would like to spend some time in London and Fred being there you would not be at the expense of having an hotel which would be an advantage, think of it dearest boy, and come over if you can leave with any safety.

*\*Aunt Julia Dyason (aged 60), Cousin John Dyason (aged 21), Cousin Julia Dyason (aged 25)*

**1859 November 17**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father and mother**

My dear Isaac

I have written to you again by the Mail fearful that the other letter sent to you by the October Mail might miscarry. I hope and trust that it has not and that the Almighty might have enabled you as this arrives to send us some assistance. I assure you my dear boy I would not ask you knowing the heavy obligation I am under to you already did I know where to go or whom to ask. I ask it for the sake of your dear mother and your younger brothers and sisters whom I am sure will repay you if I cannot. They are all anxious to get out and earn their own living and in all my trouble I am pleased to say that Julia has got a situation as Governess where I hope she will be comfortable and happy and where I think she may remain some few years. I went with her this morning to see her off by the train and I hope and trust she will when she arrives there find a comfortable home. In the course of the next year, can I but have the consent, we shall endeavour to get Edward in the Customs with Fred then the two will be able to live comfortable together. Your dear sister Fanny is trying also to get a situation as Governess in which I hope she will succeed, she is a good girl and feels our position most acutely I assure you my dear Boy. It is almost too much for me but your dearest Mother supports me or I am quite sure I should sink under it. In case the other letter has miscarried I will tell you the circumstances. The Trustees of the Harbour, my Landlords, have put a restraint in the house for rent. I owe them one twelve months rent which is £200 to September last. There is furniture in the house to the amount of £400 and upwards and why they are so severe I cannot tell having paid them £2306 for rent in ten years, there doing so has affected my Credit. I owe about £100 besides and am fearful we will be in great distress in consequence. Can you assist us once again to enable me to keep my position for the sake of the family. I assure you it will be the last time we shall require it for our expenses are greatly diminishing and after we get out of these difficulties we shall be able to put a little by for bad as this season has generally been there has been a profit of £200 from the business and as the family will be getting out and we shall not require as much for ourselves. Our having so large a family has been the cause of our difficulties and the addition of your grandfather to support all within these last two years. If you cannot assist us the end will be too serious to contemplate. I could not get more than £50 a year as an attendant at some bathing place and to have to pay rent out of that, it would be impossible for me to support the family, our position is dreadful so my dear boy if you possibly can relieve us for I am sure I have no need to convince you that in afterlife you will have the happiness of looking back with satisfaction to know that you have saved the family. I thought 'ere this I could have told you the result with respect to the Trustees but at present all is uncertainty. The Broker is still in the house, I have offered them all the furniture if they will only let us remain till we hear from you but what they will do I know not. God grant that it may all end well. Your Ma will write I think a few lines to you therefore I will conclude my most unpleasant letter hoping my dear Boy will forgive me for being the means of depriving him not only of his hard and laborious earnings but also of being the cause and making him unhappy. Believe me my Dear Boy your affectionate father.

*Mother continues:*

I am not much in spirits to write to you my dear son having in addition to our state of affairs the grief of parting with my dear Julia, she being the one who was born two months after you left home, how vividly every circumstance is brought back to my remembrance. The bitter loss, the earnest longings to see you, the regret that I gave my consent to your going and Grandma thinking we had better send for you back before you embarked, these things are hard to bear. I suppose I shall have to part with dear Fanny shortly, Libby must remain as she has four children to instruct besides our own but these trials are not as hard to endure as the being compelled to leave home, that would be ruinous. I certainly hope we shall be spared so great a calamity. The Trustees talk of making us monthly tenants, is not this insulting and cruel, particularly as by their own valuation there is more than enough to cover all we owe them. It is very unfortunate that our business is not a necessary one, it would not in that case have fallen off so very much, I expect your Aunt and cousin little thought we were in such a strait while sitting in our comfortable parlour not knowing that all the furniture in the house has been under the Broker's inspection only a week previous. It is in your

power dearest Child to assist us to keep our home. I do not doubt your willingness for a moment but oh if it should not be in your power what will become of us. If business has not improved with you it will be double loss, we must in that event fall without assistance; we cannot go on but a little while longer. I will hope you will be able to do something for us. Believe me my dear son it makes me very unhappy to write to you in this miserable strain but necessity compels me or I would not indeed.

Trusting to hear shortly from you, I remain my dear boy your truly affectionate Mother

**1859 December 18**

**Bath House Ramsgate from sister Elizabeth Dyason**

My dearest Brother

It is very long since I have replied to your kind letter, it is not that I love you the less nor has my silence proceeded from any disinclination to write but I have been waiting till I could send good news to you or without touching on our circumstances at all, write to you only of my own private concerns, but my dear brother I am sorry that my present communication must speak largely of those unpleasant circumstances, for the difficulties which have so long beset our path and which up to the present time by great exertions and your kind help we have hitherto been able to surmount, now have closed in upon us and unless you my dear brother can help us will be our complete ruin.

I can scarcely contemplate the idea of the family being reduced to want and to see Papa's long cherished hopes frustrated now too just as they appear about to be realized, for it has always been one idea to clear himself of the heavy encumbrances by which he has been surrounded (I must speak plainly) by the bad conduct of his father and to secure a comfortable home for mama and that part of the family which might remain at home after the boys were settled. A home where we might all meet if fortunate circumstances should ever unite us together. This our business would afford and this Papa had nearly accomplished and in a year or two he hoped to be free of the world but those to whom we are in debt will not wait and the consequence will be that after years of toil and anxiety on his part and after having secured a connection to the house a stranger will step in and receive the rewards of his labours, it would indeed be great trial to us to see the house we have always looked upon as our home in the possession of strangers but this would not be the worst for it would not be possible for Papa once having lost his place to get a bare means of supplying the wants of the family. He has not been situated as many others who by becoming bankrupt have cleared themselves for it is a rule of the Trustees not to keep anyone as a tenant who has failed. In order to lessen the expense Fanny and Julia have taken situations as Governesses and I instruct the children of the American Consul in this town. This with Fred's being away from home will materially decrease the future expenditure but unless we had more time it will not put a sum of money into Papa's hands to pay the back debts. You see my dear brother the family being dispersed would not be of such vital importance to us, who are grown up for we have means of supporting ourselves at least while we are young but I do not know what would become of Mama and the young children besides which the boys who are just growing up would never be able to be settled if Papa lost his power to vote, if he could keep that he hopes to get them situations under Government but this hope with many others will be lost if he is reduced to serve in a menial capacity.

I think I need not ask my dear brother, if you can by any means avert so terrible a doom from us to do it, you may think it wrong in us to make such a demand for we have no claim upon you. I know it but I also know that though we are almost unknown to you yet you bear that love to us which our near relationship demands and I am sure your grief would equal mine if at some future time you have accomplished what you have so long been trying to do and you are enabled to return to England instead of finding us happy and comfortable you were to find your family broken up and in all probability some of them you could never see for I do not think Mama would be able to bear the misery our having to leave this house would bring upon her. She is a brave woman who has battled long and steadfastly against adverse circumstances and whose whole life has been devoted to her family but I very much fear if that is to be the result of her perseverance and as we are obliged to leave her alone in order to keep ourselves, she would sink under it. If it is at all in your power, pray help us and you will know that you have saved your family from misery. I believe Mama told you that Julia was in a schoolmaster's family as governess to his children where she was to be instructed in various branches as a return for her services. Since, the gentleman has given up his school and Julia has taken another situation twenty miles below London. She has three little girls to instruct and has been there about three months, she seems to be very comfortable and the lady is very much pleased with her methods of tuition, indeed she is a clever girl as an Arithmetician, I have never seen her surpassed. Fanny is going into Gloucestershire on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January as finishing governess to a young lady in Music, French and Italian. They seem nice people and I think Fanny will be comfortable there. We have your letter containing the rose leaves and three papers for which Mama is much obliged. You will receive with this the song you asked for

and another which was a great favourite of John's when he was in England. I will send you some more by the next mail.

Dear Isaac how glad we all are that your tastes are similar to ours and that you not only have the love but the knowledge of music. The Te Deum you mention is, I think, the best – your voice must be nicely cultured to sing that. When Fanny had taken the service at St Peter's Church\* I have led the choir so we have had some experiences in Church music.

Do you know anything of Kent's Anthems? They are very fine and do not present the difficulties to amateurs that Handel and Hayden do. What happy evenings we shall have if we are ever united, it seems to me the greatest pleasure earth has in store for me all my ideas of happiness in your one day with us. How much you will love our dear mother. I think if you ever drew in imagination an ideal woman you will find your dreams personified in her. We have dear Aunt Julia and Cousin Jack. Aunt seems a very worthy person and I like John very much. He is a conversable sort of being which is more than can be said of most young men and has some ideas worth listening to though like many of the present day he affects a sort of hardness and disbelief in human friendship, faith, love etc...etc... I told him plainly it was all affectation and in return he said I was satirical and cynical. Complimentary conversation was it not? I suppose he was almost a child when you left the Cape you can scarcely tell what he is now. They paid us but a short visit as London contained so many attractions for John, I think Fred helped two or three evenings in his society. Grandmama had had a letter from Uncle Fred. He writes in good spirits, he says that you have an excellent voice. Have you heard him sing? His voice is good but uncultivated. He talks of coming home in a few years' time. Oh that we could all meet together and gratify our love of music to the utmost. You will be pleased with Fanny's playing, she is considered a very excellent one. Till that happy time comes, if it ever does, it will be our one idea to keep a home where we may all meet. I will not again ask you my dear brother to aid us in this for I am sure you will if possible. Mama will send you further particulars of our noble concerts in her next.

With love from us all and much love from myself, believe me you most affectionate sister

E Dyason

*\*Inside St Peters Church, Kent*



Image by John Salmon accessed August 2013 source <http://www.kentchurches.info/church.asp?p=St+Peters>

1860

(1860 estimated) January 24

Jas Pilbrow Esquire\*

Wingfield House

St Georges Place

Canterbury

From Isaac's sister Frances Dyason

My dear Brother

A very long time has elapsed since I last wrote to you, I believe it can be counted by years. It is not that I have not cared to write to you but as you know my time has not been my own. I have been obliged to get my living among strangers, never a pleasant or easy task for a woman and people always dislike to see their Governess writing letters so that I have avoided doing so as much as possible, only writing home that they might not be anxious about me. I have heard of you through Ma, who all this time has been almost your only correspondent. I need not say the best and dearest one you could have. I believe there is no one in the world like Ma. If you knew what she has had to endure in the years of struggle with poverty, you would wonder how she could possibly be as she is, always cheerful, always kind though almost overwhelmed at different times with the dark clouds around her, always meeting us with a sunny countenance and a cheering word. When we have been quite cast down she has always been the one to try to find something to hope for in the distance.

I very much regret that I have been obliged to be away from home so much that I have seen but little of her for some years. I had not been home for more than three years till last year. Only going home for a short time makes a difference in the expenses there, so we are obliged to avoid it as much as possible. I very much wish we had the prospect of being able to give her a peaceful house as she gets older. She does not feel strong enough now to bear things as she did, but I am sorry to say there does not seem much possibility of our being able to do it. We all send home as much as we possibly can but of course our all is very little. L and the other girls have no ornaments or trinkets of any sort, we dress as plainly as we can and I know Edward has often gone without a breakfast since he has been in London to save in order that he might send it home, but still this does very little.

The business is steadily decreasing and I believe the time is not far distant when it will cease to be a business at all. It is not a necessity of life as most people have baths in their own houses so that they will not come out and pay for that which they can have for nothing at home.

We have been very anxious to establish a school as that would be a house but we find it cannot be done without money so we are trying to do all in our power to save a little. I have been with my present pupil for 5 years but the salary is so small that I wish if possible to go somewhere else where I would get a higher one. In order to do this I must have a few clothes. Do you think dear Isaac you could lend me £10 for two years, or even 5£ would help me. I promise faithfully to return it to you at the expiration of that time and will also pay you 10 percent so that you may not be at any loss in lending me the money for this time as I know you can't afford to spare anything better than we can. If you could do this for me I should be exceedingly obliged and will not fail to return it. I intended to write a much longer letter but I must defer doing it till next mail. I am happy to say they are all well at home and wish kindest love, believe me dear Brother your truly affectionate

Fanny Dyason

\*Pilbrow lived here (no 12) at this time <http://www.machadoink.com/St%20Georges%20Place.htm>



Image accessed from <http://www.machadoink.com/St%20Georges%20Place.htm> April 2013

*Also from site: St. George's Place (north side), in 1941. All (except a few buildings nearest the parked car) were burnt out in the June 1942 blitz. Between the wars, this side was popularly known as 'Doctor's Row', because of the sheer number of doctors who lived or practised here. Lists a James PILBROW (A. 1856 May 20, M. 1860 Jan. 17) living at 12 Wingfield House, Canterbury (from the Institution of civil engineers, members) John married again to Susannah P. PILBROW, sometime after 1867 - they are living in Ivy lane "Ivy House" in the early 1870's*

**1860 February 17**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I have to thank you for your kind letter of Oct 15 and for papers arriving by each mail, three by the last. I am longing to hear from you again that I may know of your health, and that of my brother. I am thankful to say we are all well with the exception of colds notwithstanding the rather unusually severe winter, which has proved as disastrous at sea causing great loss of life and property. We learn from Cape letters received by Aunt Fanny of the safe arrival of your aunt and cousin having had a very rough passage. Your Aunt seems very desirous to return to England for a permanence which she says your Uncle has promised to do all he can to effect. Your letter did not arrive till after they had left, Old England seems to have awakened all her sympathies. You say you did not fully appreciate her kindness towards you, I am quite sure you were good and dutiful to her, otherwise she would not have spoken of you so highly, she would never admit you were any trouble to her and I believe she loves you almost if not equally with her children.

I am glad to hear your garden progresses. I received the rose leaves safely. I promise they retained a little of the fragrance. I am glad you take part in the quire (*sic*) but I do not know the *Te Deum* you mention. I expect your voice is rather powerful and will suit sacred music very well, as it requires sustaining, what part do you usually take, tenor I should imagine, your sisters even sing a little but have not practised singing much.

Lizzie told you Fanny had taken a situation as Governess to a young lady in Gloucestershire, she takes the services at the church, the organist having refused to play on account of some dispute between him and the churchwardens, Lizzie has two engagements as morning Governess. Julia is at home at present, as Mr Myers has parted with his school but holds himself in readiness for another engagement. Edward is preparing himself for the Civil Service examination in case we should get him a nomination next year which we are hoping for.

Lizzie wrote to you by the last mail giving you an account of the rights and title of the Huggetts to the arms, and sent a piece of music, she will send another piece by the next mail, she likewise explained to you our affairs. The Trustees have behaved very harshly towards us, they ought to have given us another year next month, March we become monthly tenants to them, they having taken the furniture by consignment. The value of the same will cover our rent till that time. They have raised the rent to £30 per year for interest on furniture, as they say we live in a ready furnished house. You see my dear son we are in a perilous state, as they can put us out with scarcely any warning and we cannot make up any amount from the business till June or July, if we could receive a little assistance it would be everything for us just now, as if we could pay them a quarter or half year rent they might allow us to become yearly tenants again. I need not say dear Isaac I am quite sure that you would give us a helping hand if it be in your power, if you cannot there can be no reflection on your part, no one can do impossibilities, I have written hastily my dear Child, excuse if I have written harshly or obscurely but receive my kindest warmest love,

your ever affectionate mother

EID

**1860 March 19**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Boy

I am sorry to find by the arrival of the mail of the 11<sup>th</sup> Inst., that you were unable to comply with my request for assistance as we have had no letter from you but have received the paper as usual, for which we are much obliged as by that we infer that you are well. I was greatly in hopes that we should have heard from you for God knows what we shall do, the Trustees through their solicitor have taken all my furniture at a Broker's valuation for the rent due to them and have made me a monthly tenant, at a rental of nearly £20 per month. They have called on me for a month rent due the 14<sup>th</sup> and God knows what I shall do. I have not at present 10/ in the world to pay them with but I shall endeavour to borrow it and struggle on till the Season, when with a fair Season and a little assistance with time I am sure I should do, for our expenses are now gradually decreasing.

Fanny poor girl is in Gloucester where I hope she is comfortable, but you may be sure my dear boy it makes me very miserable to be obliged to send the girls away, but I trust it is all for the best. I hope you are well, for I assure you my Dear boy you are continually in our thoughts and do not make yourself uncomfortable about us, for I am quite sure you would have assisted us if you could, and let the events be what they may. I trust that the Almighty will not forsake us.

Good bye, God bless you my dear child and believe me

Your affectionate Father

I Dyason

*Map of Southern England with Ramsgate and Gloucestershire highlighted*



(1860 estimated) June 25<sup>th</sup>

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

Your letters and papers came safe to hand, the one sent to Fred has been duly forwarded. I also have received a letter from your good Aunt with your likeness which she was kind enough to promise me when she was here. It is a great pleasure to have it by me. I do not write to flatter you but I think it is as she says, you are very much like the rest of the family only better looking.

Our affairs Dear boy do not seem to progress much, neither this side of the wide ocean nor on the other, the success of the one would be a real advantage to the other as our interests are one. The Summer is begun but the weather is very unfavourable to business as well as to vegetation. We were in hopes of having a dry warm summer after so long and cold a winter. I read the paper, your summer has been unusually dry and hot. This is a threat to us according as it affects our health or circumstances. Our business depends a great deal on the weather. We are very anxious as I have said in former letters to remain here, as it gives a sort of firmness or standing ground to the family especially as many as you have arrived at an age capable of appreciating respectability of character and circumstances, but I cannot hope to remain as now it seems an impossibility

The business will not realise the sum required to meet the demands on us at the present time. The Trust must be paid likewise. They have told us plainly they will not wait longer than the summer quarter. Your father having put them off till that time by saying he expected you would send something for the rent, but what can you do dearest boy, you cannot command success to your plans any more than others. We can only use our utmost endeavours, the rest we must leave to a higher power. I feel very reluctant to trouble you in this manner but I hope my dear child you will not be over anxious about us as you will render yourself unable to attend to your affairs.

Your father and I are very well, assured that you will not withhold your assistance a single day whenever it shall be in your power to grant it, knowing as you do the exact state of our affairs and when we call to mind your readiness on former occasions we have great reason to be truly grateful to you dearest child. Let us endeavour to put our trust in that Providence who has so marvellously brought us through the long winter and who will I hope provide all for our good. To whose care I commend you my beloved son and believe us to remain your truly affectionate parents

Bessie will write shortly

*(The following scrap of paper inserted may or may not relate to the letter in it which was found 150 years after being written)*

Edward thinks I may venture to insert this little piece of paper without it being overweight. I have been thinking that as the furniture covered all we owed the Trustees up to the 14<sup>th</sup> July if we could only manage to pay quarterly they would be satisfied. We paid them the first month March, a friend having lent us the money but unfortunately we have had no business this spring the weather being so cold. If you should be fortunate at the mining and could spare us £50 it would do us good and assist us materially too. Isaac I know very well you cannot do impossibilities but if we can keep our accounts clear with the Trustees the great danger will be avoided of being homeless. It would be a great folly to get the furniture back. It is at present impracticable, with a little of your assistance from time to time the utmost we can do is to jog on.

Dearest boy do not give way to anguish, anxiety about us as you will certainly be ill. Let us commit our cause to an all wise Providence who I know will order all things for the best. I am thankful to say I have much comfort in you, all my beloved children. What am I that I should be thus favoured.

I cannot help thinking that that blessed promise will be fulfilled in you. I will pour out my spirit upon them and they shall be my sons and my daughters and with the Lord God almighty God grant it. I am afraid you will scarcely make out my writing. I remain dear child your ever affectionate Mother

The hymns and versus are very well

**1860 July 19**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dearest Isaac

We received three papers by the mail, and should have been glad of a few accompanying lines, but attribute your not writing to want of leisure not, I hope, ill health. I see by the paper one or two nuggets have fallen to the lot of some fortunate individuals, but I do not expect you are the favoured one, or Uncle Fred either, well a man's fortune is not entirely in his own hands, or we should all be with no doubt (*covetous*), covetousness being a strong passion in man.

Our season has fairly set in and we hope to have settled weather, which will bring the people here, the crops are looking well but we want a little dry warm weather now. The beans which are generally done blooming early in June, are now in full flower and fruit is very late likewise. We are in the country now about a mile from home at Dumpton. I do not know if you remember it, on the St Peter's road. A lady having hired our rooms as a nursery for her family, we shall be here for five weeks. The house is surrounded with high trees, it is a very pleasant change. Julia comes here to sleep as we are not far from the scene of her duties. Bessie leaves at 9 in the morning to give lessons for two hours, returns at dinner time and your father walks from Ramsgate every night and returns early in the morning usually at ½ past six.

Fanny has not been home since she left for Gloucestershire which was in January but I hope to see her next month, Edward left the Post Office on Monday last, he has fulfilled his duties so as to give satisfaction but is not eligible for the situation vacant in the Post Office, being too young, but your father is acquainted with a Gentleman who he thinks, has interest with one of the members and who will use his endeavour to get him a nomination as Clerk in one of the Government Offices. Should he be successful, and Edward passes, one more of the family will then be provided for.

You see dear Isaac it would be policy to remain where we are, I mean at the baths, till we could get the boys provided with situations in case there should be a general election. Your father has ten to a dozen friends who would vote with him which ever side he was in favour of, not caring for Politics or not understanding them. Leave the affair to his judgement altogether but if we are forced to leave this Sept of course these advantages will no longer be ours. If the business would take a change etc... be as productive as it was ten years back, we should be able to extricate ourselves from our difficulties.

The girls are wishing and planning to establish a school at Ramsgate, a boarding school for children of the first class tradespeople. In order to do this they think of entering into partnership with a young lady of their acquaintance who is highly educated (a diploma) and who has engaged to find pupils sufficient in number to cover the expenses for the first twelvemonth. This would be a beginning on sure grounds. Procuring a house furnished would devolve on your sisters of course. In order to carry out this plan Pa must be responsible for one half and a relation of his unknown for the other share. I do not doubt if once entered into but that it will succeed. The schools in Ramsgate are very flourishing. Your sisters are clever and well grounded in what they profess to teach though it is not much. They are likewise persevering, Miss Cannon has received most of her education abroad. German, French and music are her forte. They will be very happy together no doubt, but this "pet scheme" as Bessie calls it must fall to the ground if Pa cannot stand his ground as he must be the principal manager of the affair.

I expect Dear boy you long for me to come to a close, I am sure you do. All my letters to you are in the same strain, viz – the difficulties that lie in our path; but our liabilities are great and demand present payment consisting chiefly of borrowed money and renewed bills, some having been taken up by parties themselves depending on Pa's settling with. In the season these are not to be paid off, the rent must also be paid in full Sept £115 as they

(*written sideways*) will not be trifled with. I need not appeal further to you dearest boy, I know you will use every effort for us and will not delay to send immediately what you can, being well assured it will be for the general welfare. Pa joins me in kindest love as all the rest, from your truly affectionate mother EID

**1860 October 24**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Your letter came to hand as also the papers by the past last three mails. Your letter caused much regret, for had we have known your circumstances we certainly should not have troubled you with our affairs as it must have been particularly annoying to you, to have been so constantly pestered with my letters on that subject. I always felt conscious of this while writing to you, but still I felt you would attribute it to the right cause, and it has always been a grief to your Father and myself that we could not provide a proper maintenance for you all. I am thankful to say we are all well and though we have had scarcely what might be called an average Season yet we have been enabled to pay some portion of our debts, but I do not know if our creditors will remain quiet, but trust in Him who disposes men's hearts that they may incline them to be lenient towards us, with regard to yourself my dear son, I sincerely hope that a better state of things is in store for you. I do not think you will despair; you are young and healthful and well conducted. If you cannot succeed in one place another may be opened for you, or perhaps you had better wait a little time longer where you are. I think it preferable to going back again to the Cape but of course you know best, but do not fret, we must use every lawful means to improve our condition at the same time remembering our home is not here, -

I have a little news which I think will surprise you. Uncle Edward is returned home, he is not in very good health but I think his native air will soon strengthen him. He arrived a fortnight since. It is probable he will not return to America to settle but will send for his wife home if he can settle affairs to his satisfaction, will you be kind enough to impart this news to my dear Brother Frederick with our

*(Written sideways on page 1)* kind love and thanks for the paper he sent to Pa. Fanny will write to you next mail. Your Father sends his kind love to you. I should be glad to have a letter from you. Tell me all about your little affairs, the garden, music, etc... I understand you have had a fall of snow, is this usual in Australia, I am trying to get Edward to draw a sketch of Stone Farm, my Mother's girlish home. If I succeed it will accompany this note.

*(Written sideways page 3)* I wrote before to you but was not in time for the mail, hoping you are in health believe me to remain with much love, your truly affectionate

Mother E I D

Your brothers and sisters send their kindest love. Fred, Fanny and Julia are still away from home. Elizabeth helps me in family concerns.

Write soon.

*(Written sideways page 4)* Julia directs this note, do you not think she writes a good hand.

1861

1861 February 19

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

Since I wrote last I have received your letter dated September 18 and also papers by that mail and the succeeding ones, for which we have to thank you.

Your inability to save us does not, cannot lessen our love for you, and do not suppose that circumstances whether prosperous or otherwise, can in the least affect the love existing in between parents and children and I need not say anything to assure you that your letters are always most welcome to us all. I am sorry my dear son that your affairs continue so adverse, I heartily wish that your father could render you the assistance you require but you are sufficiently acquainted with our state to know it is impossible for us to do so. I am glad however that you have told me of your own position as you ensure thereby our kindest sympathy and prevent our solicitations for aid from you which you have shown your utter incapability of affording and your favours in times past are sufficient evidence of your willingness to help us when ever it shall be in your power, Providence so ordering it.

I am fearful that we shall meet with some loss for our business this summer on account of the new baths which are being built on the West Cliff on the site of the old ones, not that they will answer, as they cannot get a good supply of water and they will no doubt be a dead loss to the owners, but for a time they will take, particularly with those who are not much acquainted with warm sea bathing. We hear they are to be very handsomely fitted up with reading room etc... the price from one shilling to eighteen pence. The water is not to be from the inner harbour, where we and the baths near the sands get our supplies from, but outside near the sewer so that it cannot possibly be clean or wholesome.

The entrance to the baths is to be from the outside of the cliff by a flight of stone steps (illegible) stairs every one thinks it will be a bad operation. A man who was formerly a seedsman and florist and Mr Hodgson the Postmaster (both being well known to your Uncle Fred) are the parties engaged in this undertaking. I suppose the old proverb will be verified in this, as in all other cases "Time passes all things" and though I know we have abundant cause of gratitude that we have been permitted to remain here so long, yet I cannot help wishing that your Father had less anxiety, the way seems sometimes as completely hedged in, that it appears impossible to get through, but as you said in one of your letters if one door is shut, another may be opened to us.

I am glad to say we are all in health. Fanny has completed her engagement in Gloucestershire and is now at home, but will leave again as soon as she can hear of something that will support her. Julia is with the (illegible) but comes home at evening. Edward is working for a situation similar to Fred's if we can get a nomination. Libby has sufficient to employ her at home. Charles, Augusta and Catherine are still under tuition.

You mention in your letter as having been with your Uncle Fred. I am happy to hear he is well and I heartily join with you in wishing you and he may be liberated from your long imprisonment, if I may so term separation from home. As to be eyewitnesses of the exhibit of 1862, I expect it would require a very large nugget indeed to effect such a phenomena.

*(Written sideways on page 1)*

Your dear Grandmamma is quite well, as well as the rest of the family. Your Uncle Edward thinks it likely his wife will come to England in the early Summer, if so they will settle in England. They have no family. I think I told you that your Uncle George Grove was with us last Spring having had leave of absence for three months. Aunt Polly is here with Aunt Fanny. Uncle Roger has married again and seems comfortable, so far as his

*(Written sideways on page 1)*

wife is concerned and I think it is better for the family as well as for himself, his eldest son works with him in his business as cabinet maker. Grandpa Dyason does not live with us but has a lodging with St Lawrence\*. He is not so strong as he used to be. Your brother Fred seems to conduct himself well in "The large city" which is a great comfort to us. Bessie will write to you in answer to your questions in your last letter to her. Edward has sketched the other part of Stone Farm which is the back of the house facing the sea

*(Written sideways on page 3)*

I have sent you a hymn tune which is a great favourite of mine. I hope you will approve of it. I shall now conclude with wishing you many happy returns of your birthday and tho late a happy new year to you and my dear brother to whom please give our kindest love. Your Father joins me in kindest love to you, your sisters and brothers desire the same hoping to hear from you shortly, believe me to remain, my dear Isaac, your ever affectionate mother EID

*(Written sideways on page 4)*

Have you and my brother joined the Rifle Corps which I understand has been formed in Australia. Write to me all about yourself and the mines and as I say to Fred to take care of yourself for we have a more formidable enemy to deal with than the French or any nation of the world, the enemy within and we can only come off conquerors through the Captain of our Salvation to whose care and guidance I entrust you my dearest son,

Your affectionate  
EID

*\*St Lawrence mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century*



Image sourced from <http://www.michaelsbookshop.com/blogpics/id18.htm> August 2013

(1861 estimated) July 17

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I have to apologise for my long silence and am sorry that I have suffered other things to occupy that portion of my time which should have been devoted to you but I hope my dear son now that I have written you will not delay to write to me in return as I am truly anxious to hear of your welfare. I have not much hope that your interests are progressing, I mean your temporal ones, having heard from your Aunt to that effect. Do you still think of going back to the Cape, is there a chance of better success there, will your Uncle have it in his power to forward your interests or have need of your services in his own business? I suppose you hardly know what to do for the best. I am often thinking whether it would have been better had you stayed at home, you have been nearly twenty years away from us and with regard to pecuniary matters neither of us are better, but perhaps the sums we had of you has prevented your succeeding as no doubt it hampered you greatly. I very much wish we could get a situation under government for you as that would be a certainty but young men cannot get an appointment after five and twenty, but I am thinking it would be possible to get you a situation as Clerk in a private establishment. I know there are plenty of young men who stand ready to take anything of that kind that may offer, but by the good hand of Providence we may be directed to the very thing we wish for and I still hope that you my dear son, will be provided for in some way or other by the offer of a situation, perhaps not a very lucrative one but a permanent one. Would this not be delightful for you to come home to us all, how proud the girls would be of you, what would you think of having five sisters to manage?

Fanny is in London at present, she does not like the family much. She would not have left Gloucestershire but the father died. Julia is still at (illegible) with Mr Myers. Bessie is still at home (*with*) the younger girls. We think we have got a situation for Edward as assistant in a school but are not quite sure, he is between 17 and 18. Charles is younger.

With regard to our affairs, they are as uncertain as ever. It is now decided that the Trustees will retain their offices no longer than this year. One of them was at the Bath the other day, he told your Father that they would yield up their Trust into the hands of government in January next, what effect this will have on us we do not know, they might as well – the Trustees I mean – make us a present of our furniture and forgive us what may then be due of the rent, do you think so? Our business evidently does not pay the expenses of carrying it on which has been and is the cause of all our disquiet. Whether it will ever take a change or not we cannot determine. I had great hopes this last Spring that our affairs were about to be greatly improved and we should gradually walk our way out of all of our difficulties but the time is not yet come. I will tell you how it was; your Father, after a good deal of opposition, was elected to the Office of Assistant Overseer to the Parish, the salary about £80 to £100 a year. His duties were to collect the poor's rates, but upon trial he found himself quite unequal to the fatigue. He must either have given up his own business or relinquish the one he had just taken in hand, which on consideration he thought best to retain the one he has been always accustomed to. He was very much blamed for the step he took, he was called by some idle, by others proud, but the family who saw the effect it had on his health could judge the best. It was a sore disappointment to us all but I do not doubt it is for the best. You will acknowledge that he could not carry on his own business which is very fatiguing in the Summer and go out in the afternoon for three hours and a half every day from house to house, oftentimes up and down steep airy steps and frequently to make a second and third call for one and the same rate, notwithstanding he could have managed the affairs of Overseer (*if they*) would have allowed him to employ someone to help him collect, but this they would not agree to, he was therefore obliged to give it up altogether. Uncle Tom and Charles were very much vexed with him as they had exerted themselves in getting people to vote for him, it being the gift of the parish, but he had not the strength for the work so could not be blamed.

My dear child I have told you as much as the paper will allow of our affairs.

(*Witten sideways across page*)

Miss Clayton has taken our own rooms for 6 weeks and we are for the time at Dumpton which is a mile from Ramsgate. Your Father and brother and sisters desire their very kind love. Grandma also with uncles and aunts. How is your Uncle Fred, please give our kindest love to him. May your heavenly Father direct all your undertakings is the prayer of your ever fond  
Mother

I hope to hear how you are getting on with regard to everything relative to your intentions, health and your present circumstances. Nothing can be unimportant to us respecting yourself, nothing too trivial to be uninteresting to us. I shall expect to hear from you very soon. Hoping you are in health.

I remain with much love your truly affectionate Mother  
EI Dyason

1862

1862 January 25

From Isaac's Mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I received your letter of Sept 1861 and also papers by the last mail. I am truly glad to hear of your and my dear brother's general health which is more grateful to all than to hear of your increasing wealth at the expense of the same. I do not quite agree with you dear Isaac in attributing your want of better success to indifference and neglect. I think you judge yourself too harshly. I know mistakes are the unavoidable results of our being unable to foresee what would be for the best, which often on retrospection looked like faults. But I have enough confidence in my son to feel sure that when circumstances call for prompt energetic action he will be no laggard at the post of duty.

I think you have done wisely in not returning to the Cape but I think you would incur great danger in going to New Zealand.\* Would it not be better to remain where you are if your affairs are progressing. I should imagine it to be the safer plan but you my dear son are the best judge of your own affairs. Our family is still together with us in the old house with the exception of Fanny, Fred and Charles. Fanny is a music and French teacher in a school near Swansea. Fred is of course in the Customs, Charles is gone as Junior Teacher to a school in London to see if he likes the profession. If he should, the gentleman is willing to take him for three years to teach it him. Elizabeth has at present a morning engagement as Governess to two children, when that terminates it is her intention to leave home and take a situation as resident Governess. Julia is not very well at present, she caught cold last winter which produced inflammation in the side but I hope with care she will get the better of it. Edward has been resident master for six months where Charles now is, he is now trying for another engagement where he can have a larger salary. His father hopes we are enabled to remain here, so helping our votes to procure an appointment similar to Fred's.

With regard to our business affairs, I do not know how things will be settled. We are greatly in arrears with the rent as we have employed all the money taken in the business to pay the necessary expenses. It is not reasonable to suppose that the Board of Trade will be lenient to us or that the late Trustees will pay our debts.

You said in one of you former letters "When one door shuts another opens", we must hope it will be so in our case. I think I may say we have done our best to make the business answer but the expenses of rent etc... etc... are very great. The premises were valued at too high a rate when sold to the Trustees by Mr Maurilyn the lawyer who had the transaction of the affairs, the surplus came into his hands for the liquidation of what was due to him as solicitor. The Trustees having advanced the sum of £4000 for the house required the interest of it, this has reduced us to our present condition, the business not having kept pace with the expenses. In March our twelve month expires, I expect we shall then be called to account. I will duly inform you of affairs if you wish it but I do not want to make you uncomfortable. I have not written for some time, you have attributed my silence to the right cause. My time seems wholly filled up. I am sure..

*(may be missing a page) (Written across page)*

Let us my dear son trust to the kind Providence who has so well supported us up to the present time. I feel quite sure he will not forsake either yourself or us.

I cannot forget the absent ones. I am writing now on my birthday and as I expect this will reach you about the end of March I wish you many happy returns of yours in which all join. I am happy to say your Father's health is better. He was obliged to leave home in the Autumn for the doctors were fearful of jaundice. This was an expense but we thought it would be better than incurring a long illness. All are quite well here and at Grandmamma's and send their love. Please give ours to your Uncle Fred and believe me my very dearest son.

Your ever affectionate mother EI Dyason

\*Maori Wars were around this time and a number of Victorians had gone to New Zealand to fight. Among them were members of the Victorian Local Force of which Isaac became a member. There was also a smaller gold rush in New Zealand at this time

## THE WAR IN NEW ZEALAND.

### LATEST FROM THE SEAT OF WAR,

We have Taranaki news, per steamer Prince Alfred, via Sydney, to the 14th instant.

As the Prince was leaving, and under way, the Tasmanian Maid arrived with despatches from Waitara, having left at seven o'clock the same morning. Her commander reported to Captain Bowden that our troops had shortly before opened upon the rebels, and were keeping up a continuous and heavy fire. Owing, however, to the early hour of the Tasmanian Maid's departure, he was unable to furnish any particulars. Captain Bowden also reports that he saw from his ship upwards of 600 Maories upon the beach, in the line of march, on the morning of Sunday, the 13th instant, within about twenty miles south of New Pymouth.

We annex the Journal of Events of the "Taranaki Herald," of the 12th instant, from which the nature and extent of our preparations for the assault will be gathered, as also the movements of the enemy:—

"Saturday, 5th January.—The Tasmanian Maid, from Waitara, anchored at one p.m. She has been employed during the morning in a trip to the White Cliffs, with the General and staff on board, where H.M.S. Cordelia is anchored. The little steamer ran along the coast past Mairo, Urenui, Mimi, &c, and the General had an excellent opportunity of seeing the nature of the country north of Waitara. The General and staff disembarked at Waitara, and the Tasmanian Maid came on to town. The following news from the seat of war we gather from correspondence received from the camps:—'2nd January. Since I wrote last nothing of importance has transpired. The troops are getting on well with the fortification at Kairau and the stockade at Matarikoriko; the latter will be finished in about a week. The enemy are in force about the bush, and are digging more rifle pits at the peach groves near Huirangi, 1300 yards distant. The dusty weather here is very trying, and the General is afflicted with sore eyes; indeed, goggles and veils are in great request to save one's eyes from being shut up altogether. I omitted to mention in my last that some of

**1862 April 25**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I have sent letters by the last two mails which I hope you will receive safely, not that they contain any good or very cheering news, being simply chronicles of the state of things with us at the time I write, but they will show you my dear child, that all your friends at home are quite well and that with all I have around me to engage my attention you are very near and dear to me and among the "precious things" I have on earth.

I have not heard from you for one or two mails. I suppose you have not had an opportunity of writing or I am sure you would have done so for you must think how precious even a few lines are to me to show me that you my dear Isaac are well. And now I cannot help telling you how grieved we all are that you are not able to come to England this year. My dear child you cannot tell how much your Father and I reproach ourselves in having taken from you the sum that could have enabled you to have paid a visit to England.

I have seen the exhibition. It seems so unnatural to have asked you for what you earned so hardly. We have so looked forward to this year hoping that it would see us altogether. Your Father thinks you can scarcely forgive him the share he has had in preventing it but dear Isaac we have been enabled to maintain a position of respectability hitherto and I can only assuredly that if it had not been for the assistance you afforded us should not have been able to have done so and whatever may happen in the future to us you will have the comfort of knowing that you provided the means of your brothers and sisters being enabled to fill reputable situations and saved your parents the grief of seeing them at an early age uneducated unprovided for.

I told you in my last that we were very troubled at the demand the 'Board of Trade' had made upon us, I am thankful and happy now to tell you that through the kindness of some Gentlemen friends of your father's whose hearts were surely disposed to help us by Him who has been so very merciful to us, have lent us enough to pay half, and one of them a Mr Larkins has become bond for the rest which is to be paid in June. You are sure that we do not take any money now in the business but we hope that the coming season will enable us to free ourselves in some measure from our difficulties.

We are looking forward to the time when Fanny and Edward will be home for the Midsummer holidays. Oh that you my dear son could but be with them it seems that I must see you, but I know this is not right, perhaps the time is nearer than we expect that I may see you and in the meantime I must wait patiently and content myself with writing to, hearing from, thinking of and praying for you. All join me in the kindest love and believe me,

Dear Isaac ever your  
Most truly attached mother  
E I Dyason

**1862 May 24**

**London from brother Fred Dyason (*Fred is aged 22 ½ Isaac is 30*)**

My dear Isaac

It is now a long time since I last wrote to you and I must confess I have certainly been neglectful in not writing oftener since I have been away from home, especially as I have more time than any other of the family. I was at home a short time since for a week's holiday, and I promised Ma I would drop you a line by this mail, as they are all very busy at home just now, preparing the house for the summer season.

You may perhaps have heard the position of affairs at home under the new landlord, The Board of Trade. About two months ago father got notice from them that he must pay up all arrears in the rent which of course it was impossible for him to do, especially at such a season of the year. He was accordingly served with a notice to quit the premises, but the Board after some negotiations consented to take a present payment of half the amount, the balance to be paid some time in July. After considerable trouble and anxiety father managed to borrow the rest, so that as far as the rent is concerned things are pretty square till July. This was the only arrangement father could make with them and though of course it was a very anxious time for them at home, I think it a matter of congratulation that he has been able to arrange any terms so as to retain possession of the business – a result different to what I expected to take place when the Board of Trade undertook the management of the harbour and the other property.

It is to be hoped father will eventually get clear of the difficulties he has so long been involved in. The effect of the new government of the harbour is the abolition of the passing tolls which all vessels passing formerly paid, and the imposition of entry dues – 6d per ton if I calculate right, this of course keeps the harbour clear of all ships except such as are forced to enter. There is as well a tariff imposing dues on all goods imported there. When I was in Ramsgate there was talk of considerable alterations in the town, and it was proposed to construct a broad carriage drive to connect the two cliffs instead of the steep narrow approaches which constitute the principal access to them at present. Part of the drive from the cliff to the level of our house would be a viaduct, it would considerably improve the appearance of the town, but I'm afraid the inhabitants won't go to the expense of it. There is another railway from London to Ramsgate in course of construction to be open in Sept. 63. They have already commenced the works at Dumpton near Ramsgate.

I suppose you have heard of the new baths nearly completed on the West Cliff. They are built into the face of the cliff and the basement is washed by the sea at high water. The entrance is from the top of the cliff which is level with the rest of the building. I doubt it will succeed as a speculation although I am afraid it will damage our business this season a good deal. The reservoir is fed by a steam engine and I must confess I should experience no particular regret in hearing that the baths had burnt and blown the concern up. I expect Fanny will be in town shortly en route for Ramsgate for the holidays. She has been at her present situation – a school in Wales since last midsummer and of course will be glad of the change after an absence of twelve months.

Edward who is now almost a man has been at a school as a teacher in Stratford on Avon since the Xmas quarter. He has been promised a nomination to the Civil Service by a gentleman, but the prospect appears remote as he has now been waiting two years and he took his present situation in preference to doing nothing.

I must now conclude or I shall not catch this mail. Hoping you well, and fairly prosperous.

Believe me

Your affectionate brother

F Dyason

PS They are tolerably well at home and send their love. You must please excuse the haste with which I have written.

**1862 July 18**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's mother El Dyason**

My dear Isaac

When I last wrote to you by the April mail we were looking forward to the Season hoping that the proceeds of the business would enable us to pay the money which the friends of your father so kindly advanced to us to pay half the arrears of rent and also to pay the other half which they promised to wait for till June.

But we have been again (as we have been so often for before) disappointed for opposition Baths, which have been building on the West Cliff have been opened a season earlier than we expected they would have been and that of course has put an end at once and for ever to the chance of our ever taking enough in this business to extricate us from our overwhelming difficulties. The Baths were opened on Saturday last and since that the business has fallen off more than half, for owing to their having so many more baths than us they can take them at a shilling a bath. This we cannot do as we have not rooms enough, a large business at that scale of charges would not cover our expenses. Of course we can not expect people to pay 2 shillings when they have the same thing for 1 shilling though our baths are superior in comfort and cleanliness yet in the present day every one prefers cheapness to comfort. This then has at last brought upon us what we have long expected and vainly struggled to avoid, that we should be obliged to leave this house and be without a home or the means of procuring one for it would be worse than useless to attempt to compete with them. A few weeks or at the longest a month or two and we must leave for we shall have nothing to meet our liabilities with and our creditors will bring our affairs to a close. I would if I could cherish some hope that something may happen as it has before by which we might escape this fate, but it is certain now and unavoidable and we must now consider what we must do for the best. The children will all be able to earn their own living if their health is spared to them, excepting the two youngest children who being only 12 and 14, are too young to take any situation. The salaries of the other children would help to keep me and them in a small house.

And now my dear Isaac I want your advice and help about your Father. When he leaves this house there is nothing for him but daily labour as an attendant in some other bathing establishment and this I do not think he could ever submit to. I think it would kill him. He says he thinks he would rather die in the ocean as the disgrace in the one case would not be worse than the disgrace in the other. What I want to ask you is do you think it will be possible for you to help to get him out to Australia as I feel convinced and so does he that it would be infinitely preferable for him to earn his living as a working man there than in England. Even if he could do no more than that it would be better as there would not be the disgrace to contend with as well as the hardships he would have here. I have no fear that you would find him in any way an encumbrance for he has good business talents and habits and is saving and economical and is still strong and active though the dreadful anxiety he has had lately has seemed almost to unman him. I am sure if he could once feel himself free he would be quite another person. If he could find a home, either with you or Uncle Fred for a time, he would not care what he did in order to support himself and contribute a little to my support. My dear son I can but look to you to help us in this our great difficulties. I know you cannot help us with any amount of money for you have told us that it is not in your power, but if this could be done I have every reason to believe it would save him from utter ruin. There would be a prospect in ten or twelve years time of his being able to put by a little for himself and I do not think if he has to remain in England that I shall be able to bear up under the constant pressure of the idea of his being crushed down by the scorn of men with whom he has always been on an equality.

I hope you will not refuse under the idea that he will be a burden on you for this will not be the case. I know he will be able to work and will perhaps be a help to you. As I said before the salaries of the children are able to earn will help to keep me and the children, and with a little from Fred would do so quite for a few years. This is the only chance I can see to save us from utter misery as I know otherwise your Father's spirit will be broken and for me there will be nothing but misery which I can only share, but can do nothing to alleviate. This is the request I have to make of you. I don't think if you comply with it you will ever regret it as it will be the means of rescuing us from present misery and open the way of ultimately promising the means of subsistence. I shall look forward with much anxiety to your answer, trusting that you will be able

to send the passage money and also a letter of invitation to your Father to come to Australia. If you can not pay the money at once could your name be sufficient that it would be payable on the vessel's arrival. I know Australia is no El Dorado and that fortune is procured with as much difficulty as here but I think the change is necessary for your Father, or I think his mind will give way. If it were only for that and no pecuniary benefit resulted it would still be desirable and I hope and pray that you will be able to do this for us.

I think you had better direct your letter to Fred at the Customs House as it is uncertain where we shall be and he will forward to us. I hope you will not think this an unkind letter but my dear child I am so troubled that I hardly know what I write, but whatever or wherever I am I shall always be you most fondly attached

Mother EI Dyason

**1862 July 22**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

Direct your letter to Fred in London  
Receiver Generals Department  
Custom House London  
Ma will know where we are

My Dear Son,

I find that your mother has written to you by this mail making you fully acquainted with our circumstances and also asking you whether you can in any way give one a home for a few years. I assure you I could make myself useful in any way and I do not think I should be any encumbrance to you, indeed I think if I had been with you when your Uncle Fred left England you would have been in a very different position from what you are at present and that you would not have lost the large sums in your partnership transactions which you say you have done in the letter we have just received. I can assure you my dear son it is no fault of mine that I am in this position. I have not been extravagant or fast in any way but have always endeavoured to get a living for the family, but the rent which I have paid has been much too heavy and has been the means of bringing me into my present position.

I know not what the consequences will be to your dear mother and the family. Want must be their portion, dire distress must be their lot unless they are assisted by their Heavenly Father. O my son, could you but see them, such a happy and united family with their good, kind and indulgent Mother striving to make one another comfortable and happy, you would I am sure feel glad that you belonged to such a family, the thoughts are too much for me to endure as I cannot any longer get them a living. The most that I could do would be to become a common labourer or an attendant at some bathing place where I should be scarcely able to maintain myself and that in England would I am afraid be too much for me: before this reaches you the climax will be past. I shall have left Bath House never more to return to it. O God this is unhappy and unwelcome intelligence to one who has had so little done for him by his Parents and who has done so much for them.

My dear son you have had our united love it is all we have ever been able to give you, and it is the same towards you although so long and so far away as it is towards any other of our dear children. I am afraid if you give me persuasion to come out I shall not be able to find the means, could you but send the passage money. I could rough it in any way. Your mother talks by God's Blessing to get a little school together somewhere to support herself and the younger children, and to be assisted by those who are out getting their living. I trust she may be able to do so.

As for your Uncles, the Pearces they have never done any thing for their sister or her family, they are all without exception a very selfish family, whether they will do any thing when they find their sister's in want I know not.

I must now conclude with an aching heart  
Believe me you affectionate  
Father  
ID

**1862 September 25**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Isaac

By the blessings of God we are still at Bath House but I scarcely know whether we shall continue. It will all depend upon whether I shall be able to raise £150, if so I have no doubt but what I shall be able to remain and shall be able to get a living for your Dear Mother and the remainder of the family till they can provide for themselves. When I wrote to you in July every thing was as black as it was possible to be. There was a new Establishment opened on the West Cliff in opposition to our own and the charge of one shilling per Bath or 12 for 10/6d our charge being 2/. I continued our price for one month after they opened and had scarcely anything to do, indeed I was almost wild with anxiety and fear, your mother and all the children wished me to lower it to 1/6d and begged of me through the month continually to do so, but all my friends including your Uncle Roger and Aunt Fanny advised me not to do so, even your Grandma said she would not, but at last I was obliged to take your dear Mother's advice and I only regret I did not take it at first for after lowering to 1/6d we had our usual business come back in the course of a few days, and though the opposition is there I think it speaks well for us that we shall have nearly as many in the year as we did before there was any baths there at all, but having reduced the price has taken off one quarter of my proceeds which will amount to about £120 per year, then to meet that my rent has been reduced £50 a year and I am very sorry to say your dear sisters have been all obliged to obtain situations as Governesses and as they will now be able to make their own living it will make all the difference to me as I could not keep and clothe them for less than £70 or £80 per year, so that will make things in the same state as before, and it is also the opinion of every body that those baths will never answer, for there is a general complaint against them already. People complain of the water not being good and every thing in a dirty and filthy state and from the numbers that are continually leaving them is a fair criterion that it is so. I hope and trust my dear boy that I shall be able to remain, if not I do not know how I shall obtain bread for your dear mother for I can do nothing else to get a living in England never having been brought up to do any thing else. I assure you it has made me so low and nervous that while I am writing I can scarcely keep my hand to the paper.

Hoping my dear Boy you are quite well believe me your affectionate father.

I Dyason

I forgot to name in the letter that for the first ten years after your Grandpa's arrival in England he cost me over £400 as I allowed him £40 per year during that period but I have been obliged since then to decline it so if I could only surmount these difficulties I shall not have to do again.

Your mother and family send their kind love.

**(1862 October estimated)**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

*(Beginning of letter missing)*

...from Suez to Bombay. He holds the office of Purveyor or chief cook and maintains Aunt Polly very comfortably but she is often fearful respecting his health as her whole dependence is on him. Uncle Roger is in health but not in very good circumstances, but his children, with the exception of one child, are all in situations. Your uncles and aunts in Harbour St are all well as also your Father, myself and family. I am happy and pleased to say that the children are all at present well conducted and try to do what they can, but it is a great thing if they can provide for themselves. They do not entertain the idea of being married, I rather think they are fearful of entering upon it having seen the difficulties we have had in order to provide a livelihood.

Your Uncle Edward\* who came home from America about two years since, is gone down to Wales, that being his wife's native country. He is a perfect wreck of his former self. I cannot tell what it is owing to. Some think she has property, as much as £700 a year, but he has sunk the money Uncle White left him and he receives £30 a year for life, so that if he has nothing more he can live on that very well indeed in Wales.

What an awful state America is in, but if they had not shed their own blood they would ours, as their hatred of England seems to have got to a very high pitch. If Edward had remained, feeble as he is he must have carried arms\*\*. They came over just in time.

You heard I expect that the last *Australian Maid* was wrecked but that all hands were saved and also a portion of letters and papers. I think I told you Julia had a letter from your Aunt Dyason at the Cape which she replied to, your aunt seemed in rather low spirits, complained of age coming on her. I don't know if you have written to her lately, if not a letter from you would do her good no doubt...

*\*Uncle Edward is Isaac's mother's brother (aged 64 in 1862)*

*\*\*The American Civil War*

**1862 October 24**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father**

My Dear Isaac

I wrote to you by the Sept. Mail acquainting you that our circumstances were not quite so bad as when I wrote to you in July. I can assure you my dear boy, when I did so I was under the apprehension and fear that nothing could save us from utter destruction indeed at that time it was the opinion of the whole of the family that we were entirely ruined, only fancy to yourself that a large Establishment of Baths opening at the charge of 1/ per bath or 12 Baths for 10/ when we were charging 2/ a Bath it had every appearance of quite ruining us, indeed it would have done so but thanks be to your sisters urging upon me the necessity of lowering the price to 1/6 per Bath which after a great deal of persuasion I consented to do although it was against the advice of some of our oldest Bathers and all my friends including your Uncle Roger, Aunt Fanny and your Grandma Pearce who all said keep up the price and you will always have your share, but I found to my cost after trying it a whole month that very few of my friends would come and give me 2/ when they could get a bath for 1/ and I find that since we have lowered which was on the 8<sup>th</sup> Aug we have had a fine share of business and I have no doubt but that next season we shall do very well and I am in hope with some little assistance we shall at the end of next season be nearly free from all my liabilities, indeed it is the opinion of nearly all the people in Ramsgate that they can now assure us the water is not good and the attendance the visitors say is shameful therefore I am in hopes there is every prospect of success, but I assure you my dear boy I never suffered so much in mind in all my life for I was under the dread of being without a bed to lay on for the family or even food to give them. O what I suffered no tongue can tell, but thanks be to God it was sent for my good for it has I am in hope, taught me to look up to him for assistance when all earthly help was apparently in vain, but it has been at the cost of your dear sisters being obliged to leave home and get their own living. I assure you my dear boy that was a great trial for me for my home appeared quite a blank without them but thank God they are very comfortable at present and I hope they will continue so, and perhaps after a few years they will be able to get a good school together for themselves, if so they will be very comfortable.

I think I have now told you all about the business, I wish to ask you a question. You are aware that the Harbour and all the property has come into the hands of the Government and I think they would be disposed to sell the property not connected with the Harbour as the board of Trade has said the late Trustees had no business to purchase property of that description, indeed I asked one of them if they would feel disposed to do so, he told me to write to the board and ask the question. I have not done so yet but think I shall, the Trustees gave 4800 for it besides £500 for some additional ground and I paid them at that time £280 a year rent for it but the price of the baths becoming reduced they were obliged to lower the rent at different time but I could never get it sufficiently reduced to meet the smaller returns in consequence of the price of the baths being lowered with the same amount of expenditure which was the cause of my being always in difficulties.

I have under the Board of Trade got my rent reduced to £180 per annum and have every prospect of getting it reduced to £150. Now we all know that property to purchase is not worth more than 16 years purchase and is very frequently sold for 14 years purchase which could be at the rental of 150 a year the sum of £2100 and if I could get it at that price the interest on that amount at 5% rent would be £105 a year and as I have to keep the property both inside and out in repair, it would enable me to pay that amount very well and get a very comfortable living, should I be able to get it for anything like that sum I could get a person to lend me £1700 upon it. He has partly promised to do so then what I want is some friend to lend me £400 as a second mortgage which I am afraid I could not get, now the question I wish to ask you is whether you could do it if it was properly secured to you by mortgage deed and to receive 5 per cent for the outlay it could be done. I am quite sure now is the opportunity as there is a new Railway coming to Ramsgate which I have no doubt will very much improve our town, therefore if possible I should not like to miss the opportunity. I shall be glad to hear from you by the return mail and hope it will please you to enable you to do it. Fred is staying with us for a few days for a change. Your mother and all the family at home desire their kind love and believe me my dear Isaac, Your affectionate Father

I Dyason

1863

1863 January 16

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

Many thanks for your kind consolatory letter of Sept 25<sup>th</sup> transmitted to me by Fred and received at the "Old house at home" which I never expected to do when I last wrote to you but thanks to the divine Power and Goodness who assisted us in our greatest need and permits us though unworthy still to retain our home and supplies our wants. I think dear Child your Father explained to you how our affairs stand at the present with the Board of Trade: that we paid up all arrears of rent to September last and are now become yearly tenants. It must now be our business to keep our accounts clear with our new landlords, more particularly as they have reduced the rent of the house £50 per annum and which is now £180 per annum. You know sufficiently of business life to see we are not figuratively speaking out of the thicket, not having adequate funds of our own to effect what has been done, but having been assisted by different individuals. We of course shall have to pay back the sums we have borrowed. We shall consequently have still to be very careful and self denying as well as to work diligently in order to keep things in the right course, but what a blessing it is, dear Child, to be able to keep the home still, to have a refuge for you all, a place you can use without ceremony, your own, your Father's home.

Dear son, I sincerely regret it is your lot to have so many disappointments and losses. I thought the opening of your Australian life looked bright and cheerful but I see how it is, you are truthful and generous and in consequence of these qualities are the greater sufferer than your companions in unfortunate speculations, is it not so dear Isaac? And also the embargo that was put on your property, just as you began to amass a little of this world's wealth. But I trust you will be enabled to hold a great position yet. I know very well it is not your nature to sit down in despair even as you counselled me dear child, so I feel assured you yourself will act at the same time, looking steadily at the future as this is not a permanent resting place, it would be unwise to allow it to engross all our thoughts and anxieties.

I am very sorry that our troubles should have come before you to add to your own griefs but in our despair we turned our thoughts to you: we could not tell how God had prospered you and whether you were to be the channel through which we were to have relief; but can it be my dear Child that you have really been reduced to so great straits as to be really in want of food and at the present time to have no home of your own, and for us to have been constantly harassing you with petitions for money. I am very anxious to hear if you are still in those unfortunate circumstances and also if my brother is the same which I hope you will inform me of (if not of my brother). Though I think Uncle Charles would much rather be made acquainted with, as something might be done by extending his business here. I hope dear son you will not keep us in the dark respecting yourself, if you are still in want we must consider the matter and if possible come to some arrangement respecting you.

I will just tell you what the family is doing. Lizzie is at St Bees near Whitehaven in Cumberland in a clergyman's family as governess and is comfortable. Fanny has changed her place and is just going to Sussex to instruct one child where I hope she will be settled for a little while. Julia is a teacher in a school in Staffordshire. Edward is in Worcestershire, Fred you know about, the three younger ones – Charles, Augusta and Catherine, are at home. Julia has not very good health, our climate is rather too keen. Your Grandmama is very well, has all her teeth, can see to read very well and has the full use of her faculties. Grandpa Dyason the same with the exception of sight which fails very much, he lives at St Lawrence. Aunt Fanny is well, Aunt Grove lives at present at Minster, her husband is in very good employ in the Oriental Steamship Company's ships.

I must now conclude, ever wishing you many happy returns of your birthday and also that this year may be productive, happiness and prosperity to you and to us all so far as it is for our own benefit, hoping to hear from you soon and that you are in health, with kind love to my brother. I remain dear Isaac, your truly affectionate mother, EID. Your father sends his kind love as also your brothers and sisters.

**1863 May 14**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

We received papers by this and the preceding mails, and also a letter some little time back and hope you are in health and in good spirits notwithstanding the very trying state of your affairs. I have however this confidence in you that you will not yield to despair but still look forward with hope, you know well that nothing happens by chance and it is wise to be submissive and to trust in that Hand that He appoints to each his portion, but I a shortsighted creature would fain desire ease and prosperity for you but there may be these in store for you as well as a more enduring on balance than this world can bestow which none can deprive you of.

I suppose your Aunt John has informed you of the death of your Grandpa Dyason which took place last month. I saw him three days before he died, he had been weak and poorly for some months previous to his last illness, and also lost his sight a twelvemonth ago, at least altho not totally blind yet incapable of reading which you may remember he was fond of. He retained his faculties to the last, I think his age was 78. He was buried in the vault at St Lawence\* by the side of his wife and two children. Aunt Fanny nursed him, he was ill a fortnight and took to his bed a few days before his death which was a quiet one at the last. All the rest of the family are fully well now. I refer to your Uncles and Aunts, time alone wears away the edge of sorrow and reconciles us to our bereavements.

When I wrote to you last I think I mentioned about your Aunt John being not very well, have you heard from her lately? How is my brother Frederick. I am happy to say we are all well, as well as the family in Harbour St. Your Grandma is rather feeble. I sometimes fear she will not be spared to us much longer. She desires her kind love to you. I suppose you will not think it a great task to write a few lines addressed to her. I know it would please her very much, tell her of some of the beauties of the Country which I remember you wrote to me of when you first went there and which I suppose it still retains, although it has proved a land of disappointment to you and my brother Frederick.

I suppose dear Isaac you would like to know a little of business affairs. I told you that having settled with the Board of Trade all arrears of rent in September last, we then became yearly tenants in June our quarterly payment is to be made due. We were preparing the house for the Summer and hope the business will soon become brisk and also that the house will let well I feel. I dare not doubt, I dare not despond, after the great deliverance that was granted us last year when all hope seemed gone and we were threatened with expulsion from week to week. I cannot but trust when I reflect on the past – altho at the present we see not very clearly how to manage to get things to go on nicely. The Winter months seem expensive and continuous when there is nothing doing, but the Summer may be a good one to us and I hope to you and your Uncle and also to those dear friends at the Cape as well as to my dear relatives in Ramsgate.

Lizzie is in Cumberland still, Julia in a school at Staffordshire. Fanny was obliged to come home to rest – she is not very strong. Edward and Charley are at home at present as also the two younger children. I asked Aunt Fanny about the Dyason family, she says they came originally from Sevenoaks and says they were farmers. She remembers hearing them talk of her Grandparents, Great Great Grandfather living there and her Grandfather and his brothers coming to Ramsgate to settle here. One was an upholsterer and auctioneer, the others of different trades but generally speaking very successful at that time but afterward did not do so well. I must now conclude. Your father joins me in kindest love to you my dear son, your sisters and brothers likewise. Believe me your very affectionate mother EID

*(Written sideways)*

P.S. We have had a most delightful Spring but to day there is a strong cold easterly wind. The sea is washing over the East pier most furiously. My hands are so cold I can scarcely write. The Railway Terminus is begun on the Sands\*. The tunnel through the cliffs is nearly completed. They want to finish by September. Write soon. Tell us how you are doing.

Yours with much love

\*St Lawrence



Image accessed August 2013 from <http://www.michaelsbookshop.com/blogpics/id18.htm>

\*\*The Railway, late 19<sup>th</sup> Century



Image accessed August 2013 from <http://www.itk.me.uk/OldPhotos/Places/Ramsgate/images/RamsSands-L.jpg>

**(1863 June estimated) From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

*(Missing beginning of letter)*

...he\* died on his passage to Calcutta and his remains committed to the deep. She is with us at present, he died in the Spring, she had a letter from Suez on the 27<sup>th</sup> April. He insured for a small sum which will come to her. She of course is very full of trouble. He was only forty six, he had been in the hospital and was thought to be dying but he rallied and joined the vessel. He however soon sank again into his former weakness and death ensued. I am very sorry for him poor fellow, and very sorry for her. I hope she will be supported and directed as her affliction is not a light one.

We have let the house earlier this year than usual, should like to have more business, people complain of the water and dirt in the other Baths, still they go to them and use them more frequently than they do ours but we may improve as the summer advances. The Kent Coast Railway is finished, we have in consequence two railway terminals in Ramsgate. I do not think it will benefit the town much. It is certainly never convenient for those who live at the lower end of the town and on the Cliffs to go by the lower train as the Terminus is above at the entrance to the Sands, while persons residing at the Upper part of Ramsgate can get to and from the South Eastern station which is situated at the top of Chatham St, what we call the Margate Road.

The taxes however are increased by the new line. The charge to London by second class used to be 5 shillings, it is now 8. There is a tunnel from the Sands through the cliff to Dumpton, about a mile. There is a small station between Broadlands and St Peters. The fall is rather sudden there and is the only, I believe, dangerous part of the line but no doubt great care will be taken to prevent any accident occurring, at least I hope so.

We have had a rather long Winter, the weather has been cold through the Spring months. There is a great deal of young fruit on the trees, peas are 10/ a pound. We have had some nice showers lately which bring forward wheat and other grains. Potatoes are fast recovering from disease, we had very good ones for 3d each. Bread 14d per gallon. Meat is high 10d for steak and 1/ for lamb and 9d for mutton. Our town increased very fast, buildings are added and occupied as soon as finished. Drapers and grocers seem to be doing well. We hope it may prove a good season for all.

Do you still belong to the choir? Have you an organ at the church? Are you still at the same house, do the people make you comfortable as I suppose you do not cook for yourself nor dust your own rooms. How is the garden, has it recovered from the cruel usage it received from the gold seekers. You used to tell me about the pretty garden at Rondesboch. This brings your Uncle's affairs to my mind. He writes to say that he had lost £2000 a short time ago. He seems to be in great trouble but I believe your Aunt is in better health now as he did not say to the contrary. I am sorry for Julia, her husband's business is not so prosperous they say as to place her in comfortable circumstances. I am glad to say your Grandma is quite well, also your Uncles and Aunts on both sides.

You requested some time ago that we should send the Motto to you. Grandma's family arms, it is the following "*I Deum Velle Quod Vult Deus\*\**" It has been translated as "I will what God wills" I don't know however if it be correctly translated. It is not known when the Arms were granted but possibly by King Edward at the battle of Cressy and in the field of battle there. They may be a higher date conferred with the honour of knighthood.

*(written sideways page 1 – very faint)*

I intended to send this letter by the heavy portion of the mail but delayed till too late through talking to your Aunt Groves who was at the time very much distressed.

I have sent you a scarf I wish it were two, but - mail being up, you will think it not worth the postage but I had a scarf for years by me, I decided it not fair for the boys and I wanted you to have one, but you need not wear it if you do not like.

*(written sideways page 3 – very faint)*

We received your letter and papers by the mail which did not arrive till the 24<sup>th</sup> at the least the letters were delivered the 24<sup>th</sup>. Julia is not coming home, she has joined one of a party and is going into Wales for a fortnight. Fanny is going with the family to the Isle of Wight for 3 or 4 months.

I am very glad to find my brother Frederick is all right, I have been

*(written sideways page 4 – very faint)*

...very anxious about him. We thank you for your kind letter and for papers. Augusta was pleased to hear from you, she thought you had forgotten to write to her. I am sure I shall tire your patience so will conclude, accept of our love and believe me your truly affectionate mother EID.

Your father desires his best love.

*\*Uncle George Groves (who married Isaac's mother's sister, Polly Pearce)*

*\*\*For the latin pedant an online English /Latin translator puts this as "Ego velle quod Deus vult"*

1863 August 19

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I received the likeness safely, also papers and letter for which I have to thank you. I sent one likeness to Bessie, the other I gave to Fanny as you requested. I should like you to send one for me if not too expensive, I will if I can let you have the family portraits by Christmas. I think however with regards to good looks you have always taken the palm.\* I am sure if you were here your sisters would be very proud of you as also your brothers. Your aunt\*\* said you had a tall, sober appearance, very different from John who is of a very delicate constitution. Grandma thinks you are like Fred but he is not nearly so tall as you. I do not expect any of the children will make a good likeness but they will be as welcome to you as if they were perfect in form and feature. I am happy to inform you that your Father succeeded in getting a nomination for Edward as Clerk in the Customs. He went to London for his examination. He had to compete with 15 other candidates for five vacancies. He passed first on the list and of course had the choice of places. He chose the tea department and joined the staff about six weeks ago. His salary is £70 per annum with a yearly rise of £5 till it reaches £90. I forget how it progresses after this.

Fred and Edward lodge in the same house with a fellow clerk who is married. They are respectable and well conducted people and study to make the boys comfortable. The home was got through a member in the Liberal Interest, we having always supported the Conservatives found it a very difficult game to play at the late election, more particularly as we had received Fred's appointment through the Conservatives so recently, of course they expected your Father's vote and interest at the elections in December last. He was obliged to remain neutral, having a few friends who were liberals among whom were my brothers. ED's\*\*\* nomination depended (illegible), he promised to bring them 10 votes tho' not seen in it himself. You will think this was hardly upright conduct but had he given his vote at all it would have been for Mr Ed Dering the liberal member as Sir Norton Knatchbull is too much of a Tory for the times and as deaf as a beetle as we say, quite unfit to represent our County at all.

I should have written to you last month but Fanny was not well. I also had to attend to Ed's affairs, so could not get time. Fanny did not stay in Sussex, the Lady of the house was too exacting, the child very tiresome which formed too great a strain on Fanny's nervous system. She was very ill when she came home and was sometime before she recovered her usual (*spirit*), but she has taken another situation in Surrey. I have had two letters from her, she says the Lady is kind and the daughter seems a nice girl and happens to be deficient in those two things which Fanny can teach, viz., music and French. The young lady is 15, the only child. Her address is Somerset House, Guildford\*\*\*\*.

I should like her to be at home with me as she could bring our two girls forward, Augusta and Catherine, but Fanny's constitution requires more delicate space than we can give her. She is also away from all pecuniary difficulties and home troubles. Lizzie is still at St Bee's. She is more spirited than Fanny and stronger in constitution. Julia is still at Staffordshire.

Have you heard that your Uncle John is in trouble, he wrote to Aunt Fanny to say he had met with losses to the amount of several thousands. This is very afflictive to himself and family as also bad news for us, as we depended on his assistance to defray funeral expenses which amount to £50. These affairs are always paid as soon as possible after a person is buried. The bill is to be met shortly. Of course he was made acquainted with his Father's wishes which had all been carried out and as it was the last demand that would be made on him, we all hoped he would send some part that the debt might be settled without delay – and he wrote to Aunt Fanny, she alone (illegible)

I don't know what we shall do, we should not call for any help if we could do it ourselves but the Season is very dull. The class of people that are here this summer are not for warm bathing, being mostly Jews and people of quite the inferior class. Several gentlemen have taken their families to other places on account of the visitors that are here, not looking or acting as respectable people should do, so we do not have the business we ought to have, but we can hope on, we may still hold on. We have much, very much to be

thankful for, which remark you made in your last letter. Let us remember past memories as David when in trouble "He called to remembrance the years of the *Most High*." If we do the same I am sure we shall be encouraged still to trust in a superintending kind Providence. I am glad you are not gone to New Zealand. How should you like to take a few boys to instruct. If you had but a few it would bring you a living, I do not mean a boarding school. Schools answer well here. Whitehead has retired, his successor is doing well, (*as are*) several others in the Town I do not know of one, conducted properly, that is not a success. I thought of this while at breakfast this morning, I did not tell my thoughts to any but you.

I have mislaid your letter but I think I sent it to Lizzie as she likes to read your letter.

*(Written sideways)*

I cannot remember if you asked me any particular question. How do you progress in singing and the flute. What is your voice. I am glad my brother is well, please give our kind love to him. They are all well in the Harbour St and also our family. I hope you still have your health.

Believe me to remain your ever affectionate mother.

*\*Taken the palm means to have 'come first'*

*\*\*Must be Aunt Julia referring to Uncle John from Cape Town*

*\*\*\*Edward Dering (Liberal) won the 1863 by election caused by the death of the previous incumbent, William Deedes (Conservative)*

*\*\*\*\*Somerset House is a Grade 1 Listed building - Former Town Mansion, now divided up into shops and offices. Late C17/possibly c.1700, built for Charles Seymour, 6th Duke of Somerset; altered in C18, C19 (to rear) and C20 on the ground floor. Interiors re-arranged in 1847*



**Somerset House. Guildford**

**1863 October 24**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your letter and two likenesses. I have at present but one in return to send you which is Bessie's. The rest of the family decline having theirs taken as they say she is the only one presentable. They like yours amazingly and would rather you should remain in happy ignorance of their personal defects. Bessy is a little cross looking in her likeness but is in reality an affectionate, warm hearted girl, as she is the first on that list I think she deserves a few lines from you. Her address is Rev. G.H. Heslop, St Bees near Whitehaven, Cumberland. I know you will be disappointed but I think I shall get two or three by the next mail. I sent one of your last likenesses to Julia. I think they are very well done. I prize them much. I am glad you can make out the tune I sent you. I have another piece I should like you to learn which Augusta will write out for you. This also like the Cardiff, sounds better with one voice to each part. I used to like to sing them when I was a girl but the last may not suit your taste.

I did not know about the garden, it must have been a great nuisance at the time. If the Chinese had found a large nugget it would have made you feel rather queer would it not? Do you practice the flute now? Have you time for study? Do you get books at a reasonable price? Your cousin Hurst called here and told me you were married. He said he heard it from a gentleman who had been many years at the Cape and had often taken a bath with you in the river and played cards with Uncle John very often. He is also a correspondent of yours and wrote to say you were married. As I am not assured on this point, I shall postpone my good wishes till I again hear from you.

Fanny is not at home, she has taken a situation at Surrey as teacher of French and Music to a young lady. The family are kind to her. I think she is comfortable. Julia will leave Staffordshire at Xmas as she is not able to do the work, only think of the Principal herself teaching 40 girls, many of them boarders. Edward as I told you is with Fred in the Custom House London, the rest of the family are at home.

There are two railways at Ramsgate now, the South Eastern and the Kent Coast. The former goes by Canterbury and Ashford to London, the latter to Margate, Herne Bay. The Kent Coast was opened 3 weeks back, the Terminus is on the Sands. We think on the whole it will benefit Ramsgate. The harvest was very good, bread is cheap.

Grandma has sent her kind love to you. I am glad you are going to write to her. Aunt Fanny is still with us, Aunt Polly is at Minster still. They are both well. All desire their kind remembrances and love. I am glad to hear my brother Fred is well, also to hear that neither he nor you is given to fretting. Please give our kindest love to him. Your last letter gave me much pleasure, we like to hear of your home affairs. The little heartsease gave indication of its hiding place. I said on opening the letter, I'm sure there is a flow in it but still I believe there is more beauty than of fragrance to be found in it. Do you paint or draw now? I think you have a decided taste for it. Do you remember the picture alphabet you made for Fred, I have it still.

*(written sideways)*

Did you send a paper by this post? I am thankful to say we are all quite well, we let our rooms for 3 weeks in September and went to Minster for the time. Oh those pretty lanes, and beautiful trees! I have sent you an additional *Carte*, Cather the baby girl, she is not plain is she.

The cost for the funeral was £15. The family came from Faversham. We have not heard from the Cape lately but you say they are all well. I thank you for your kind wishes for my mother's health and life, she has only lost one tooth which happened when I was a child, Near perceptive hearing and sight are excellent, a pleasant companion she is still for young people. I do not expect you like crossed letters so I shall conclude. Your father joins me in kindest love, baby sends a kiss. The rest of the children and all of us unite in wishing you a pleasant Christmas and happy new year.

Believe me to remain your ever affectionate Mother E I D.

**1863 October 24**

**Belgrave House Cannock from sister Julia Dyason**

My dear Brother

Mamma wrote to me the other day and said that you wished to have all our portraits for Xmas. She desired me to send mine to her that she might enclose it in her letter with the others but as I haven't got it done in time for that perhaps it will be unacceptable enclosed in a note from me and now I have at last broken our silence I trust we shall be good correspondents. Dear brother I hope you do not think it is because I don't love you and anything I could do to please or make you happy I would directly. I always think it must be a trouble to you to answer our tedious letters. I suppose mama has told you I am a teacher in a school near Birmingham and I have not been home for 18 months but please God I shall go at Xmas. Now dear Isaac when are you coming home, I do so want to see you and I am sure I am not the only one.

I am sure you will see by the papers that there has been the shock of an earthquake felt in England especially in the mining districts. I believe it was felt in Cannock, some people say they were quite shaken in their beds. I suppose I slept too soundly or they exaggerated a little. I know that you will be glad to hear that dear Grandmama is quite well, what a blessing it is that we have all our dear relations spared to us while many have neither father or mother, though you have not had their care during your youth and manhood, yet I feel sure you love them as dearly as we do. Mama has sent me your portrait (to look at I suppose, it is not for me). What a handsome fellow you are. I am quite ashamed to send mine.

With fondest love  
Sister Julia Dyason

1864

1864 January 25

Ramsgate from Isaac's Father (and note from Sister Augusta aged 16)

My Dear Isaac

It is now some time since I took up my pen to write to you, not because I have had no inclination to do so, but I assure you my child it has been in consequence of the great depression of spirit caused by my great anxiety for the well being of the family, and having year after year nothing pleasant to communicate has been the only reason of my long silence.

We have now commenced a new year and by the time this reaches you it will be drawing towards your Birth Day, your mother, self and all the family wish you many many happy returns of that day, and that many more may not pass before you may be again united to your family is the sincere wish of all of them. Should it please God to enable you to do so, no one my dear boy will be more delighted than your dear mother and myself. I have no doubt but what your mother has informed you that your three eldest sisters are away from home as Governesses and your two brothers Fred and Edward I am happy to say are settled in the London Customs House as Clerks where they will remain till they are pensioned off if they conduct themselves properly. Their salary is at present small not more than Eighty Pounds per annum, but in the course of a few years they will have a better one as it increases from 5 to 10 pound yearly for some years with their chances of promotion to 4 or 5 hundred per annum. It is generally considered in England preferable to trade as their is no risk of capital or losses in Business and their length of time on duty is from 10 AM to 4 PM and during that period not over worked as you may suppose.

I am now exerting myself to get your Brother Charles a nomination in one of the Government departments and by the blessing of God I trust I shall succeed, it would be a hard case for him to be shut out from obtaining an appointment being the only one left, he is at home studying for it as they are obliged to go through a very severe competitive examination and there are always three candidates for each appointment. When Fred went in there were 15 appointments and 45 candidates in which he stood 9. When Edward went in there were 15 candidates for 5 appointments and he stood number 1 or first. Therefore I think my dear boy your mother has not been idle in bringing them forward with their education, to her I may say their success in life to the present time is mainly due and their own untiring dispositions and exertions, for they have never received any public education, has been the means of bringing them where they are.

Your three sisters are clever good girls, I will not say more of them, but it will be the greatest comfort I can have in this world to know that there will be a probability of your being united with them again. Therefore my dear boy if you cannot succeed to your wishes in Australia come home, for it is not worth while for you to spend the whole of your life away from your family who will only be too happy to receive you and I have no doubt but what the Almighty who has been very good to me will provide something for us all if we put our whole trust in him.

My dear Boy the last letter I wrote to you was at a time when I was in very great distress of mind respecting the welfare of my dear family in consequence of an Opposition which appears not only to us but also to the public generally, that I should not be able to stem the torrent that was rising up against me but thanks be to God, I have been so far able to contend with them, but it has been at the sacrifice of my dear girls being obliged to leave their home which was and still is a great source of unhappiness to your dear mother and myself, when the Opposition commenced they not only took away customers but I was obliged to reduce the price one fourth to compete with them so that it was a quarter of the whole of my income gone without any reduction in my expenditure, but by rigid economy and the boys getting out with the sacrifice I have named, I hope in the course of two or three years I shall be able to extricate myself from my difficulties, for when the opposition commenced I was very much involved having so large a family to support, and although we received so large an amount of money from you it was all swallowed up together with some money that your mother had left her from your Uncle White, in supporting your Grandfather, which I did from the time he

left the Cape till within three or four years of his death. I will say no more on this doleful subject, but will endeavour to place my whole dependence on one who will never leave us or forsake us.

We yesterday went to church and the Bishop of Melbourne preached a sermon in aid of the funds for the Colonies and a very good sermon we heard. I find my dear son from some of your letters that you are one of a choir and therefore I presume by that you attend Church regularly. I am sure you cannot do better. I have found more comfort there than any where else. Today is your Dearest Mother's Birthday. I hope she will be spared to me for many years to come. My dear Isaac, you do not indeed know the value of such an object for you were too young when you left England to appreciate a mother's love, such love has she for her children that I feel satisfied there is not one of them but what would make any sacrifice to serve her or do any thing to make her comfortable, do not think my dear son that you are neglected or forgotten in those feelings. I can safely say you share them equally with the others.

Tell your Uncle Fred we often think of him, and say that he is the only Uncle the children ever had. I do not know if he is altered but when he was in England no one could be dull where he was, tell him I often talk to the boys about our going out shooting together and the many pleasant days we spent. I have never been out since he has been gone, the boys when they are down here go out occasionally, and I tell them if their Uncle Fred was with them they would enjoy it much more. It is now just dark, ½ past 4 and I can not see to write any more as I am alone in the office without candles or gas light so you must excuse the latter part of this letter. I do not know if your mother will write a few lines so have left the other side on purpose. She does not know I am writing so will (*now*) say good bye, God bless you my dear son it is the sincere wish of your affectionate Father

**On last page from Isaac's sister Augusta Dyason**

Dear Brother

I've sent you Lizzie's and Catherine's 'Cartes' and Julia sent you hers last autumn. Did you receive them safely? I now send you Ma's. There's a motto to the family name but we can't remember it.

I remain

Your ever affectionate sister

Augusta Dyason

1864 February 14

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

*This letter has a large brown stain which makes many words illegible.*

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter of Dec 24<sup>th</sup>. I (illegible) some delay in answering my (illegible) since I cannot find fault with you (illegible) you have made ample amends in (illegible) so long and nice a letter.

I am glad the likenesses pleased you. I have another of the family whose likeness I have enclosed in this. I do not expect you can recognise her at all from memory.

Your father did not wish me to send it, as he does not think it a good likeness. If she (*will*) have another later and it should please us better we can send it to you. I shall have Augusta's likeness taken when the weather is clearer. We have had (*a*) very cold winter, my hands have several chilblains on, as also my fists, the chilblains have been broken but are better now. I dare say Uncle Fred as also yourself would like to feel a little of this very icy weather. It has the effect of making one (illegible) and industrious, however this having the contrary effect which you feel no doubt another cause of that indolence you accuse (illegible), thoughts I do not believe you are really (illegible) as to not think you are constitutionally sound. I gave Grandmamma your letter last evening, she seemed very pleased with it, thinking it was one of mine that I had brought to her to read. I did not undeceive but told Aunt Martha to look at the address. I did not stay to see the result as I was going home from Church and the wind was so cold. I was glad to return home.

I am glad you sent your *carte*\*. I have not understood photographic likeness (illegible) one, I cannot therefore receive your (illegible) you will accuse me dear Isaac (illegible) ...ing so neither do I think you extravagant in having a number of *cartes* done. The first impression *cartes* something (illegible) of the other taken from that we cannot complain of. I know your Grandmamma will be more gratified in having your likeness, than with any thing you could have sent her as a Christmas gift. I can say the same thing of us all. I do not doubt your loving willing heart my beloved child for one moment. The same blessed sympathy is manifested by all the family.

You ask who Cousin Hurst is, do you not remember going to tea occasionally with a family of girls and one boy who is the one I spoke of as telling me of your being married. Their mother is first cousin to (*your*) Grandmamma. The Dyasons at Victoria no (*doubt*) are relations of the family. We occasionally hear of persons of the name of Dyason, and (*upon*) enquiry we find they belong to the (illegible) origin. Mr George Dyason of Grahamstown had a large family, possibly (*some of them*) may have settled in Australia. There are relations at Faversham and at Dover but we only know them by name, very likely some from them have gone abroad.

I think dear Isaac with you that you all have very good natural abilities, it is also a pity that you could not have the advantages of education but still a great deal lies within our own grasp. Chambers is the best educated man who I consider self taught. He says a man needs but books and if applies himself he can arrive at the same end as if he had Masters. I do not think he can so soon, so many things need explaining which takes a long time to find out without the aid of a Master. I am glad you need not stand still for the want of books. That which is most recommended to be studied is mathematics. It is assured that no mathematician became lunatic or insane. Edward is employing his energies in this study. Fred is teaching himself German.

I know the anthem you speak of. It is not an easy thing to sing. I should think it must be rather an efficient choir to sing Handel's pieces. If you had it on Christmas day, was it a success? There is a book of Handel's songs published by Boosey and Hauley within the range of your voice. We had it for Fanny who cannot reach to such extent, and they suited her voice very well. Can you get the book at Melbourne. If not shall I get one here and send it to you? The family are fond of music, though they cannot be called a singing family not having voice.

I am sorry your teeth are not strong (illegible) to think if you lose them the only thing to be done is to have others placed in their room. This is universally the case now as it prevents disfigurement and also dyspepsia.\*\*

I cannot say but that I felt rather startled when it was announced to me that you were married. I said I thought you would have informed me of it had it have been so. I also expressed my doubts respecting it, but a Cousin said he had been in company with the gentleman who was an intimate friend of yours and that you had read him my letter. It was so, he recollected perfectly well your going from the Cape to Australia and also I was most likely a Grandmamma. Do you know if any of the Mr Dyason's sons or grandsons went to Australia. I mean your Great Uncle who settled at the Cape many years ago and who I believe were the first English settlers there.

I am sorry my brother Fred should be at all concerned about the Dumpton affair. I knew exactly how it happened. Your Uncle Paulin had a cold on his chest at the time, it was a few days before his exhibition, he thought he would go to the bathing place at Dumpton Stairs and practice himself in swimming. He had not been long in the water before he fancied the tide was turning strongly. He immediately turned and found his conjecture true and swam in to shore which he had some difficulty in doing, his lungs not being in good shape. As he was swimming to shore (*he*) passed this gentleman who also was swimming. Uncle P noticed his being a good swimmer and also his long powerful arms. He also passed some youths, these he cautioned, advising them to come in to shore, telling them the tide was running strongly a little way ahead. It never struck him to speak to this gentleman, he seemed to know what he was doing very well. U(*n*cle) P felt fatigued and was dressing himself when a Preventive man from the cliff called on U(*n*cle) P by name telling him to go to the man who was drowning, he hesitating, the Preventive man told the boys to go, one was going but Paulin seeing the danger told him he would be drowned if he did. Of course the gentleman was soon lost to view, his body was washed ashore about half an hour after. Uncle P felt tired from his over exertion in swimming through the current and not being very well at (*the time and*) did not feel equal to the task (illegible) if he had gone to him and (illegible) strong powerful (illegible) Uncle P (illegible) fastened on him they would both have been drowned. I do not think there was any blame to be attached to my brother in the affair but it made us all uncomfortable for a time. If he could have attended the Coroner's inquest and have stated the facts no one would have said any thing against him but it had so great an effect on him that he started for London the same day. Your father talked to two or three gentlemen who came to the baths, they said there was not blame to be attached to him and after a few days passed from the public mind. It was a sad affair. Charlie used to meet him at the bathing sands, and thought what a very fine man he was. I expect he was taken in a fit. It put aside the exhibition for that Summer, and I hope for ever at least by Uncle Paulin. I believe it does him an injury.\*\*\*

The *carte* I send you is Fanny. (*Please send*) my kind love to my brother and (*give him our*) united love. Believe me ever your very affectionate mother EID

Many happy returns of your birthday  
Aunt Fanny and Aunt Grove send their kind love

*\*carte de visite – a new technique in the 1860s made photographic portraits much cheaper. Multiple copies could now be made on paper which was affixed to stiff card*

*\*\*indigestion*

\*\*\* See the bottom of Uncle Paulin's book for some of the activities he performed.

# GODWIN ISLAND,

A PLAY; AND SWIMMING BOOK, BY PAULIN HUGGETT PEARCE, ESQ.,

*Author of the following: Alexander the Great, a play, with swimming rules; Darius III; Richard I. an opera; Edward IV.; Swimming Poem, in lessons; A Treatise on Swimming; Poems on Waterloo; The Funeral of the Duke of Wellington, and Royal Visits; Seringapatam, Nile, Copenhagen, Trafalgar, &c.; Funeral of Lord Nelson, Hero and Leander, &c.*

RESIDENCE: 10, HARBOUR STREET, RAMSGATE.



ORDERS RECEIVED AND SENT BY POST OR RAIL.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Being for several years engaged in Teaching Swimming, and exhibiting Feats in the water, viz:—Cooking and Eating Dinners, Smoking, Firing off Guns, Pistols, Bows and Arrows, Sailing, Flying Six Kites at one time, letting off Fireworks, &c., &c., besides Swimming several miles from Ramsgate Sands to the Brake Buoy and back, against time; Dover to Calais, Broadstairs, Margate, &c., for which, see my Poems, and Warrior's Swimming Book, and wishing you to learn the Art of Swimming well, I pen the following rules.

ROBERTS, PRINTER, 86, CHISWELL STREET, PINSBURY SQUARE.

**1864 June 27**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

Six months of this year has passed away and I do not remember having written a single line to you. I don't know how it is, I'm sure you are not less in my thoughts than formerly, I believe it is that I cannot command those little half hours I used to have when your sisters were at home. I hope therefore that you will not ascribe my long silences to neglect but to the real cause, want of leisure.

Your letter to Julia came safe to hand, it was forwarded to Staffordshire where she is still but will leave at the vacation which takes place this week. I expect her home in a few days, she will advertise for another engagement unless we hear through friends of another situation that will suit her.

We have a lady lodging at our house who is the principal of a very superior establishment in London and who used to lodge in the old Bath house in your Grandpa's time. This lady your father intends to speak with respecting Julia, perhaps she has a vacancy, if so Julia can have an interview with her without taking a journey for that purpose. She will tell you all about it by her next mail.

Edward is coming tomorrow Saturday. He has been in the Custom House just upon the twelvemonth. He was not well for the first five months of his being in London, but I hear he is getting used to the smoky air and dirty streets. He is very steady and well conducted. Fred & he lodge together but do not work in the same Office. Fred is in the Treasury, Edward is in the Tea department. Fred has had no advance of salary – still has £90 but next year he will have an advance of £10 which is to extend over two years. After that he will have a yearly increase, but I don't know whether it will be five or ten pounds.

Charles wishes to get into the Civil Service, and is studying for examination tho we have no expectancy at present. Fanny has been at Grandpa's since last July, she is also coming home next week, but she did not say in her letter whether she is going back to the same family or not but you shall know all about it. Bessie has just finished her two years at St Bees (*see below*), she thinks of paying us a visit at the latter part of the Summer. I think you will have a letter from her by the next mail as she does not give lessons during the vacation which takes place on the 30<sup>th</sup>. I cannot get any more likenesses for you just yet, perhaps before the Summer is ended the boys will send theirs and Augusta hers. Did you receive Catherine's, it was not well done. Edward had his taken but I did not send it, as it was not at all like him. Yours and Julia's are very well done, I cannot remember if I sent Fanny's. If I did it was against your father's wishes as it looked so very unhappy he thought.

I am sorry your teeth are decaying. I hope the front ones are all sound, I do not think you should have grey hairs yet, what have you been feeling about. You were hopeful as a child. I have lately been putting the desk drawers in order and have lighted upon some of your early Cape letters, which I have read with great interest, also the description of the things you saw on the voyage, the long seasickness, Grandpa's kindness etc... Do you remember John's falling into the sand, the horse taking fright, Julia and John screaming, the baby dying, your fall and broken nose, the whooping cough, visit to Algoa Bay, Captain Harrington, Julia's nice playing, the nice grapes and a thousand other things which were all interesting to you and to me.

I have not yet asked after my brother Frederick. Is he alone or not? His silence is most extraordinary. I really feel quite alarmed lest any thing has happened to him to prevent his writing home. I almost fear to know, I hope however all is right. Your father I am sorry to say has sprained his foot in the place where he broke it when a boy, it occurred about a month ago. He has had it strapped and can just place his toes on the ground, he is able to get down stairs but cannot move without crutches. A sprain usually takes a long time before the part will bear pressure and weight. It is however better than it was and I hope it will go on improving. I am also sorry to tell you that Aunt Polly has lost her husband.

Across the front is written: Please present our kindest love to my brother.

(*Missing pages?*)



St Bees school, Cumbria [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St\\_Bees](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Bees) accessed 6/3/2013 additions were made in the 1890's

1865

1865 April 20

Belgrave House

Cannock

From Isaac's sister Julia Dyason (*aged 24*)

My very dear brother

You will see by the paper that we have had a very sad loss in poor Aunt Polly. I do not know whether you can remember her, she often used to talk of you and how fond she was to take you out for walks when you were a little one. She was papa's youngest sister and I dearly loved her.

I feel very grieved for Aunt Fanny's sake, she was her only sister, and they were much attached. I am sure you will sympathize with us all. I think Aunt F would think it kind if you would write her a line. Aunt Polly's death was very sudden, at least she had been ill but we never thought of death. Dearest it makes one tremble for all those I love. I sometimes think I could not bear to lose any of you, or my dear parents either, yet if God so will it I must submit. I am afraid I have a very proud stubborn wish. Now let me lay a strict injunction on you to be careful of yourself. I suppose I feel so anxious on account of the suddenness of poor Aunt's death. I am going to write to Aunt Julia, I am sure Uncle John and Aunt will be grieved.

Now darling, I hope you will not be vexed with me for sending you such an unconnected letter, with nothing but complaints in it. I hope you will scold me well when you write. I am getting selfish and thinking about what a loss I have had, not trying to cheer others who must feel it more than I. When I heard from home all were quite well and they send you back many kisses and much love for in return for yours. I am glad to tell you that beautiful summer is making rapid approaches. I am so glad I like the warm weather.

*(written sides page 1)*

I shall finish my letter with my old requests. Write soon very soon and come home (*to*) us soon. Accept dearest brother the fond love of

Your truly affectionate

Julia Dyason

I do not know whether I address your letters right, but I have sent first South Australia

*(written sides page 3)*

P.S. I am going to send you a long letter when I feel in better spirits. I send you a piece of my hair. Please send me some of yours.

Good night dear.

**(1865 November estimated)**  
**From Isaacs's mother EI Dyason**

...the property to his widow. She died and it has passed into the hands of her niece. Poor Uncle White never ceased to regret the pact he had taken. Paulin did not marry the lady he was engaged to at the time, but fell in love with a young girl on the stage, completely setting aside all the plans for his wellbeing and happiness. Uncle White was a brother of your Grandma's, Paulin Huggett\* was your Grandma's eldest brother's son consequently the rightful heir.

Uncle White died a few years back and left his property equally to his three sisters' children; your Grandma, Mrs Hurst of Deal, and a family in London, I forget the name, The farm is situated on the coast about 3 miles from Ramsgate. We cannot help regretting that it has so completely gone out of the hands of the family. The Pearce you ask about is no relation of ours. She came into Ramsgate a few years back. I must conclude now as my paper is used up but purpose writing by next mail to tell you how Charlie gets on at the Examination. Wishing you a happy new year and many happy returns of your birth day.

*(written sideways)*

I remain with much love your truly affectionate Mother E I D

The family returns you love and kisses

*\*This is NOT Uncle Paulin Huggett Pearce*

**1865 Christmas Day**  
**From sister Julia Dyason**

Belgrave House  
Cannock  
Staffordshire

My darling brother

You will see by the above I am spending Xmas away from home, the distance is so great I prefer going at Midsummer. I am keeping house for the Principal who always goes to her father's to spend Xmas, so I am all alone. I found it rather dull after having 60 or 70 in the house. Still I hope they are all enjoying themselves and that thought makes me contented. I have been here nearly four years so you imagine I am rather attached to the place and people. The Principal is very kind indeed. She has a brother, either in Adelaide or Sydney I forget which. He is a Mr Edwin Smith. I believe he has a store, though I am not sure.

I heard from home yesterday. You, I and poor Georgy\* are the only ones away from the family group. I wonder, "Do they miss us at home, do they miss us", as the old song says. Dear Georgy we know, is perfectly happy. I trust we may all meet him in Our Heavenly Father's home. You will be there won't you dearest! I fancy to myself I can hear your dear voice singing the Xmas Anthem. Won't we sing it all together some day? How I wish the time was come, how fond our darling mother will be of you, her first-born son, dear Isaac you don't know what a treasure of a mother we have.

I made you Father Confessor last time I wrote, so I must let you know about the nameless individual, I am so sorry to tell you that I have found him to be very different to what I thought him, he is given to drink. I was so shocked when I just heard of it, he is a very good hearted fellow the only son of pious parents, and I believe he is very sincere towards me, yet you see dear Isaac I should not be right to become the wife of a man devoted to drink, even though it has not entire sway over him now, we don't know what it will have, it has been a great trouble to me, because I candidly avow I was fond of him and I know he is of me, and for me to be compelled to break off the engagement and avoid his company has tried me a good deal, but I feel that I am right and that is a consolation. Please do not mention at home about it being a trouble to me, as they will think me foolish and I daresay I am.

Dear Isaac will it be too much to ask you to write me even a few lines now and then, I have never had a letter from you since last January, nearly a year, I don't want to bore you but I think those who love you so dearly should have a slight recognition from the loved one,

I am sure I am right in sending best love from mother and you know you have that from your loving sister  
Julia

P.S. A happy new year and lots of kisses

*\*Brother George Dyason died as a baby*

1866

1866 January 19

Ramsgate from Isaac's father (*aged 55, Isaac is nearly 34*)

My dear Isaac

It is near two years since I have written to you, but do not my dear son think for one moment because you are absent that we do not care or think of you; I assure you, you are quite as much in our thoughts and our wishes for your welfare are as often expressed as they are for any other member of our dear family: I assure you, your dear mother never forgets you in our family prayers which we have night and morning. That alone my dear boy I think must be an assuring fact that you are never forgotten by us; but we may have seemed indifferent to you by our not writing more frequently than we have done. I am now fully convinced that it has been all my own fault, for had I from the first endeavoured to do all that I possibly could and left my affairs in the Almighty's keeping we should never (*have*) had the trials that we have had to undergo, but in consequence of my rebellion which I am very sorry to say still continues very frequently, I am chastised for my passiveness. I could say a great deal more on the subject but will not.

We have received this morning a paper from you containing a programme of a concert in which I see your name figures as a performer and in one song which I see you sang and the words which you have sent has been the cause of my commencing my letter in the way I have done to assure you that we do not ever forget you. I do not know if your mother has told you that I have succeeded in getting a nomination for Charlie in the Inland Revenue Department as a Supernumerary Surveyor of Trades. He has passed his test examinations with credit and he goes up on Tuesday next for his competitive examination in which I hope he will succeed, he has been very persevering and will deserve all he gets. I think you must admit I have been very fortunate to obtain three nominations for one family.

Edward seems to like his appointment very much, it is in the East Indian and Tea Department of the Custom House in London. Fred likes his appointment better than he did as his Office has been classified and he gets an increase of salary every year till it gets to a certain amount. There he must remain till he gets off his Class and enters on another where his pay will increase in the same ratio again. His department is the Receiver Generals and is the envy of all the other offices in the Customs. Charlies will be a good appointment should he succeed in obtaining it.

You will have the news by the same mail as you receive this of the loss of the Steam Ship London bound to Melbourne in the Bay of Biscay with nearly all her passengers and crew. It has caused quite a gloom in England at the loss of so many lives. It has been a fearful winter in this country for the shipping, in consequence of the wildness of the weather we have had nothing but gale of wind and the loss of life and the number of vessels which have foundered all along the coast has been greater than for many years.

How does your Uncle Fred get on, what is he doing, tell him we often talk of him and relate to the children what he used to do in times past. Tell him that John Farly is still alive but has been quite blind for many years. And now my dear son what are your prospects, do you think it is worth while for you to spend the remainder of your days separated entirely from your family in the uncertainty of your obtaining a fortune which you may be never able to realise. Would it not be as well for you to turn what you have into money and return to England and purchase a Life Annuity with it in the Government Securities, even if it was not quite sufficient for you to live upon it as you would like, you would find no difficulty in this country as a young man in obtaining something to do, to add to your income, something light and pleasant just to employ your mind as it is not good for people to be idle. I merely throw this out for your consideration, I can only say that we should be only too happy to see it carried out.

And now my dear boy, one word about myself. I am glad to say that should I be able to get over this Winter which I hope and trust I shall, a better time with God's good pleasure will be in store for us, the new railway which we have in Ramsgate has purchased the Baths near the Sands which are now closed and as they have been greater opponents by far than the others which have been started within these four years, it must add

greatly to our business and profits. I calculate my returns will be quite half as much more as they have been these last four years in consequence of the other Baths being closed, and I have no doubt they did nearly the same amount of business as I have done. I think I ought to calculate on doing half theirs in addition to my own, and as the business is of such a nature that we are almost at the same exposure whether we have 50 Baths a day or whether we have a hundred it must add greatly to our profits. I do not know at present if your mother will drop you a line by this mail but should she not do so, I will my dear boy wish you many very many happy returns of your birth day and may the Almighty be your Protector, Guide and Friend is the sincere wish of your

affectionate father  
I Dyason

As soon as I can afford it I shall take care that you have all the Family's likenesses

1867

(1867 estimate) January 18  
From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I have enclosed a note for my brother, will you be so kind as to forward it to him. I have sent melancholy news to him. I have alas to inform you my dear son of our losses, aunt Martha has died of cancer. She was attacked poor thing by that disease the summer before last. It was recommended that she should go into Guy's Hospital, that she might have proper medical treatment. She consented to be operated upon after having had the opinion of the first medical men of the day which took place in the spring of 66 and during the summer months she enjoyed comparative ease into the end of the year. She wished to see her medical man and went up to London, she had she thought a cold, but cancer had attacked her lungs which soon proved fatal.

She died at the commencement of the month very placid and calm. The missionary at whose house she was staying bears testimony to her having expressed her hopes and confidence in God her saviour and that her death was a happy one. I have not told your Uncle Fred what was the matter with your aunt Martha as it might distress him more to know that she had been enduring so much suffering. However it is all passed now and I trust she is where there is no more sorrow nor pain. Your Grandma does not know that Aunt Martha is gone, she does not think it could be cancer, but that it was an abscess and thinks she may get the better of it. If she were to be told the facts I don't think she would survive it, she has the weakness of age, though in the possession of all her faculties. I have told your Uncle Fred this. I hope he will not revert to this subject when he writes to any one but me. She was not buried before your Uncle Roger Dyason was taken ill. The doctor said he had an abscess near the throat, a lady whom he had been attending having recovered from a similar malady, we thought he might get better as soon as it discharged itself, but he only lived 5 days. He could swallow nothing, not even liquid, he has suffered in his health the last two years. Strangers judged him to be seventy years old but he was only sixty three. He has left two sons and three daughters, all unmarried. The youngest son is two years old by a second wife. Poor fellow, he had a most kind disposition, a cheerful contented mind. As time moves on our family circle gets less.

I trust dear Child when the summons comes to us, each of us in our turn ever may be ready to enter the unseen world, believe me to remain your ever affectionate

Mother

*(Written sideways)* We are having a good deal of snow, the trains cannot move, we have had no mail from London for some days by land. A vessel came into the harbour for coals yesterday and took the mail bags from our post office.

Your father and the family join me in kindest love to you and many happy returns of your birthday when it comes. Thanks for the paper *(that we received)* by the December mail.

**1867 March 25**

**Ramsgate from Isaac's father (with a one page insert from his mother)**

*From Isaac's father (the last letter we have from him as he died in the following year aged 57, when Isaac's mother was 65 and Isaac 36)*

My dear Isaac

We received your letter dated January 7 last and am very sorry to find that circumstances do not prosper with you so well as you could wish. I assure you my dear boy it is often a source of anxiety both to your dear mother and to my self, and I often regret the amounts that you have sent us at different times for our benefit. It is not in my power to repay but I live in hopes the time may come when I shall be able to do so, things look a little brighter with me than they have done for some time past and if I have a good season this year I hope to be nearly or quite free from the world which is a situation I have not been in for some years past.

I see by your letter that you very much complain of the climate and it begins to tell on your constitution. I have no doubt but what it does, and it seems very hard after so many years of toil and labour that you have not made a sufficient competency to enable you to come back to your home, but my dear boy there is no occasion for you to wait for that time, perhaps it will never arrive to your satisfaction therefore I think the better way will be for you to weight the matter well over in your own mind and see if it would not be more desirable for you to come to England and be with your friends. I do not at all know your affairs but after parting with all you possess in Australia would it realise from £70 to £100 a year in England, if so you could especially as you are a single man live well on that amount, or should you not have more than a few hundreds. I feel quite satisfied something might be done to enable you to get a very good living should it please God to spare me, and you will return. Something might be got for you in Ramsgate or elsewhere. With the little interest I possess, I feel certain that it all may be accomplished, but even my dear boy should you not have any thing at your command. I can only say from my heart and your dear mother will echo my wish and all the family will join in that wish that we shall be so happy to see you, and will do all in our power to make you comfortable for I think after all the hardships and struggles you have gone through for so many years partly for our sakes it will be but a small return on our part to endeavour to do what we can for you. I shall not write any more on this subject till I hear from you, I do not know if your mother will write a few lines with this letter, if so she will tell you all about the family. If she does not write she will be sure to write by the next mail in April, for receiving your letter only the day before yesterday, I do not think the old lady can find time to her satisfaction if she does not.

The children are all quite well and desire their kind love, I believe your Uncle Tom is writing to your Uncle Fred about his coming home, there is no doubt but what he would do very well here especially if he continues to be as smart a man of business as he was when he left England, your birthday is close at hand and I wish you my dear boy many happy returns and may you be blessed with long happiness that this would afford and afterwards with that happiness that is promised to those who faithfully believe and put their trust in him.

Believe me my dear boy, your affectionate father I Dyason

*From Isaacs's mother (undated but included with the letter)*

My dear Isaac

Many thanks for your nice long letter. It is quite a treasure. You need not blame yourself for not having written to me lately as it is the same thing whether you write to me or to any member of the family, as we communicate the news to each other. So to know you are well is the best tidings we can have. I am aware you can have nothing very particular to write about. I do not expect to hear oftener than I do so you need not reproach yourself dearest boy by thinking you neglect me. I am very sorry to hear you had so bad a summer. I hope you will not stay to the injury of your health. Riches are of no value if health is impaired. I do not think it would be wise either for you or my brother to remain in Australia. The climate no doubt is

beginning to affect you both. If the liver becomes diseased you know the consequence. I should not remain where you are in order to grow rich. Perhaps it is not to be your lot, Providence may order otherwise. You and my brother must well consider the matter. I shall write by the next mail if nothing prevents. It is getting dark so you will excuse this hasty epistle, but take every possible care of your health. Your Uncle Tom has directed a letter to you for your Uncle Fred as he is not certain about his address. Will you kindly put the letter in a fresh envelope and send it to him.

I am thankful to say we are all well. We have had some intensely cold weather while you have been suffering intense heat. I shall say goodbye for a few days when I will write a longer letter. All is well, with kindest love from all. I remain dearest child, your truly affectionate

Mother.

**1867 March 25**

**From Isaac's Uncle Charles Pearce (aged 40)**

My Dear Isaac

I am very much grieved and surprised at the contents of your letter having no idea that Dear U.F (*Uncle Fred*) was in that condition. That Rascal his partner and those losses was the cause of all. I wonder how I got free for I had to pay the utmost farthing. I did not get clear until 1860, since that I have stuck at business, but in a country place you cannot do a large trade, had it not been for my Dear Mother and Sisters I should have gone to a larger place, but your Aunts all being much afflicted.

I do not think it advisable to waste any more time in the Colony when there can be made with economy, experience and industry a better position in a shorter time in the Old Country. Here you have the advantage of a large population, you are not affected by any fluctuation of the markets and can concentrate on the general retail trade 25 percent. What I should advise is come to England immediately and open either in some large town or London a good retail shop. He who determines to succeed must and will do so. Of course we must walk before we run and there is little doubt we can do the first and soon be able to accomplish the last. The following would be the best – consider. Say a Partnership, the money advanced to carry it on to be repaid as trade allowed, but not to cripple the establishment, being fully conversant with the present requirements and general value of goods purchased and be made first hand, no second profit. If there are no funds, I must supply them and my credit will do the rest for through all my troubles I have always kept my name and that is a good in itself. Take good business premises in a first rate position in a populous town and with that attention to business success is certain.

With regard to shipping goods, I am of opinion the day is passed, there is only one safe plan to go upon and that refers to suitable goods, samples require to be sent here of the exact shape, quality and workmanship and the wholesale price as well as the retail quoted to show what we can pay for manufacturing and what the Colonial expenses are per pair on them, also the English maker who stands well in the Colony, then when this is done and the goods arrive you have to run the risk of large shipments of the same kind. If such should be the case you have to wait until the goods are in demand, there is a great advance in the price of leather and of course a corresponding advance in goods.

Therefore upon careful consideration I see the advantage lies in returning, I know the great objection to do so is because the affair has not been successful! No one need know how it has terminated. Gossips' imaginations are generally very fertile and they must think it a prosperous termination when a goods business looks healthy and of course pride of which all have their share would object but this is nothing and the sooner my advice is acted upon the better, money (*and*) position is ever achieved by hard work, consequently every day passed is one lost, then again a prosperous affair would be a salve for the wound and give substantial evidence that all is not lost and who knows - our very losses may eventually be our gains.

*(Written sideways)*

I determined to stay if your U.F does return. Do not let it appear (a) want of means and do not write to my brother such is the case, I am very glad you wrote to me on the subject. I hope you and U F will consult together and consider what is best to be done.

Your dear Grandma sends her kindest love, and your Aunts, Uncles. Communicate with your Uncle Fred as soon as possible

Your affectionate Charles

With kisses and love

I have written a line by the mail to U F

Suppose U F returns there would be a better chance of success in shipping because he knows exactly what is required being a practical man but it would be necessary as well to find out before the names of the England firms that are liked the best, that is supposing you would like to go into an affair of this sort of course.

You would arrange such an affair with UF before he leaves.

You can tell U F bottled Porter is the sort of thing for sea sickness.

I cannot sufficiently thank you for giving me this information

1868

1868 February 18

Belgrave House

Cannock

Staffordshire from sister Julia Dyason

My dear Brother

As usual the mail is just on the eve of departure and your naughty neglectful sister has only a few minutes in which to write. Dear brother I hope this will reach you by your birthday of which I wish you many many happy returns, I only wish I could spend it with you. Dear Mama tells me you are not well, I am so very sorry.

I wish you would come home if only to stay a little while. There's one thing to be said however, that is you would be quite spoiled between us – dearest brother if you do feel any worse at all please write and tell me. I should like to go and nurse you and take care of you, you must be so lonely all by yourself. I do wish we were not separated by such a tremendous distance. I feel so anxious about you, I am afraid you are not taking care of yourself.

Thank you for your advice respecting what I asked you. I have quite forgotten it now. I hope you will not leave this letter unanswered very long or I shall be coming to look after you.

This week I have been singing at a concert. I belong to a Glee Class and we were asked to sing. I think we managed pretty well, the Glees we chose were Novello's\* "When words breathe soft", "Lucan of the valley".

I went to London at Xmas and spent 3 weeks with Fred and Edward. I enjoyed my visit very much; but there is one wanting that is you. I feel that more and more every day. Do come, never mind waiting for a fortune we shall all welcome and love you quite as much and more than if you come home rolling in riches. Life is at the best but very short, and I am sure that money does not make the happiness of anyone.

I think all at home are pretty well. I am glad to say I am well. We are looking forward to the Cambridge lists coming out which will show us which of our pupils have been successful. We have one young lady here who has been dangerously ill with rheumatism, of course it has caused a great deal of anxiety to all of us. Now my parting words will be dear brother, do come home,

With hundreds of kisses and fondest love,

Believe me

Your truly loving sister

Julia H Dyason

Write, Write, Write very very soon

*\*Novello is a London based printed music publishing company specializing in classical music, particularly choral repertoire, founded in 1811*

**1868 September (no day)**  
**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I thank you for your kind consoling letter. I am fully sensible that I have your love and sympathy, as well as that of the rest of my children. Still a sense of loneliness is always present which I cannot divest myself of, also numberless regrets of things I did not and of things I did, which no doubt materially affected his happiness, but which perhaps I did not see at the time. but now are vividly brought before me and I am but to acknowledge that this visitation is a mark of the displeasure of Heaven. I never anticipated such an event as this happening to me, and was wholly unprepared for so dreadful a blame. He died in full strength, the doctor continually assured us that there was no change and that the many favourable symptoms were all leading to his returning health, and I was preparing to go with him to Norwood where the boys are for a change.

Your dear Parent who also fully entered into my plans so that none of us anticipated the terrible result. Years of anxiety do the work and more particularly the last 3 or 6 years in which there was not rest. He was ill for about 6 weeks, the liver got out of order, but he had been often ill from the same cause. I advised him to see Barry who generally did him good, but he did not seem inclined but thought a few pills would set him right. I was not well myself and unfortunately I went for a fortnight away from him thinking he would have advice if I were away which he did as he wanted to get well by the time I came home.

When I returned he was apparently much better and we had no idea there was anything beyond the liver being or having been out of order. He felt so well on Sunday, he took a tonic Barry gave him and felt that that dose did him infinite harms, and I have not the least doubt it was a fatal dose, after that he was not at all progressing in health. Though nature did all she could, for there were many favourable symptoms but Barry was repeatedly administering his medicine which all appeared wrong. Your poor father himself said to me Barry has killed me, after a time dropsy set in and then all hopes vanished, but he was strong to the last he never lay down. He had no sleep for a fortnight; of course he was very often meandering as a consequence.

He did not wish to leave us at first but at the last he was quite resigned, a little while before his death Charley asked him if he were happy. He replied yes my dear boy I am quite happy, previously to this he had been in great distress at the thought of death but a happy change had come over him and he exhorted his family to love and serve God, and said if his life were spared he would devote his whole time to the service of God.

He asked me if I would join him as he said I should like for us to be companions together in heaven, I wish to spend eternity with you. On my promising I would endeavour he asked to repeat my promise, he also said Eliza will you wear my hair always. So you see dearest child that your poor father's love was strong for me even in death. I feel wholly unworthy of his love, and am greatly distressed, that I was not more alive to his feelings, and to his sensitive disposition, but he is taken away, and I am left to mourn.

I am at present at Norwood, Lizzie is at Ramsgate. It was your dear father's wish that we should carry on the business that we might pay something, particularly the borrowed money, but circumstance did not press upon his mind at all during his illness, which was a most merciful dispensation of providence, as I believe they would have overwhelmed him.

You asked me to tell you of our affairs past and present. I think we can date all of our misfortunes to the erection of the new Bath House. It was already unfit for our business. There were only seven bath rooms and two shower baths. We ought to have had twenty or thirty baths so that we might have accommodated the class of people that of late years have come to Ramsgate, and also that we might have lowered our prices to have prevented others taking their stand in the Summer. Perhaps I had better go back a little in order to explain how so great a blunder was committed with regard to the premises.

When your Grandpa left England he was insolvent and placed all his affairs in the hands of Mr Houlihan, his attorney, who was also appointed trustee in concert with your father and Uncle Roger, but Houlihan was the managing trustee. He received all monies, paid all business bills, your father's and Aunt Fanny's salaries for conducting the business and when the Ground was offered to the Trustees which the front part of the house stood upon, he had the disposal of it, and superintended the erection of the new building. The consequence was he built a large high handsome looking house having an eye rather to the letting than to the business. After a little while when it was completed, he advised to make an offer of the premises to the Trustees of the Harbour who purchased at the sum of four thousand pounds which imposed a rent on us of £300 per annum, fancy this with only seven baths the letting being only a secondary affair. Houlihan was a large speculator in houses, he had purchased or partly purchased a great number in different places and sometimes wanted a little ready money.

Your father used to put his hand to accommodation bills for him, and he had two on hand about this time; one for 500£ the other for 200£. Houlihan brought in his bill soon after the Trustees purchased the property and pocketed one thousand. Soon after that he failed and went to Paris and left poor us to do as we could. Your father settled one bill by paying part ready cash the other by instalments. Now it was wrong of Houlihan to estimate the property at 4000£ (of course he wanted to pay himself). Afterwards we were obliged to petition the Trustees to lessen our rent and were obliged to acknowledge that the estate was not worth the sum of 4000 which got us into bad repute with the board. They took off £80 to enable us to support your Grandpa who had come back from the Cape.

The whole affair was carried on in much anxiety, we were continually to make up the deficiencies by borrowing from the bank and from some friends whom your father had then, but many of them died a long time ago. The money you sent and the little I had from Uncle White was of course quickly swallowed up. At last all resources failed. I had forgotten we were obliged to pay our rent by selling our furniture to the Trustees which was done at the time your aunt was here, when the property passed out of the hands of the Trustees into that of the Board of Trade.

We could not raise money to pay up our arrears of rent otherwise we should have had it covered, but nobody would do it, and we have had an uncertain time for years. We were in arrears to the Board for rent £150 when your poor father died, and as it was his wish we should carry on the business for a time the family and friends advised me to petition the Board to accept me as their tenant which they did after finding 2 Bondmen for the quarterly payments of rent and also for the repurchasing (*of*) the furniture in October next which has been valued at £250.

Uncle Charles and Tom have become bondsmen for both rent and furniture. I am now the legal tenant. Aunt Fanny conducts the business. Lizzie is at the house superintending in my absence. She may attend to the accounts. Uncle Charles advises in matters of business and at the end of the season we shall be able to see what remains to be done. I should have thrown it up, because I do not see a chance of making a living as things stand, not unless we could have cheap bathing and that would make an outlay of at least 5 or 6 hundred pounds. We should want some copper, cisterns, pipes, pumps, and a small steam engine. No doubt if all this were done and the ground at the back laid out in baths we should probably have the greater share of the bathing.

I told you that the boys and the girls are living together at Norwood, a gentleman lent £150 to furnish a house for a school with the verbal promise he would not call it home while the interest was paid, before a twelvemonth has expired, he has called it as his home and the three boys have been obliged to insure their lives in order to earn the money but I believe Fred will write on this matter.

I told you I had become tenant to the Board of Trade but I anticipate no good results from having done so. 'Tis true all your poor father's debts were paid with his life but there is nothing on hand for my and the family's mourning. We were obliged to put on black. The business now is carried on with an increased expense as we are now obliged to have an attendant and the price of a bath is only one shilling and sixpence. There are constantly fresh expenses going on. The boys join their hand to a bill for £70 so a banker at Sandwich which poor Pa was very much grieved to be obliged to do. He insured his life for five hundred

pounds but was obliged to give up the policies as security for money he wanted. I hoped there was something to be had from that to pay for our black but they say there is nothing. The boys will find it a difficult matter to pay their premiums, the rent of their house and living for themselves and the sisters. As for myself and Aunt Fanny we must remain by the business I suppose till we are stopped if we can't pay the way. But I have written an unhappy letter. I do not want you to be unhappy. Accept dearest Isaac the ever fond love of your truly affectionate mother.

1869

1869 October 26

Bath House from Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I received your very nice letter and papers, many thanks for them, and also for the (*P.o.o = Post Office Order?*) for myself and Fanny. It is a great help to us both. She has left that family and is seeking another engagement. Your letter came safely to her after a little delay. She is gone to see the family at Norwood and will most likely write to you by this mail. I wrote to Julia to say I had had a letter from you, perhaps she will write also. I am very sorry I omitted to write acknowledging the receipt of your former of last summer but you have kindly ascribed it to the right cause. I was at that time in great affliction, I used to be afraid I should lose my reason. I felt so restless, night and day the strange feeling never left me. I was getting better when my mother was called away. It returned upon me, but not with that violence. Fancy the nerves of the stomach were affected as I couldn't rest whatever I did, but the good hand of God has brought me through, and I do desire to devote my whole soul to him and do earnestly pray that my dear children may serve the Lord in their day and generation.

You mention about Julia's having written to you respecting the school. The Principal Miss Smith had some thought of getting married, and if it had taken place, she would have most likely have parted with her school. She altered her mind and has taken Julia into partnership. No doubt it would have given Julia more weight, if she could have thrown a sum of money into the scale, but it is all settled now.

Katherine is at the school, and has her English education and board free, but all the other expenses have to be paid for. Miss Smith has a nephew and niece on the same terms. Their Father pays liberally for their education and Julia as a partner (*is*) expected to share the benefit but Miss Smith asked Julia to let her have the profits on these children and in return allowed Julia to have Katherine there on the terms I have mentioned. Julia is well suited to Miss Smith, her abilities are superior to Miss Smith's and her education a little in advance of hers. She is thought much of and treated very kindly by Miss Smith's relatives. Of course you are aware, dear Isaac, that our family are not thoroughly educated. They are not ignorant of their shortcomings and it was with many doubts and fears they took up the profession of Governesses and every fresh situation they have is entered with much anxiety and many misgivings. It is to prevent all this in Katherine that Julia has taken her to Cannock that she may have the benefit of the several Masters there and I am glad to say K(atherine) is alive to the advantages afforded her. Miss Smith's brother is coming from Australia in the Spring to see his children. He went abroad some years ago and was unsuccessful for some time, he also had a dangerous illness. When circumstances were at the lowest ebb with him, a gentleman engaged him as a traveller for his firm and furnished him with horses for his use. He had a large brewery at Adelaide I believe. Soon after the Head of the firm died and his widow offered Smith a partnership. He is now realising £10,000 a year so Julia writes. He lost his wife about two years ago, he is a very good man.

I am sorry to hear that the climate has tired you so much, you had a strong, well-built frame as a boy and unless you have been starving yourself you ought to look robust and well. I have observed those who come from Australia about your age have looked exceedingly well. However my brother from America didn't look as well as his contemporaries in England, all are not able to bear the extremes of heat and cold alike.

(Written sideways)

I have heard this morning from Norwood that Fanny didn't like the situation she went after and is gone back again to Mr Pilbrow's who are very glad to have her.

Please give my kind love to my brother. Mr Davis went by way of Adelaide. I am so glad you keep up your voice, make Uncle Fred do the same. I hope to see you both some day. Don't be anxious, we can't all be rich in this world's goods, but we can all have the same riches. The money you sent her came at a time she most needed it, do not call it a small sum, it is not so to us. Good bye dear son, may your heavenly Father

take care of you and my dear brother Frederic. I do not wish you to be inconvenienced. Don't suffer any privations for us, otherwise it will make me very unhappy.

The season is over now, the herring fishing is begun, they have been 40 a shilling. We have had some very cold weather, I hope we shall not have a severe winter. The Goodwin Sands has begun its work, a large barque went to pieces, 8 of the crew were lost, 8 or 9 were brought in here by the lifeboat. It is expected that the harbour will shortly become the property of the Town. Our house along with others on the quay are a part of the harbour property. It is the intention of the committee to raise all the rents. We are therefore advised to apply for a lease from the Board of Trade, and also to petition that the piece of land at the back of our home be included in the rent. The ground was bought by the Trustees, our former landlords, on purpose for your Father at his request in order that he might erect a number of cheap baths, and also to build a large swimming bath which would have prevented the baths being made on the cliff, but for want of means, he poor man could not carry out his desired project. However, the trustees and after the Board of Trade have allowed us the use of it for drying towels, shaking carpets etc...

The boys will write to the Board for me. We have enemies among the committee, one has built the other baths, and he has been heard to say he would shut us up. This speech was levelled at your poor father, but he is beyond their reach now. We have had a very short season and a rather trying one owing in a great measure to the servants employed in the house and in the business. The pumper left us just as the business was at its height. We had the greatest difficulty to get a man to take his place though we offered higher wages. One would stay an hour or two, another a day and so on. What a deal of money was spent in brandy and wages during the hot weather to prevent them from giving over. It requires a man that is used to the work. We have one now, which we think will do and as he has the winter before him, he will get used to the work by degrees.

We have paid our accommodation bill £20 and have lessened some of the others. This £20 your father had nothing to do with. We have also paid £20 I borrowed from Uncle Charles in the Spring to make up the quarter rent. I paid the Summer quarter rent and am ready with the means for the present quarter's rent due the 1<sup>st</sup> November. The winter quarter I must be indebted to Uncle Charles for otherwise I should have to leave. I have £50 and interest in hand for Mr Benson who lent me £150 to purchase the furniture with. I promised £100 but I couldn't raise more than £50. I reckon I owe for accommodation

Bills	£160
Residue of loan on furniture	£100
Taxes, Rates, current expenses	36

We keep an account of every bath and also of what the letting the rooms brings in and also an exact account of all expenses.

I don't know what the letting and the business has produced till Fred who is coming down, has examined the books. I know what the remainder is at the present time £94 from which Benson, and the rent are to be paid.

Aunt Fanny is the managing party, she understands the working of the whole machinery and will give place to none. She was brought with the business when young, and has had the management of household matters from very early days. She is fond of rule, and grows stronger from opposition, salesmen and maids. She is just fitted for this place.

I think it would be rather unwise to give up this place. It will take some time to clear ourselves from debt, but afterwards the business would maintain itself and provide for two or three persons. Aunt Fanny and myself must live, and there will be always one or more of the family who will want a rest here. As Uncle Tom and Charles are responsible for the loan on furniture the whole of it is made over to them till I am clear of debt. I don't expect to do otherwise. Once more thanking you for the help you have afforded us, believe me with much love your ever affectionate Mother EI Dyason

1870

1870 May 11

Belgrave House Cannock from sister Julia Dyason (*aged 29*)

My dear brother,

I am much obliged for your last contribution in the shape of an epistle and also for its length. I see you wrote on my birthday (26<sup>th</sup> Feb) I was thinking of you so much on that day and wishing I was with you. I almost felt tempted to take the voyage if only to see what sort of animal you are. From your description of yourself I should think not the most tractable. In the part of your letter you say it ought to be a comfort for me to tell my cares and anxieties to you, in another part you would make me believe you had not one lovable quality, you talk about "my believing in you" as if you were some monster for whom I entertained a blind love. Please don't say such things again because I don't believe them. Neither do I wish to do so. Neither Fanny nor Liz ever said you used to tease them, but I have heard dear Mama say "you were very truthful and noble" as a child and if you say such things of yourself I shan't know how to reconcile the two statements. I have only one more thing to say and that is Do you when you speak of my "affectionate letter" to speak as critically because if you don't "believe" in any love for you, say so, and I won't trouble you with any of it. I have love to spare.

I was very glad indeed to hear you were quite well. I think dear Mama made me more anxious by saying she thought by the tone of your letter, you were ill. Thanks for the papers. I think I have said before I liked them much though not so much as a letter. I noticed the coloured picture and read its history, I don't think it needed explanation it was what I call a speaking picture. Now I will answer one or two questions you want answered. With respect to the school, first in a pecuniary sense I am benefitted by being a partner. 2<sup>nd</sup> Miss Smith intends to remain a miss, would not be bought out. 3<sup>rd</sup> I do not think it would be a house for Mama as Miss S having been mistress so long would not like to be second. I have gained £60 this year, you will think that is not much but the rent of my share £40 and the interest of the furniture (with some new land lately added as a croquet ground) £20 per annum all takes a great deal that would be profit away. Then I work very hard so that I scarcely think with anxiety. I am paid, though for the want of something better I still keep on. I am enabled to give Kate\* a good education and clothe her and myself and send a little towards the general fund. She is learning French, German, singing, music, drawing and dancing. Of course I have to pay for these.

My new notion is to try to get a small house for Fran and Mamma to begin a small school. I think with care I could manage a little for them to start with and as the house at Ramsgate must be given up owing to a person opening a large bathing establishment and lowering the price of baths so as to close all other houses of that description something must be done. There are Mamma and Aunt Fanny beside Katherine and I am so anxious Fanny should get something permanent while she has energies to work at it. I am 27 years old this last February. So it behoves us to look around. Still with all these troubles and difficulties in the way I shall trust One who can smooth the most rugged path and who has said "I will be thy exceeding strength".

I am afraid I have given you but a confused notion of my affairs but Miss Smith has been very ill and the duties of nurse have been added to my others. We were successful in passing two girls at the last Cambridge Examination. I am sure you will be pleased to hear it. I cannot help believing in you. You see I was vexed about that expression and should not have spoken as I have on the first part of my letter. If it bites you forgive me dear, I have not time to write another letter or it should not go.

I must finish so accept my dearest love and ever think me your truly affectionate sister Julia.

I shan't send you any kisses this time.

*\*Sister Catherine Dyason*

1870 September 30<sup>th</sup>

Castle Street Carisbrook

Isle of Wight from (unidentified friend back from the Diggings – G Baker?)

Dear Dyason,

I received your nice long letter of March 25<sup>th</sup> with the account of all the folks and change that has taken place on the Hills. The place must be very different from what it was in the time of your humble servant, this is a world of change, and we are having it in Europe on a larger scale, and no one knows when the change will be completed. I refer to the war between France and Germany. It's the most (and I might say), the only absorbing topic of the day. Only ten week's since France was considered to be the chief ruling power in Europe. The word of the Emperor might have stood against the world, but what a wonderful change has come upon the Grand Estate in so short a time, her Army, the Invincibles has been almost annihilated, the Emperor a prisoner, the Empress and Prince refugees in England. A third of France occupied by Germans. Paris closed in Strasburg capitulated yesterday a Republic proclaimed. The seat of Government changed to Tours and likely to be obliged to leave that place in a day or two. In fact they are in a most pitiable condition. I am sorry for them, but it serves them right, they had not the slightest occasion for going to war, and that's why the English nation can't sympathise with them; although they dread the consequence of a bombardment of Paris, it will be something hitherto unknown, for a population of at least two million, to be shut up in one town. It's dreadful to think about and yet they won't come to terms with the Germans, the end seems to be far off. If the war continues the Germans will over run nearly all the whole of France and what can a crushed nation do against such an army of victorious soldiers. There is an old saying in the Drapery line that the first loss is best on a piece of unsaleable goods, so I think it would have been best for France to have come to terms with a first loss, she would have done better but now if she continues the struggle, she might have harsher terms imposed.

I think I shall take your advice about the price of land next Fizell's and let remain a bit. I never thought it could have drop so low. I believe that fencing costs one something like £10.00. I think it could be let for mining, I know there's gold in it, but I would rather be rid of it at anything like a reasonable price, but not at Fizell's munificent offer of £5.00, he must advance another £5 before he gets it. I should have no objection to allow 20 shillings for back rates. My friend Mr Rayson of Emerald Hill who has the deeds of it left here July so I suppose by this must be very near Australia.. If you should hear of a customer for the land won't you be kind enough to drop him a line or if not if you should take a trip to Melbourne. I should like you to call and see him. He is a very nice fellow, and would be pleased to give you all particulars about our family and his trip etc... His address is Clarendon Street Emerald Hill.

The war has been a means of cramming this island with visitors, it's never been so full. A great number of French. The Empress landed here when she made her escape from France. The foundering of the turret iron clad "Captain" caused a melancholy feeling throughout England, it quite put the war in the shade. (\*see below)

I generally (if I don't forget) send you two papers and Mr Webb two and I always send four successive days so that you might be able to borrow from each other. My wife joins in kind regards to yourself and other friends nearby you. I must now give you a little of Home affairs, our family I am happy to say (has not increased) are all well, they are good specimens of humanity. I'll back any of my Boys against any other four in the Kingdom for idleness and mischief.

Harry has had an increase in his family that makes four, and Ned Amato an increase in his, that makes thrice in about 3 ½ years. His wife is likely to have a dozen more, she is only about 22 years. I don't know whether I told you of Rayment having gone into business in Hull as a ship chandler. I believe he is doing pretty well.

We have had a long dry summer such a season has never been known. We have only had about three days rain since February and to morrow will be October. I have had two crops of potatoes, have sent you a few more seeds. How did the others turn out? If you should fall across at any time one or two of Sturts pee of

the desert I should like to try them. Rayment gave me some but they never came up. I got the photo of your church, am much obliged, we think it a very neat little affair. I should like to see it and hear the choir and the new organist. I can do better on the harmonium although I'm not so much advanced as I might like.

*(written sideways on sheet – perhaps a page is missing?)* ...are well and that we may yet have the pleasure of seeing you in the old country.

I remain yours truly  
G Baker *(best guess)*

*\*The foundering of the 'Captain'*

*6 September 1870 Captain was cruising with the Channel Squadron of 11 ships off Cape Finisterre. The ship made 9.5 knots under sail in a force six wind, which was increasing through the day. The commander in chief was on board to see her performance, and speed had risen to 11-13 knots before he departed. Not being accustomed to ships with such low freeboard, he was disturbed to note that at this speed with the strengthening sea, waves washed over the weather deck. The weather worsened with rain as the night progressed, and the number of sails was reduced. The wind was blowing from the port bow so that sails had to be angled to the wind, speed was much reduced, and there was considerable force pushing the ship sideways. As the wind rose to a gale, sail was reduced to only the fore staysail and fore and main topsails.[15]*

*Shortly after midnight when a new watch came on duty, the ship was heeling over eighteen degrees and was felt to lurch to starboard twice. Orders were given to drop the fore topsail and release ropes holding both topsails angled into the wind. Before the captain's order could be carried out, the roll increased, and she capsized and sank with the loss of around 480 lives, including Coles. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Hugh Childers, and Under-Secretary of State for War, Thomas Baring, both lost sons in the disaster. Only 18 of the crew survived by making it to a boat which had broken free*

Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS\\_Captain\\_\(1869\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Captain_(1869)) accessed March 2013

1872

1872 January 25

8 Belvedere Terrace

Tunbridge Wells

Kent From sister Frances Dyason (*aged 39, Isaac is 40*)

My dear Brother

We seem destined to experience nothing but trouble. I am truly grieved to be obliged to tell you such sad news, but Mamma has not time to write herself by this mail so has asked me to do so. Poor Lizzie has been seized with Paralysis. She has been ill since the first week in November. We thought at first it was rheumatism, but time passed and she got no better so we called in another doctor, who said she was seriously ill, but could give us no opinion until he had watched the case for a few days. He said there had never been a trace of rheumatism, but that it was paralysis. After a few days he gave Ma his opinion which is that there is no hope but that it must end in death. We cannot believe it, we had been looking forward to months of tedious illness, but never anticipated this result. He then advised us to call in a physician, which we did, but he cannot tell us anything more. They both say it is a most singular case, and they can see no cause for it.

She has suffered dreadfully and is like a shadow – her once round fat arms are like sticks – she has been in bed nearly three months. We cannot realize it at all she has always the strongest, and most healthy and a short time before it happened she said she felt as if she had not a bone in her body she was so well. I do not know how Ma will bear this further trial. I am afraid it will be too much for her. It is so dreadful to see her suffering so, and getting weaker and thinner. Mamma who has always been the consoler says while there is life there is hope, but I am very much afraid that the medical men are right. Julia has spent her five weeks' holiday in nursing her. I too have been, and now Augusta is over, but of course we cannot stay as we must remain in our places in order to get money.

I do not know what the boys will do in order to meet the expenses. The physician charged 5 guineas for coming only once, then there is nourishing food to be got, and Mama requires, and must have wine daily, of course the little school has been obliged to be given up and the boys have the sole expenses of everything. Poor boys, they are obliged to deny themselves all pleasures, and cannot even take a change. All last summer they never left London and when they have invitations they are obliged to refuse as they cannot afford to buy themselves clothes fit to go in. I am sorry for them, for it is so hard, all the young and best part of their lives should be so spent, all their spirits ground down. We help but it is of course little we can do. It is so expensive to live in England now. Rents, taxes, and provisions are so very high. The school in which Julia is seems to be declining. I do not know how it is, but nothing we have anything to do with seems to prosper; there appears to be a blight upon the family. We thought after the long years of poverty we had, and now have come from the misery of them but ourselves, we should have a little rest, but ever since our father's death we have had illness to contend with. Mamma has been dangerously ill twice, and now there is poor Lizzie.

I do not think dear Brother there will be many left when you come to England, and those that are will be worn out with trouble, but I must not weary you with such a miserable account. I daresay you will tell me never to write to you again. I have been waiting, hoping to be able to write a cheerful letter but this trouble seems more than we can bear. By the time you get this Lizzie will either be better, or she will be no longer with us.

With kindest love from all, and hoping you are well,

Believe me dear Brother

Your ever affectionate sister

F. Dyason

I would wish you a happy new year, but it seems that it cannot be one with our present prospects.

**(1872 estimate) March 19**

**8 Enmore Park**

**South Norwood**

**Surrey**

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

This letter will not reach you in time for your birthday, nevertheless we all wish you very many happy returns of it and hope the future will be brighter and more prosperous. I was sorry I have suffered so long a time to pass by in silence which I hope you will not attribute to forgetfulness of you as you know that cannot be, but it is partly owing to my time being more occupied than usual and partly to my being too late for the mail when I have intended to write. I must therefore hope you will excuse me.

I have to thank you my dear son for the regular supply of Australian news. The Xmas number was very interesting. I tried to read some of them to poor Lizzie who has been very seriously ill. I trust however as the Summer advances she will be well again. She is very much wasted in her limbs and body but her face fortunately does not look so badly. I can not tell you what her disease is nor can I tell you what has caused it, but we attribute it partly if not wholly to the strong tonics her first medical attendant gave her after an attack of Rheumatism, as he termed it and which has poisoned her blood. It is a sad thing for her, she was so healthy and strong. We have asked her present doctor repeatedly what it is owing to but he always evades the question which rather confirms us in the belief that she was wrongly treated at first. She had a Tonic for her hair which had been coming out very much, she being at the time in good health. It was a strychnine tonic she was soon after seized with most violent pains in her legs. She got the better of that but the pains returned with more force and seized the tendons, in a few weeks she lost her flesh, the muscles wasted away. The doctor tried to restore her by strong medicines and resting her with sleeping draughts but she got worse and we had another apothecary and a Doctor Willis from Guy's who altered the medicine and prescribed generally for her. They say she has passed the dangerous part of her illness and they think she will recover but it will be a lengthy affair. They were rather afraid of Paralysis but those symptoms have died off and I trust all danger of a lifelong illness has passed away....

The family are all pretty well. Catherine is with me, Fanny is at the old place, the Pilbrow's, Julia at Cannock, Augusta at Saltburn\*. The rest of the family live together. I hope you are well and that your prospects are a little better than they were. I am sorry you are so very unfortunate in your speculations. I hope that your health will not suffer in consequence. We must not feel that we are denied wealth. If we are in the possession of the necessaries and some of the comforts and conveniences of life we ought not to be complaining and dissatisfied.

Do you still officiate as Harmoniumist at your Church? Have you learned to play with more fingers than one yet? Do you still teach the Sunday School children? Have you lost your hair at all? You complained of your teeth, how are they now? I suppose my brother Fred is not more prosperous than he was, poor fellow, please give our kind love to him when you see him.

Dear son will you excuse more at present as I am afraid I shall be too late for the post. I will send a paper with this. They all send you much love. I remain dear son with kindest love your ever affectionate mother

EI Dyason

PS I received your letter of Sept 9<sup>th</sup>

I have sent the Graphic

Aunt Fanny is quite well and very comfortable

Uncle Tom is married at last and I believe is very well satisfied with his choice.

All the rest are well excepting poor Aunt Susan and Polly who I fear will never be well again.

*\*Saltburn-On-Sea*

1872 April 9

Bellevue

Tunbridge Wells from sister Frances Dyason

My dear Brother

(had I not received yours) I did not intend to allow this mail to depart without carrying a letter from me because I feel sure you are anxious to hear news of poor Lizzie. I should have written before but Julia I believe wrote in February and Mama told me she was writing a long letter to you by the March mail. I am thankful to be able to tell you our worst fears are not realized, but the improvement is very slight indeed. Is it not a strange thing – they can only account for it by supposing the tonics the medical man gave her poisoned her. He actually gave her arsenic and strychnine and she had been, up to the time of taking his medicine in perfect health. Her hair was falling off and she thought a tonic might cause it to cease. She has always been so strong and well. Mama hopes in time she may recover, but I have serious doubts of her ever being quite well again. Her medical man who is now attending her says we shall see an improvement after she has been galvanized, but at present she is too weak. She bears it very patiently, and it is a great trial. She has now been ill 6 months. You can imagine what a trial that must be to one who has always been so full of health, and spirits, but we must hope for the best and trust that she may yet be spared to us.

I was very much pleased, dear brother, with your nice long letter, which I received this morning. I began to think you never intended to write to me again. I have not had a letter from you since 69 and I have written several. I am afraid some of them have been very miserable ones. I know I ought not to send you such miserable accounts and I always reproach myself after the letters are gone. The last one especially as I had just returned from Norwood, and poor Lizzie, for whom we were then told has no hope. I am very sorry that you have again met with a disappointment. I regret it so much because it prevents you from coming to see us. If you had only realized what you mention, you might have afforded to pay us one of those visits. I can't imagine what Mama's delight would be at the prospect of seeing you. Believe me you are not forgotten by any of us. Indeed a few years ago we used to feel quite jealous because Aunt Polly and Mama used to say "The others are very well, but there will never be one like Isaac" then they would go on praising you telling us little anecdotes about you. I am quite sure "the boys", as we still call them, do not regard you in the light you fancy – they always speak of you as one of us, and think you have done all in your power for us they have some little excuse for not writing, tho, as you say, they might do so some times, but their days are passed in a London office, where they are writing or calculating as hard as they can all day, and when they return, which sometimes they do not do till quite late, they seem to require a rest from pens and ink. I scarcely ever have a letter from them, but they really are and have always been very good. They bear the expenses of this illness, without a murmur, tho' they have to deny themselves many things, Fred being the eldest at home, has had an immense amount of worry and anxiety. He had to see all the creditors, after our father's death, which you can imagine has not been pleasant, as there was absolutely nothing for them. At the time of his death he had not as much as a £ in the house, then during the time the business was continued he was obliged to come down constantly whenever anything went wrong – which it frequently did as there was no master on the shore. I am sure if you knew all they have been, and are to us, you would forgive their not writing. I believe they also fancy that the accounts from home also make you miserable. Julia is still at Cannock, she is a most estimable daughter and sister. She has been out in the world teaching since the age of fourteen, and has saved nothing for herself after all those years of toil.

She has kept, and educated Cassie ever since our Father's death, nearly four years and I believe it was greatly owing to her coming up to nurse Mamma (which she did, giving up her period of rest during the holidays, that saved her life). Augusta, one of the youngest, is still at Saltburn-By-Sea where she has been nearly three years. She is very comfortable. Mr Hamilton is a very kind, upright man, no doubt you thought it was very strange we should allow so young a girl to go into a widower's family. We did not intend her to go, but it happened in this manner. I intended to take the engagement, but could not do so for some weeks, so Augusta went till I could come – there was then a lady in the house, who remained a long time. As soon as I was able I went, but found her so thoroughly comfortable that I decided to give it up to her, and there she is likely to remain as she will never be so comfortable anywhere else. She is quite safe there, and Mr Hamilton takes as much care of her as if she were his daughter.

Cassie, the baby, is now at home. She left Cannock last Christmas and went to see Augusta with whom she stayed till within the last few weeks. As Lizzie is ill there must be some one at home, and Cassie is not fit to be among strangers – she would never bear the hardships and trials that are met with, so she has two little pupils who come to the house. I am sure she would be your pet. Edward quite spoils her, and she is so fond of him. She plays the accompaniments to his songs, he says no one can do it so well. She is a pretty girl, and so childlike that we cannot bear to send her out into the world alone.

I am still in the same family with whom I have been for 9 years. I have often thought of leaving but have not yet, the name is the same, Pilbrow, tho the residence has often been changed, we have lived in 6 different places, during the last 9 years. We have just removed but in the same place. My address will be Bellevue Clarimont Road Tunbridge Wells, instead of Belvedere. I have so much to do that I really have not time to write. I am obliged to scribble away as fast as my pen will go, so you must please excuse all mistakes. I have not even time to read it before I send it, much less to consider, but I could not let this month pass without writing. I enclose my photo, which I have had taken expressly to send to you. I hope you will have one taken, the same size as mine, and send by the next mail after you receive this. I have no likeness of you. I shall be greatly disappointed if I do not receive it before this year is gone. Please have it done.

I must now say good bye – most heartily for your own sake do I wish you success for your own sake, and thank you for your kind letter, it has cheered me up. It is so pleasant to know one is cared for, especially when one's life is passed among strangers.

With kindest love and best wishes, believe me  
Dear brother  
Your ever affectionate  
Sister F Dyason

I will write by next mail when I hope to have more time.

**(1872) May 16**  
**Bellevue Claremont Road**  
**Tunbridge Wells from sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Brother

I am according to promise sending you a letter by this mail as I am sure you will be anxious to hear news of Lizzie. I am very sorry to have no better tidings. She is no better than when I last wrote. I have not seen her since but I hear from Mamma. She has, last week, had another return of the severe pain in her limbs. It is so dreadful that she has not rest. She has been ill since November and is still unable to move. She has been galvanised but it does not seem to have done any good. Her doctor said she should be able to walk about the house at the end of the treatment but now he says it will be Christmas. I am very much afraid he thinks she never will but does not like to tell us and so he alters the date as on date draws near. I fear the attacks of pain will quite exhaust her strength. Is it not a strange thing, she was in perfect health, or appeared to be, and none of the doctors she has had can say what is the matter with her. It is a sad trial and so unexpected for we always considered her the strongest of the family.

Poor Mamma really has had, one feels tempted to say, more than her share of trouble. I hope her own health will not give way. We nearly lost her in the illness Julia told you of. She fell and injured her leg which caused it to be very bad. The doctor feared he should not save her, he said she had to be kept from all worry and not to do anything, that if it broke out again – I mean the wound on her leg – we should lose her. I wish Julia or myself could be with her but that is not possible as we are obliged to be out in order to help as much as we can. Katherine, or Cassie as we call her, is with her but she is so child-like though of course she does all she can to take care of her.

Aunt Susan, you do not remember her at all I suppose, is, I am sorry to say, very ill. I do not expect she will be still living when I next write to you. She has been confined to one room, unable to walk, for more than 10 years with a bad leg which has been gradually getting worse. She has lately been unable to leave her bed and Aunt Fanny who also sees Uncle Tom sometimes says they do not expect she will last long. We have not yet told Mamma as Fred is so much afraid of the effect it would have upon her but I suppose we must.

Uncle Fred will be grieved as he was very fond of her – I am glad to hear he is well. He has been away twenty years now has he not. You ask me how old he is, I do not know exactly as that is a great peculiarity in that family, they will never tell their ages, but I believe he is about 57. He is 4 years older than Uncle Charles who was born in 1819. It is very strange but they cannot bear people to know how old they are. Does he look as old, they are a very young looking family. Mama sometimes by gaslight does not look much more than 45. She has been very pretty and so has Aunt Polly.

Uncle Tom is really married at last. The girl of 17 would not have him but he has since found someone much younger than himself, Uncle Fred will remember her. Her name was Baldock, she was the National School mistress at St Peters when he went away. Uncle Charles has been married four years tho' he did not acknowledge that he was till after Grandma's death. He has no children. Why Uncle Fred should not wish it mentioned I cannot imagine. Of course we know he is married and has a family and if his wife is not very grand she cannot be far inferior to his brothers'.

I do not think it is at all likely that Uncle Charlie will send any more money to Uncle Fred: indeed I am sure that he will not so he need not try to cheer himself with that hope and I am equally sure he will not lend you any. He might have answered your last letter and ought to have done so but you would not expect it if you knew him since his marriage. Aunt Fanny thinks it very unkind in Uncle John not to write to her, she has as you say found a home in Minster. I do not know how he could possibly have kept her, added to the expense of Lizzie's illness we are very thankful. We were afraid at first that she would not accept it, she is housekeeper to the father of the people with whom her sister used to lodge, at a salary of £10 a year. Of course it is not what we should like but we cannot help it and I am very glad to say she is comfortable. She is a woman of wonderful spirit and industry, always cheerful and never like many people at her age would have considered themselves long past work. She rises every morning at six and as they have no servant you

may imagine there is something to be done. Do you at all remember her, she is the last of the Dyasons in England. If none of the boys, as we still call them, of this family get married the race in England will die out and I do not think it would be a cause of regret because I do not think they are energetic or persevering enough to be very successful. I am not including you as I do not know what you are but Aunt Fanny is the only energetic Dyason. I know Uncle Roger had one son who is still living but is in an asylum where he will remain for life as he is not fit to be at large. Some people seem able to make a way and name for themselves. The gentleman with whom I am residing says that when he was 35 he had not done anything. He made all his business a pretty considerable fortune as he can pay £1210 for the rent of his house in such a place as this and his farm after that age and retired from business before he was 50. He was a Civil Engineer.

I often wish we had one relation who was in good circumstances. I mean an Aunt or Uncle, but wishing is no use. I hope you will have a more successful year and that some day not very far distant you may be enabled to pay us a visit. You must please excuse all faults of style, writing as I have not time. I have written part of this before breakfast, part at night, so you must not criticise. I intended to write in March, but must now wish you very merry happy returns of the day. We do not forget your birthday. I hope to hear from you soon, and please let me have your photograph. I thank you sincerely for promising to help when you can. If your uncle lent me a little to buy a winter dress for Mama it would be a great assistance. Perhaps this may be a lucky year – who can tell.

With kind regards and best wishes  
Believe me dear brother  
Your ever affectionate  
FD

1873

1873 February 26

4 St Pauls Place

St Leonard-On-Sea from sister Frances Dyason

My dear Brother,

I have been looking again for the photograph. I feel very much inclined to scold you but am afraid you are offended with one of our letters so must apologise. At the time I wrote that particular letter I had been very much worried and it seemed to me the only thing worth doing was to take care of oneself. Hence my advice to you. Oh dear brother please forgive me as I would not willingly say anything to vex you for anything that could be offered me. You have assisted me several times and believe me I feel truly grateful to you and never shall cease to remember your kindness. I wish it were now in my power to show you I appreciate it. I delivered the letter you enclosed into Uncle Tom's hands myself so am quite sure he had it. Uncle Fred is not at all cured in supposing there is a plot to prevent his letters being received. It is quite a mistake. I believe that every one that he has sent has reached its destination. They never think of answering a letter when they receive one. I think Uncle Fred forgets that peculiarity. Please do not tell him what I say but they always were and still unlike anyone else.

I do not for one moment think that Uncle Charles' wife is trying to get his money away from the family. Of course as his wife she would have a right to it. He is perfectly well, Aunt Fanny saw him not long ago and he was as well as usual. He has not been ill. I have never seen his wife. She was not introduced to the family. I daresay Uncle Fred will remember her. The name was White, the father keeps a small beer shop in the High Street at Ramsgate and she used to carry out the beer. Uncle Tom has married a National School Mistress. The young girl would not have him.

With regard to yourself I do not consider you an old man nor would anyone in England do so. We consider a man of 45 in the prime of life. The aristocracy of England scarcely ever marry young. I mean the male part and there would be no difficulty in finding you a lady of any age you liked, a person 19 to 90. I wish you would make haste and come and see. I have two now on my list, both pupils of mine, so they must be good. I sent you a photo of one. Would you like the other? The one I sent you would be the best – worth having. She is a very nice girl, has every quality desirable in a wife and last not least has plenty of money. I have told her she must wait for you. She says she does not believe you will ever come home. Can't you arrange to come. I really believe she would marry you. She is very fond of me and likes dark men. She is tall 5ft 8, fair with beautiful golden hair and will have about £1500 a year. It seems such a pity to let her go out of the family. She is 25 in May, just about the right age for you. The other is a nice girl but not equal to this. Now you can't say "Sisterly Jealousy" appears. If you will send me a photo I will do everything in my power to forward the matter and I am sure you could not have a better wife. Could not Uncle Fred take care of your business while you come to see us.

John (*\*cousin*) and his mother came over, and Mr Smith, the brother of the lady with whom Julia is, came over for several months. I wish you would come before we all get too old to see each other. I have just told Miss Pilbrow I am telling you about her and she says she is sure you she would like you. I believe she should marry you, and you cannot have a better chance. I leave it to your consideration but shall expect a photo by return taken in the very best style.

I am sorry to say Lizzie is very little better than when I last wrote. We all fear she will never be well again but will always remain an invalid. It is a terrible thing for her and of course a great tax on the boys, as we call them, for continued illness is very expensive.

I fancy, you have not the slightest idea of what an expense feminines are. You have never had any experience of them and I dare say would be quite astonished. All your troubles or pleasures in that line are to come.

I saw Aunt Fanny at Christmas. She certainly is a brave woman and sets us an example worth copying. Fancy, she has to get up and have breakfast ready by 7 O'Clock all through the dark cold mornings of Winter. She has no servant and even has to clean the boots of the individual with whom she lives. I wish we could manage matters differently, but it is impossible, and as are all with her, only too thankful that she has found a home, for we could not, with this illness, possibly have supported her. I think Uncle John might send her a little trifle just to show he had not forgotten her. I am certain if the circumstances were reversed and he was in her place that she would have contrived by some means to send him some. She feels it very much as she does not believe that he can be so badly off that he has not even £2 to send his only sister. The accounts we, from time to time, have heard from people who have been to his house are so different. She was 67 last month. I do not think she will live many years longer, her breath is so very short and she is getting stout. Ma, I am happy to say, is pretty well though she has much more worry and very much more than she ought to have to do at her age. It seems very strange that just as we began, or thought we were beginning, to escape from the dreadful clouds of misery we had been under so many years we should have illness in one of its worst forms attack us, but it is no use to fret!

I have a great deal more to say but have not time now. I wish you dear Brother many happy returns for you birthday tho' it will be past when you receive this. I shall expect the photo and with kindest love believe me dear brother your truly affectionate sister

F Dyason

**1873 May 6**

**From sister Frances Dyason**

My dear brother

I cannot tell you how much I thank you for your kindness nor can I in a letter make you feel how truly grateful I am. I wish I could do something for you in return, but at present am powerless, and can only send you my most sincere and heartfelt thanks. I feel very obliged in taking what you earn so hardly, but dear brother if I can never do anything to repay you; you may be sure you will not be altogether unrewarded for your kindness. I am so glad you had a gleam of better fortune when you wrote, though most likely it was only transitory. I wish most heartily for your own sake you could be successful and also because if you were we might hope to see you. I am very much afraid that all the disappointment would be on your side at our meeting, notwithstanding your pretty speech which I interpret ironically. I have no doubt but that we are exactly the reverse of what you imagine us to be, and should sadly dispel your dreams.

I think during the homeward journey you had better employ yourself in conjuring up all the most disagreeable qualities you possibly can so that you may be prepared to meet the shock. I wonder which you would bear best, meeting us all at once, or being cautiously prepared by a stranger and then having us presented one at a time with an interval between to allow you to recover. Do you remember "Gulliver's Return" I think mama is the only one who would not disappoint you. I have sent your message to her. I should be so grieved if you did not come in time to see her. I hope and trust she may be spared to us for many years yet, but when one has reached her age life is more uncertain. How I should like you to see Aunt Polly as we have always called her. She is the only one left now. I expect she would want to pet you like a child. She has all your letters still, and the rich pictures you used to paint. Do you remember them? She has always said we were all very well, but not compared with you who were the flower of the family. I used to feel very jealous when I was a child I remember.

I thank you very much, dear brother, for your kind and affectionate wishes and also for the promise of a photo which I shall look for eagerly at the promised time. I do not understand why you should have to sit so long, your skies are much clearer than ours therefore a photo ought to be taken more quickly. I only want a plain one, I mean one like that I sent you of myself. Those are called vignettes here, I don't like the painted ones or those elaborately touched up ones on ivory. I did not mean you were to spend £6,000 on buying a cottage. You could get a palace or a church for that. I meant that would be sufficient to live upon, or rather the interest it would bring in but I see you have such quaint ideas, "20 acres of land"!!!!!! I am very glad Uncle Fred is well. Please give my love to him when you see him. I certainly should not advise him to come home. I am quite sure he would not bear being in a shop again, and there really is no necessity. Why does he not write to Uncle Charles to ask him? It is nonsense to think the letters are not received. There is nothing, and no one to prevent their due arrival. Uncle Charles is quite well and able to manage his own business.

It is not that we should but be delighted to see Uncle Fred over here, we were very fond of him, but for his sake only unless he could return independent I should most strongly advise him not to come. His ideas, and Uncle's are widely different now I imagine

*(Next page? – or is one missing)*

I have no doubt that you have heard from Julia and she has explained her silence. I do not think she could be offended but she has not been well for a very long time and she is very much overworked. We have a long time tried to persuade her to leave, but she has been there now so long (11 years) that she does not like the idea of taking a fresh home among strangers when she might have to occupy a subordinate position, and so she continues year to year tho she is working (of course I mean at teaching) from 8 in the morning til 9 at night and often longer. She would not be so tasked in a family, but she does not to try.

Lizzie I am glad to say, is a little better. She can walk about the room a little I believe. Her visit to the North was a sad failure. No doubt it was too cold, and the journey too long. She says she thought she

should have died. She has not been out since. When the warm weather comes I hope she will be able to get a little fresh air and sunshine.

You ask me what the respective salaries are. I will endeavour to ascertain, if I see them before I write again, but at present I do not know. I believe they entered the service at £70 or 80 per annum which I think has been increased by £5, a yearly rise.

I had a letter from Charles a short time since, and he said it was a constant struggle to keep things together, and free from debt. The dreadful increase in the prices of all kinds of provisions, and in fact everything, is terribly felt by persons with fixed incomes, and yet Edward it is said, was never so healthy. When I was a child things were about half the price they are now. Beef is 1 shilling per pound, butter 1 and ninepence, but I daresay you see accounts from the "Mother Country" so will not repeat them. My salary is £25 which perhaps may seem a large sum, but in such positions people are expected to not look shabby, and one has no time to spend in making one's own clothes so that a few pounds even with the greatest care soon disappear.

I wonder if you have the idea that is so common among men that a woman can or ought to find £5 a year sufficient for dress, at the same time they are the first to object if she does not look as smart as any other woman who perhaps spends some hundreds yearly. I daresay you would be quite astonished at the requirements of a feminine. You did not say whether Miss Pilbrow would do for you, but I suppose not by your silence. She would be able to find her own dress and everything else but I must now try to get Miss (Jup.'s?) photo. They are both very nice girls. Miss P is the junior by two or three years. I am afraid you will think my letter very much like Mrs Nicholas Nickleby; which of Dicken's works do you like best?

But you must please excuse as I am obliged to scribble away as fast as I can. I am very much obliged for the paper. I saw among the list of passengers for London F H Pearce. I thought at first it was Uncle Fred. I have often meant to ask you why the paper is printed for England expressly. Miss Pilbrow says she believes it is got up on purpose to make us jealous, she does not believe it is at all like that really. I must say good bye now. I will endeavour to write by the next mail. I must begin earlier and then I shall not be so hurried.

With kindest love and very very many thanks for your kindness to me believe me dear brother,

Your ever truly affectionate

F Dyason

I hope you are well and that you are still successful.

1873 June 2

Isaac Edward Dyason is awarded the Champion Medal for the Bendigo Rifles



Terms and conditions of the award are described in the following newspaper article.

RIFLE MATCH.—Yesterday afternoon the rifle match, being one of a series, for the medal given by Captain Joseph and the championship of the Bendigo Rifles, took place at the Back Creek Butts. The terms of the matches were that the medal should become the absolute property of the member who won it three times, and the present match was the sixth of the series. Sixteen competitors were present, and the ranges fired at were, as in previous matches, 200, 500, and 600 yards, five rounds at each. During the progress of the match the light was rather dull, with a baffling wind blowing from the right rear. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, however, the shooting was very good, and again resulted in Corporal Dyason being declared the winner of the first prize, with a score of 43 points. This being the third occasion upon which Dyason has made the highest score, the medal becomes his property, and he takes the position of champion of the corps. Corporal Dyason is, comparatively speaking, a young "shot," but his steadiness and judgment, combined with unflagging practice, have raised him to the position of one of the best marksmen of "our own," and should act as an inducement to young members of the corps to practice the art of rifle-shooting. Private W. Field (band) took second prize, with 40 points, while the prize for "most bull's eyes" was tied for by Johnson, Mann, Hope, and Bennett, but was eventually won by Mann. Sergeant Field obtained the prize for "most centres," while that for "most hits" was taken by Private Davidson, who only scored one miss.



**1873 July 2**

**No Address (Hastings) from sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Brother

I rather expected to have a letter from you by last mail but I daresay I shall have one by the next. I wonder if time passes as quickly with you. It seems to be to fly but I suppose after twenty everyone feels the same. One would fancy as one gets older that time would drag heavily and the years seem like a lifetime but quite the reverse is the case. I do not remember whether I told you we had left Tunbridge Wells and had come to Hastings. We are now going back as Mr Pilbrow does not like the seaside as well as an inland place for a residence. I have been in the family for ten years this month. Is it not a long time? I suppose I shall have to make a change as soon as I am not establishing a home for myself and it seems so necessary as we get older. I mean the feminine portion of the family to have something permanent in view so that we may have the boys of the family unburdened. Mama wishes me to leave so do the others but I think I shall remain through this year. Of course I am quite at home here and it requires a good deal of courage on my part to go forth again among strangers. I always shrank from it. Lizzie on the contrary does not mind it. The family I am with do not at all wish me to leave them, they will scarcely spare me a for a week or two in the year. Mr P says I shall be very silly to leave them as his daughter will be very well off but so many things might occur – she may be married and then most likely thought an encumbrance. If they would promise that if I stayed they would provide for me I would not think of leaving but they do not say anything about that and Mama says it does not do to trust to uncertainties.

Augusta has been up from the North to see them, I have not seen her for 4 years. Julia is gone to Scotland with Miss Smith and the two children of her brother who is in Australia. I am very glad she has gone as it will be a great change. On her way back she will stay at Saltburn with Augusta a short time. Miss Smith's brother sent home £50 to pay their expenses and particularly wished Julia should be of the party. Was it not kind? Aunt Fanny is pretty well and is still at Minster. She is up in the morning at 4 O'Clock. Is it not wonderful? I wish she would have a servant to help her but the people she is with do not see the necessity.

When you see Uncle Fred perhaps he may like to hear that Uncle Charles has had a silver teapot given him, I believe it cost £3. It was given by the Vicar of St Peters whom Uncle Fred will remember, a Mr Alfred Whitehead, son of the old schoolmaster. Also some time since, he was presented with a ring because he played the Dead March in St Paul with so much taste at a funeral. I think Uncle Fred would not recognise the old church now, all the old people are gone. They have full choral services and everything is very elaborate. I believe Uncle Charlie is one of the best players in that part of Kent now. I have not heard him for more than ten years and have not seen him for nearly six. The Archbishop of Canterbury has taken a house at St Peters. He frequently goes there to get a little rest and very often goes to the church. The name of his house is 'Stone House'.

I do not know whether Uncle Fred is aware that he is a great uncle, which Miss Pilbrow says when she writes to tease her Papa is the same thing as being a Great Papa. Uncle Isaac's daughter has two children. I scarcely know her as I have been so much away, and a few years ago, so it seems to me she was never a child. Aunt Fanny went to Ramsgate a few days since, and saw them all. I believe she took tea with Uncle Tom and his wife. She also saw Aunt Polly and Uncle Charles who are well.

I am sure, dear brother, you will be pleased to know that part of your generous present to me has been appropriated to buying Mama a nice dress for the summer, and a bonnet. Lizzie says she looks so new in them. I have great pleasure in buying her nice things for she looks much better in them than any of her daughters. I believe she does not really look much older than I do. I am happy to say she continues well. They are in hopes that Lizzie will some day get over her sad illness, but at present she is still very poorly. There are times when she is a little better, and then she has a relapse.

I wonder how your affairs are getting on. How I hope they are prospering. How delighted I should be if I could have a letter saying you could at last afford to pay us a visit. Mama says you sing and play. What sort of voice is yours - bass, baritone, tenor or alto? What little voice I have is contralto, but it is not at all

strong. I sing duets with Miss Pilbrow, but do not often attempt solos. Does Uncle Fred sing now? He used to have such a musical rich voice.

I suppose you have seen in the English papers accounts of the "Tichborne Case". Does it excite interest in Australia? I have read through the case from the beginning aloud. Miss Pillow takes so much interest in it. What is your opinion? Is the claimant Sir Roger or not? I have always thought decidedly not. Is it not strange that there are still people who firmly believe in him?

I suppose you get all the new books without much delay from England. I have just found such a pretty song, it is not a new one. It is for a bass but anyone can sing it, even a lady. The title is 'Let us then cheerily wait for the Spring', the composer is 'Lindrighes'. You may some day happen to see it, if you do, get it at once. I am sure you cannot fail to like it. What are your favourite books? Have you read any of Dickens' writings, I hope you like him. Also Disraeli, Thackeray. When you write again tell me which you like.

I have just had a letter from Julia. She has arrived safely as far as Dunnoon. She says at present she has not seen anything in the Scottish scenery to rouse her enthusiasm but she has not yet seen the lovely parts. I think I must now bring this epistle to an end. I am afraid I shall not be able to write by the next mail as we shall be so busy moving, and a great deal of the business devolves upon me but I will write again as soon as I can. I expect soon to hear what you think of Aunt Fanny. I also am still expecting your photo. So do not think I shall forget it I do not want an expensive one, but one like that I sent you of myself.

With kindest love, and best wishes for your health, and happiness,

Believe me dear brother

Your truly affectionate  
Sister F Dyason

1874

(1874 January estimated)  
From Sister Frances Dyason

*End of a missing letter*

...are. England for the last three weeks has been in a very excited state. I am very glad the Conservatives are victorious. Gladstone resigned yesterday and Disraeli was sent for today. What are you? I am a rather liberal Conservative. We had not much excitement here, I bought some new colors and wore them. I was about the only one who did as everyone is so prim in Tunbridge Wells – I mean the ladies. My colors are mauve and purple. We got our candidate in and in the evening a band went round the town playing “see the conquering”.

I think your uniform must be very handsome. It looks so in the photograph. I am sure you cannot be so lazy as you give yourself credit for being, to walk so far in such weather and then to go through an inspection. I hope your concert went off well. The Messiah is very difficult but what a glorious thing it is. I think Handel’s music cannot be surpassed. I am sure your voice must be a great addition to the Society if as I imagine you inherit the family voice. Mama’s was such a beautifully sweet one and even now it sounds better than any of ours when she sings.

I am very much obliged to you, dear brother, for your kind wishes for my birthday. This will arrive after yours but I most sincerely wish you every happiness this world can give, and that before very long we may have the great pleasure of seeing you. Who can tell? The time may be nearer than we think and meanwhile we must wait and hope. We have so far been mercifully kept and we must trust on. I will write by the next mail if I can.

With kindest love and very many thanks, believe me your ever truly affectionate  
F Dyason

1874 February 19<sup>th</sup>

7 Grove Hill Tunbridge Wells from sister Frances Dyason

My dear Brother

I received the little box, you were so kind as to take the trouble to send me, quite safely and am very much delighted with the specimens. I think they are very beautiful some look like stars how very nicely and carefully you packed them. It seems so strange and scarcely possible when I look at them that your fingers so many miles away should have put them in this box. I was obliged to bestow a specimen on Mr Pilbrow, he admired them so much, and granted one to add to his cabinet of specimens. I took them to Thornton Heath and they were as much pleased as I am. I am sure it must have been a great deal of trouble to you, and believe me I prize them very highly.

I also took Uncle Fred's photograph to show Mama, and she wished to have it so I gave it to her. It hangs in a little frame in her best room. I should not have known it was Uncle Fred. I suppose I have quite forgotten his appearance. I certainly could not recognise the Uncle Fred of my memory at all. Please give him my kindest love and thank him when you see him. I will send him one of mine if he cares to have it. I also owe you many thanks dear brother for your photo. I can quite appreciate the very great trouble it must have been in such hot weather to have prepared for it, and had it done. I have heard the grumblings of sitters in my amateur experience. I sent it to Mama to look at. She does not like it at all, she says she can plainly see the photographer did not understand his business!!

I am very glad to tell you that Uncle John sent Aunt Fanny £5 just before Christmas. I believe she thought more of the feeling than the money, though that was acceptable enough to have. Fancy, she has to work a whole year for £10. She paid them a visit at Christmas. It makes a little change for her, and they do all they can to make her comfortable. I enclose a letter from Augusta, she made a mistake in the time of the mail leaving so asked me to post it for her. I am sorry to say she did not have the pleasure of coming up to see Mama. I had been there nearly 11 days, I had to come back as Mr Pilbrow has his sisters here and required me for music. Was it not very vexing, it is such a very long journey and so very expensive. I had not seen Augusta for 4 years, but he insisted on my coming back. That is one of the disadvantages of this fellow. I never can go to my friends. I think in this case he ought to have paid my fee back. I should write to you oftener, but they cannot bear to see me writing letters – is it not strange? So that I have to take opportunities when they offer, which they do not very often. I am very glad to say they are all well as to health. Lizzie has been very poorly at times this winter, and obliged to have medical attention again. I wish she could be well and strong again. The doctor says she ought, and must go to the seaside, but I really do not see how it is possible.

We are very thankful she has been spared to us, we did not at all expect she would be, but the expenses have been a sad drag on the "boys", as we call them. They have been obliged to live as closely as possible in order to meet them, and to wear summer coats in winter – for two years they have had to pay £50 for doctors. I do not exaggerate at all. I saw the receipts. Then of course Mama is not getting younger. I am afraid she is 71 this year and it is absolutely necessary she should have a little leisure sometimes. Anything in their power they always most cheerfully get for her, and they do not grumble, but I am so sorry they have such a burden upon them, and now it is worse since Julia's marriage it rests more completely upon the two youngest. Mama says she sometimes thinks they will break soon under it. You say I did not mention Fred's marriage. We did not know it for a very long time. I think nearly two years, but am not sure, he had no idea of such a thing of course, he can only allow a very little now of his salary and if he has children, which no doubt he will, he must have even that. It is a great trial to us all. Edward and Charlie have felt it very much.

It has been the aim of us all to raise ourselves, and their position now is decidedly above that of trades people. He might have done so differently of course Uncle Tom thinks it all right, because it is exactly what they have all done, but we hoped that this generation would rise above it. I do not trust the remaining three will not do likewise if they are determined to marry beneath them. I hope they will at least do it openly, and let their family know as people with the slightest pretension to respectability always do. I have no fear for

Edward. Charles, I think has learnt a lesson and you I do not think will. We were so surprised because Fred always so thoroughly disliked the uneducated Cockney, she is even older than he, and has been out of health ever since he has known her. What infatuation could have possessed him we cannot imagine, we can only comment and wonder.

I think perhaps it would be best not to refer to what I have said in your letters to Thornton Heath, as it makes Mama so very uncomfortable, and always causes Edward indignation. I suppose you have heard that there is every probability of the tea duty being taken off with the change of government. If so Edward's office goes, and he will be dismissed with just enough to keep himself alive. Is it not very strange. We are so thankful that they at least are provided for, and could always spare a little to help the rest. They have not been able to take their house by the river. It was found too expensive. They require exercise after sitting over desks all day and we thought that would be so nice for them but it could not be done. They are obliged to have a decent house or they could not keep up their position at their offices, and if they could live as Uncle Tom does, it would not be such a struggle, but then they could not retain their situation, nor could they submit to it if it were possible by any effort on their part to alter it, but I really must not write any more upon this subject my letter will be such a contrast to Augusta's bright cheerful one, that you will think older sisters are very troublesome grumbling old bores.

I have written as fast as possible you must expect all mistakes. I cannot think how it is you manage to write so well. Your writing is the same as ever. I shall be pleased to have the papers you mention. I wish I could send you some but you have everything in Australia now and even our fashion books! It does not seem possible that you can be enduring such heat as you speak of, my hands at the present time are full of chilblains. Do you know at all what we shall do if Edward loses his place, it will be such a long time before he can get anything else and of course Mama and Lizzie can't do anything, but we can only trust as we have before and things may not be as bad as we fear. I think I must say goodbye for the present as it is freezing and I am writing in a room without a fire so my fingers are getting gradually colder. It is a very fortunate thing that it did now snow at Christmas. I do not know what price coal would have been, as it is it won't last very long, we are getting into Spring.

With kindest love and hoping you are well

Believe me dear brother  
Your ever sincerely affectionate

F Dyason

1874 March 9<sup>th</sup>  
7 Grove Hill  
Tunbridge Wells from sister Frances Dyason

My dear brother,

I am very much obliged for the pretty paper I received last month. What a lovely dell that is where the ferns are growing luxuriantly. Is the scenery really so beautiful in Australia. I am so fond of beautiful scenes, especially distant ones. What a contrast to the Christmas scene. It makes one long to exchange but I suppose an English person would feel the heat very much, I mean a person who had lived many years in this country may make a great fuss and complain when the thermometer stands at 80 in the shade.

How smart the ladies are. I am afraid you would be quite disappointed in the old country lassies because I do not think we could find you anything to surpass those fair dames certainly not in dress. That reminds me of the book "How to dress for £15 a year". It has been assured and clearly shown that a person in order to dress, even in that style, must spend the whole of her time in working for herself alone, because that sum would not allow her to have anything done for her, she must make the whole of her clothes herself, and even then she would have to wear dresses made out of bed tick. Do you know what that is? I in my position could not do it, I find it difficult enough to get the time to mend my clothes, and I should not be allowed to go about dressed in bed tick.

You said in one of your letters you wished you knew something of the Dyason family. Shall I ask Aunt Fanny to tell me what she can recollect about it. I do not think it will be much, but when she is gone we shall not be able to ascertain even that little. I fancy they were farmers in her grandfather's time but I am not sure. Would you like me to write to *Culleton*, I daresay you have seen his advertisement offering to trace anyone's family if the name and County are given. I suppose we belong to Kent, unless we are descended from gypsies as Uncle Roger used to say he was sure we were! I know a person who applied to him, and has since always used a crest. His charge is not very much 5 shillings in the first instance I believe. Our name is very uncommon which no doubt would render it easier to trace it out. There is a family of the same name living at Whitstable near Canterbury. They are boat builders. I suppose they must be a branch. Did Uncle John ever hear his father say anything about them I wonder?

The same thought has crossed my mind, that they have not always been as we have known them. There is something so different in their manner and bearing from the class they are supposed to belong to. Did you notice that in Uncle John? It was remarkable in the others, even Uncle Roger, though he had descended to very low in the scale was not one of the class he lived amongst. And how very few situated as Aunt Fanny is and doing what she is obliged to do could maintain the position she does. The people she is with look up to her instead of treating her as a servant. What an example she sets us. Have you heard from Julia yet. I cannot think she is offended at anything you can have said. Mama says she has written you a long letter and one letter from her is worth more than 3 or 4 from any of us so you must be consoled.

I suppose you are thinking of Autumn now. At the present time the ground is covered in snow. I think it must be come to welcome the Russian princess, as she has just arrived, and it is the first we have had this winter. I hope it will not remain with us long. Have you taken any interest in the Tichborne case? It is quite a relief to everyone that it is over. What do you think of him? I read the whole of the first trial aloud and my opinion since that has never wavered. Possibly having to read 4 or 5 columns every day may have had something to do with it. There is a very good number of the *Graphic* called the 'Tichborne history' giving portraits of the principal people. Would you like it?

I heard from Augusta the other day. I am glad to say she is well. Mrs Hamilton talks of sending his daughter to Guernsey for a year to finish her education, and would like Augusta to go with her. It would be very advantageous as it would enable her to get a higher salary. Lizzie is still at home. Unfortunately she has lost her pupils, they left the place and she has not yet obtained any more. I hope she will be able to pay Augusta a visit in the summer when she can enjoy bathing. I am very glad you are able to get a dip. It is so

refreshing. Do you inherit the Pearce talent for swimming?\* They swim like ducks. I think you rather misunderstood what I said about Hastings. We did not go there for a visit, but Mr Pilbrow took a house there and removed all his furniture, and as it is so much pleasanter than this I was sorry he returned here instead of remaining.. I do not know anything of the life, in which walking up and down on a fashionable promenade with one's hair hanging down forms a part, so I had no regrets of that kind.

How I wish dear brother, you could meet with a sudden turn of fortune, which would make you come and see us. I so much wish you would come before we all get so very old. Does it seem possible to you that we have arrived at the age we have. I cannot realise it at all. In 5 or 6 years I shall be quite an old lady, my hair will be perfectly white, I shall wear spectacles and I daresay not be able to see even with their aid, and I shall be generally shaky, with a face full of lines, wrinkles, and crows feet, so you must not be surprised at my appearance. I do not inherit the very wonderful... I do not know what to call it so will say power of keeping young the Pearce's have. It is perfectly marvellous, Uncle Tom's hair is as brown and thick as a man of 30, and it is a fact that Aunt Polly at 60 might have been married but the man was afraid she was too young for him, he thought she was not more than 30 or 35. She told Uncle Charles so some years after. I think Edward is the only one who at all resembles them in this respect, but perhaps you may. Are you at all troubled with your eyes? The Dyason's have not strong sight. My eyes have never been strong, and they have been a good deal tired by reading small print. I have had so much of that to do. I do not wear spectacles yet, but think I shall be obliged to very soon as my eyes get so tired.

We are anxiously expecting the budget when parliament meets. Everyone seems to think the duty will come off tea, and in that case Edward's office will be abolished, and all the clerks dismissed. I so regret Fred's marrying – if he had waited a short time longer it would have been so much better, and I do not think he can be comfortable with a wife he must feel ashamed of. I do not know...

*Next page is missing*

\**Godwin Island; A Play [In Five Acts and in Verse]; And Swimming Book. (Paperback) by Paulin Huggett Pearce (Guernsey, GY, United Kingdom) ISBN: 9781241364670 Copied from the 1872 edition held in the British Library, Historical Print Editions, Print on Demand*

JUST PUBLISHED.

LORD NELSON'S BATTLES:  
AND  
A POEM & TREATISE  
ON  
SWIMMING,

BY  
PAULIN HUGGETT PEARCE, ESQ.,

*Ex-Champion of Swimming,*

10, Harbour Street,

Ramsgate, Kent.



ROBERTS, PRINTER, 6, EAST ROAD, CITY ROAD, LONDON. N.

\*

**1874 March 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Belgrave House**

**Cannock from brother Edward Dyason (*Edward aged 31, Isaac aged 42*)**

My dear brother,

I must own I am almost ashamed to write to you, having been so long neglected to do it. Nevertheless I will crave your pardon which penance is not unknown to my dear brother I believe? So much for the prologue.

Thanks many, dear, for your likeness but it only makes me wish to see the original more than ever, in spite of the disagreeable colours he is always flaunting himself in. You must know I do not very much admire our brave defenders, The Volunteers,\* I always have a desire to work them a banner with the motto "He that fights and runs away to do" but I will not say anything disagreeable on the second sheet of your paper.

I dare hardly think how long it is since I wrote to you last but of course Mama has told you of how seriously ill poor Lizzie has been. She was hovering between life and death for some time, it was dreadful – but worse for those who were obliged to be at their posts, and so leave her in that state. Dear Mamma seems to have had nothing but trouble since our poor Father died. You can't know how good she is. I do so wish you would come and see for yourself. Shall you not come home?

I have quite lost my wish to grow a beard. I feel too old now to care for one. Miss Smith's brother is going to visit England again next year. I suppose he will take his daughter back again when he goes. It is four years since he left England. How the time goes! I daresay someone has told you Fred is married. I am sorry to say his wife isn't just what we like but we must not say anything now, it is done and cannot be undone, and anything said against his wife injures him. But it was and is a terrible trial to me, he is so good, so nice, intelligent, with superior tastes and she – well she is quite the opposite. You will not say what I have said to you, will you? If no one else has told you please don't say anything. I am so sorry to hear that Uncle John has met with an accident, you will be glad to know Aunt Fanny is quite well and also our dear Mother and the rest of the family. Lizzie is better but not well. I trust she soon may be. Now dear, hoping you will come home soon and that you are quite well,

Believe always,

Your loving though neglectful

E.Dyason

Many happy returns for your birthday, do write back.

(\*Isaac became a member of the Bendigo Rifles, part of the Victorian Volunteer Forces)

**1874 December 17**

**(Chilton House, St Pauls Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey)**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

*(Written sideways at the top)* Many happy returns of your birthday

My dear Isaac

I thank you very much for your letter and also for the papers. I have to apologise for any long silences but I have deferred writing from time to time thinking I should be more at leisure, however as that is not likely to be the case I have decided to wait no longer.

I am glad to hear of your continual good health...I am glad you are making some little progress in the harmonium though sorry you had to give up the school, of course you could not have gone that distance in such hot weather. I see by the photograph your uncle Fred sent that he has a wife. She is very little. I hope she is very good. I do not advise his coming home. Uncle Charles has managed his business for years by himself. I do not see what place there is for Uncle Fred to fill. I should imagine the business is not nearly so brisk as it used to be, Ramsgate is not now in a very prosperous state, it is spoken of as a rather low watering place. I believe it has been going down for years...On the receipt of your last letter I wrote to Uncle Charles to ask if he wanted his brother Fred home. If so I thought he had better write to him. I do not know if Uncle Charles has written. If however uncle Fred has decided to come back I do not wish to dissuade him, The home in Harbour Street is full but there is room in Uncle Tom's house as at present it has only 3 occupants but the house is decidedly more comfortable since he has been married.

Fred is married, the other members of the family are still unmarried. The girls have been advised to open a school in Hampton in Oxfordshire. Augusta and Fanny would join. They have both been very comfortable in their situations but it will be better if they can have a home of their own.

Julia has spent her holidays with us, she is going to make every enquiry before we enter upon the school affair. Lizzie is sometimes better and then is quite frustrated again. She still has medical attendance. We have constantly tried to do without but pain gets too violent and relief must be had....The doctor ordered her to the seaside last year but the funds would not allow of it. We were therefore glad to accept of Mr Hamilton's kind invitation to go to Saltburn, though it was the wrong time of the year and the place too far north, but being on the seacoast we remembered to send her. The result was she returned worse than when she left home. When he called the other day he said as soon as the Spring came she must go to her native air and remain there till well into Summer but that is impractical, she could not be maintained there for less than £10 and the boys cannot do it. It has cost £20 for doctors bill in June but we shall have another account from that date to the present time. It would no doubt be the best economy to send her for change of air but the cash cannot be spared as we must reserve it for present payments.

We have removed from Norwood about 2 miles away. The house was no longer habitable, 2 of the ceilings had fallen down and another had to be taken down. There was only one room in the house that was considered safe, also the cistern was so leaky we were annoyed with streams of water running down the walls. We have unfortunately alighted on a clayey soil which we wished to avoid on account of Lizzie but there was not a house that would suit us with regard to distance from town so we were obliged to take this. This is a convenient, nice house but the country all round damp. We should have remained at Norwood if we could have done so with safety as we wished to avoid the trouble and expense of moving. The boys are considerate and willing to do to their utmost everything to make the family comfortable. Julia also does what she can, if Lizzie could be got well she could help in the school or take a Governess place. I do not see at all how we can send her to the seaside unless we could have some help. If I could borrow the money I could not pay it back again. If it were possible for you to send a portion of what it would cost I should be so very glad. I do not anticipate you can as I know the difficulties you have to overcome. I should like to send her to Minster or Margate as either of these places will do but she cannot remain there for long enough for less than £10.

Fred lives at Croydon about three miles from here, Edward and Charles, Lizzie, Cassie and I live here, Aunt Fanny comes to spend a little time with us at Xmas, 16 days. She said she had had a letter from her brother and he had sent her a present of £5 which gave her great pleasure. Her brother had quite misunderstood her situation. He thought she lived in ease and comfort instead of having to do the menial work in the house. Everything is in her keeping and in a great measure she does as she likes but she works hard and most of her work is anything but pleasant. Mr Silk is a good man and seldom interferes in her affairs but the drudgery is the same.

I believe you had a letter from Augusta about Xmas time. Fanny also keeps up a correspondence with you, Cassie is lazy I'm afraid. Gussie and Cassie do not recognise the photograph in uniform you sent as their brother, their handsome brother but we would all very much like a real likeness of yourself in full uniform, perhaps you will favour us some day. Gussie's birthday present 24 May, the Queen's birthday. I'm glad you have joined the Rifle Corps, those trips do you a good deal of good if you do not over exert yourself and do not take cold. I could not help being amused at your wishing me to avoid being old. I am thankful dearest boy that I continue in health and am able to employ myself all day without feeling over fatigued but you know wrinkles will come do what we will to prevent them. I will try to keep myself from anxiety and fretfulness and do what is necessary for health for my family's sake which I hope will satisfy you. I also hope you will take care of your health. It is a precious boon. Poor Lizzie will acknowledge to that. I do not urge you to study, if your time is filled up that is sufficient, and by all means be careful of your eyes, do not try them when they are tired.

The boys are very constant to their daily work, they are respected at their offices and are well conducted. Fred still conducts services at Broadside\*, Charles takes the organ at Westminster, on Sunday afternoons and weekdays in the absence of the organist.

How are you and Uncle Fred progressing with the Harmonium, which plays the best?

Our Address is  
Chilton House, St Pauls Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey

You remember our old Chilton Lane by Pegwell. Our landlord allowed us to name the house. We gave it Chilton to keep up old reminiscences.

*(Written sideways)*

They all send their kindest love to you dearest. Isaac accept the same from your loving mother.

*\*Broadside is in Gateshead UK*

1888

1888 July 27

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason (*aged 85, Isaac aged 56*)

My dear Isaac

I was much pleased to receive the two photographs of my dear grandchild Amy. She bears a strong resemblance to your father's family it is thought by those who have seen the photographs.

I should have written earlier but have been much hindered from various causes one of which was my eyes were inflamed and painful and writing made them smart. I am thankful to say they are now much better. I hope your dear wife is keeping her health. I was truly glad to hear of her safe confinement. I had been anxious about her and strange to say that anxiety was removed from my mind at one particular time and I seemed conscious that the event had taken place and that all (*was*) well. In due time your letter came assuring me of the fact. I suppose by this time the baby is Christened. What names have you given him? You have now two boys and two girls with yourself making six in the family. I wish you may remain so most heartily. A large family is very hard to provide for. But I hope your means will be adequate to your demands at all times. I was sorry to hear your affairs do not improve, this is very sad news. I had hoped to see more brightness in your business life, it is possible that a change for the better may take place if business becomes brisk and remunerative. Work is allotted to each one of our family. We never had any rich relations to help us and strange to say no relation where the children could go, any one of them, for a change on a long or short visit, excepting for cousin at Deal, when you were all young there were several children, but several have died and some have been long since in New Zealand. We do not know anything of them now.

I trust dear Isaac your children will always be above real want and that your good health will always remain with you, and that you and your dear wife will live long and happily and the children good and dutiful to you.

We have had a rather stormy unsettled year so far. Hay was plentiful but this rain has spoilt a good deal of it. I hope Autumn will be blessed with propitious weather that the corn and fruits may ripen and be gathered.

I had little Emily's letter, I send her my love and thanks. I hope she still continues a good little girl and is fond of her brothers and sister, and good to Papa and Mamma.

Please find my very kind love to your good wife and kind love to the dear children. Accept the same to yourself my dear son, from your affection mother  
E I Dyason

I hope to write a longer letter when my eyes are stronger. Writing tires them and makes them painful.

(Note from Isaac: Mother, July 27 and Nov 9 1888 replied Jan 1 1889)

**1888 November 9**

**Wisteria Villa**

**Victoria Rd Worthing from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac,

It seems a long time since I heard from you. I hope nothing is the matter and that all are well. The continued supply of papers which you are so kind as to send really assures me that nothing material is the matter, still a letter would be very acceptable and more restful.

In one of the papers, you call our attention to a sale of goods at Sydney in the name of Dyason and Co brothers. I suppose by this year (*you*) must have had a share in the business. I hope however that the winding up of this affair has not been a loss to you even ever so trifling a one. I am anxious to know how Harriet is. Is she able to manage her large family? I know there is a great amount of work to do in a family of six as well as servants and a woman has need of a good share of strength to see that all goes right. Harriet I believe has much perseverance and this quality assists her very materially in accomplishing what she thinks necessary to be done. Whatever troubles may be allotted to you my dear son, you must take into consideration the blessings of a healthy family and a wife of good sound sense and of an excellent loving disposition, and likewise you should take into account your own excellent health whereby you are able to exert yourself for the providing of comforts of your family. I hope you will excuse this long preamble dear son but I do so hope you will not allow yourself to give place to a melancholy depressed state of mind.

I find the papers on the Centenary Exhibition are very interesting and it is a very wonderful fact that a country "where no European foot has trod" a century ago; all countries are now pouring their wealth into it. You will go of course, and Harriet, as the Exhibition will remain some time. Your father and I went to the Great Exhibition of 51. I have remembered the great pleasure it afforded me and can describe some of the beautiful things I saw there. I hope the dear children are all doing well, Emily and Amy and the two baby boys. I should like to hear about them all.

I think I told you your brother Edward had sprained one of the sinews of his leg. He is not able to stand more than a few minutes at a time. It will take some months yet before he will get well. He is often very low spirited and thinks he will (*won't*) stand again. In similar cases to his the patient has been about two years before he got well.

Will you give my very kind love to your dear wife and love and kisses to the dear children and believe me my very dear son from your truly loving mother.  
Your sister and brother send their love.

1889

1889 February 23

Worthing from Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

I thank you very much for the papers and for the photographs of your little son. He looks a bright and good tempered little fellow. I fancy he is like Emily. Harriet tells me you and the family are all in good health which I am very glad to hear. I wish she could say the same of herself, at the same time she speaks hopefully of herself as feeling better and stronger. I believe if she will use Bow's lineament she will get rid of her cough, outward applications are often more effective than medicine for coughs and inflammations. We have had a very serious illness through this town. The Epidemic has scarcely left one family free though not very many fatal cases. We have all escaped except Charles. He has had a rather severe attack but I am thankful to say he is all right again. I wish I could say the same thing for Edward. He has been ill for 3 years past and seems so very low and weak. This illness has been a great expense to us as it has been necessary to have medical attendance so often as well as the advice of physicians in London. Owing to this and our limited income we find it absolutely necessary to give up house-keeping and retire into lodgings. The lease of the house does not expire until August twelve-month but we can underlet it and as soon as we can let it we shall take rooms somewhere near, or in the country. Our house is now in the hands of two or three agents and likely we shall part with it soon. My two legacies realise £30 per annum. Edward's income is but just enough to support himself. I am very sorry to give up a home as I have always all through my life had a home, but in order to have a home since I left Ramsgate I have been supported by my family, both boys and girls who have also helped the young faction of the family that were unprovided for until they could keep themselves.

Fred has a very expensive invalid wife to maintain. Charles does as much as possible and now owing to Edward's bad health he can do nothing. The only course left to me to lessen the expenses is to take rooms. You may think your uncles could help me. I know very little of their affairs. Charles has the business, Fred works for him and as you know has nothing, Isaac has always had a struggle to make two ends meet, therefore it would be useless to apply to them.

I should not have troubled you with these details, I thought you would wonder why at my time of life I have given up housekeeping. You have often asked me of our affairs. I should not now have entered into particulars but for reasons I have given.

I am very glad my dear son that your home is in Australia instead of England for, tho the family while young is not so difficult to provide for, when they grow older they must be placed out in life and this now in England is almost an impossibility.

Please address your letters to the Post Office Worthing until I can give you the address of our apartments. Hoping bright days are in store for us all.

I remain my dear son, with kindest love, your affectionate mother.

**(1889 estimated) February 26**  
**Worthing from sister Frances Dyason (aged 56)**

My dear Brother

Mother says she has been telling you about affairs and her brothers. Please if you mention them in writing back do not speak of them as dead. She has no idea but that they are still living. Aunt Fanny's death was such a shock to her we decided we would not tell her again. She is not strong enough to bear it and as she never heard from them in any way it really makes no difference. We have not seen them for years. They never write though mother is their only living sister and as for coming to see her, they would not dream of it. Uncle Isaac as you know has been dead since June. They were always very poor. Aunt Isaac has always done all the work of the house, she used to take in lodgers until she became too old, she could not have a tenant as they were too poor. I don't know how they managed to keep on but I suppose the eldest son works at the shoe making. The youngest son is in the County Lunatic Asylum. He has always been imbecile and he is no longer considered safe to be at large tho they never expected to send him there. The only daughter married a clerk at the Railway Station, they have 11 children and I need not say can't help their relations.

Uncle Paulin, who died suddenly last year,\* left an old will leaving all he had to Uncle Charles. The will was made years ago and there has been no other found. We don't know what he left, not much I daresay but whatever it is Uncle Charles has it, we do not expect to get anything from him. He never noticed us anyway and he has adopted a young girl who has lived with him since childhood. She is now about 20. Uncle Charles is so little older than we are, only 9 years older than you and I have not any doubt his constitution is, 20 years or more younger than you or I, that he is more than likely to be the longest liver.

Uncle Fred does not look more than 50 they say, and a young man for that age. Added to all this they never liked the Dyasons so I do not think we must expect the slightest thing from them. We are all of the same opinion. We think he may leave something to the town, Ramsgate, as he takes a great interest in it.

I have not written to you lately as mother tells you anything there is to tell and I am always busy in house affairs, of course mother is too old to do anything now and requires attention, though I am thankful to say she is not an invalid. I don't know what we should do in our circumstances if she were.

It is a great blessing you are all well. It is to be hoped our health may be spared to us, for we have nothing, but our own health to depend on.

Believe me

Your affectionate sister  
Frances Dyason

*\* According to Ancestry.com Paulin Huggett Pearce Lived from 1808 to November 1888*  
[http://records.ancestry.com/Paulin\\_Huggett\\_Pearce\\_records.ashx?pid=101644253](http://records.ancestry.com/Paulin_Huggett_Pearce_records.ashx?pid=101644253)

1890

1890 March 29

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac,

Many thanks for your kind gift which came to hand last week. It is indeed a most acceptable present and has relieved our fears and much anxiety. I sincerely wish I could make you some compensation but our circumstances are such they do not afford either me or Fanny a dress or any article of clothing that would exceed a few shillings. In the early part of the winter I had had a warm winter dress and two winter vests, as time went on I could see no way of paying for them and of course I have been much troubled about the expense I had incurred, though at the time I thought it expedient as I feel the cold so much. Your help, which you have so fondly sent has not only helped me out of this difficulty but has helped me in other things. Accept my dear son my sincere thanks for the same.

I should have been very well pleased to have been present at the annual gathering of the Militia. Soldiers always excited an interest in me. I am glad you have belonged to them and do still belong. You must not forget to let me have your photograph in the uniform, as you have represented the several features of the day. I am glad too that you are connected with the officiating clergyman. I have no doubt but that he is a good man.

How much I wish you would be spared the great anxiety of business matters. I think the mines interests are most disappointing. I do greatly hope that success will be granted to you. I am very sorry to hear Harriet has had influenza, it is a most depressing malady. It has marked Edward's eyes; Charles had had it in the usual state, all over the system leaving the patient in a very hypochondriatic state. I hope Harriet will shake herself free from every ill consequence that sometimes follows this disease. I cannot imagine the heat of F120°, it must be fearful. I hope the poor children will not have whooping cough badly. You already know of Roski's Embrocation. It is much used by the medical faculty here. My mother used it for all her family. It has the effect of turning the cough into a casual cough, divesting it of the whoop which is so distressing to the patient. I do not think cold bathing is good for children till they are quite rid of their coughs. The danger is the cough might become a confirmed cough and bring on asthma of consumption.

Clarence is decidedly a very beautiful boy, his head I should think a very fine head. The photographer has given a fine picture of the child. I am sorry the first was a failure especially on account of the little one. Edward has been poorly all winter. His medical man has advised him to see another physician. He went to town on Tuesday for that purpose. Will stay for a short time. Our house is not yet let. We have had 4 or 5 enquiries to look at it.

Please give my kindest love to your dear wife and my darling grandchildren.

Love from Frances and myself.

**1890 August 21**

**Wisteria Villa Worthing from Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

No doubt you have been expecting to hear from me for some time past. I have however been waiting and hoping to tell you we had parted with the house. There have been a great many people to enquire but no one has taken it. Unfortunately there is a rather large vegetable garden belonging to the house and though an advantage to some it is objected to by many. Had the ground been made into a tennis lawn it would have been more to the people's taste and requirements and of course could have been kept in order with less expense. We have the house at a three years lease and we have just entered the third year. We shall hope to get a tenant for the third year.

I thank you dear for the very nice photographs which came safe to hand. They are very well done and must be good likenesses of you, comparing them with former ones, we fancy you look like a German soldier as seen in the Illustrated Papers and no doubt the "Emperor" would have thought you tall and strong enough to grace his ranks. I thank you also for the kind letter you sent. I also have received the papers. It is very kind of you to take all this trouble. I wish most heartily business were more prosperous with you. You have had hard work for so many years so keep hope alive. I think you will still take courage and work so success may not be far distant.

I am very glad to hear you have been able to send your family to the seaside. Even a short time often does a great deal of good. Roskis Embrocation for Whooping cough, Bow's Linament for a common cough. We do not hear much about influenza now. I think it had its day and is gradually leaving our country. I hope that it is going from yours. It has been very general everywhere and has made people feel very ill but I believe has not been fatal generally speaking. What a nice arrangement you have with medical men. I wish we could do the dome thing in England. You often regret in your letters opportunities you have let slip. Perhaps dear son you were not at the time aware of them being advantages, most likely it was very doubtful whether they would be a loss or gain. You no doubt thought you were doing the right thing. If so you need not have unpleasant reflections. I hope you will not feel...

*(possibly a page missing)*

With kindest love and hoping you will rise superior to all kinds of despondence and be blessed with success in your endeavours to reach your several wants.

I remain your loving mother.

1891

1891 February 23

(East Grinstead, Surrey) from Isaac's mother EI Dyason

My dear Isaac

Many thanks for your kind letter of November 12<sup>th</sup> and I'm glad to hear of your continued health though suffering from an attack of toothache as Harriet tells me. If your tooth is hollow you could have it stopped of course you know. It is a most annoying pain as well as a most distressing. I am sorry to hear Harriet has had another attack of Influenza, I hope by this time she is entirely free from its influence. I am sorry for the poor Amy, it must have been a sad trial for the poor child to be deprived of her pretty curls. I hope the worst of the disease has passed off; her hair of course will grow again but it will be some time in growing. However the least appearance of growing on the spots will be a sign that they will soon be covered. I am sorry that business is so dull still. I heard that mining was doing better, that there was a good demand for iron. I wish it were true for your sake my dear son, I hope however you will not despair, that will do no good, it will only make you unfit for exertion, you have had a long time of depression, I hope and pray that a change for the better is near at hand.

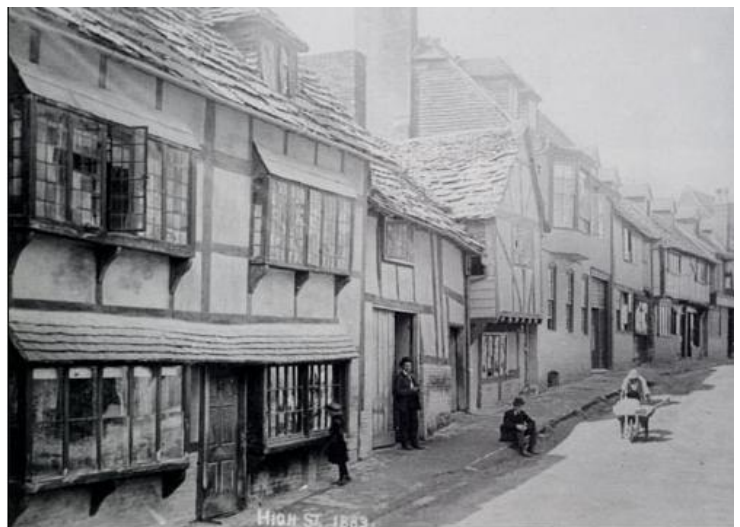
Fred received the Argus and letters directed to him, will also come to me. I have delayed in writing to you as we have been shifting and tidying twice since we left our house, Wisteria Villa. That was a nice convenient house but too expensive. I do not like lodgings and there is one great inconvenience attending them. In the Winter you can have a warm fire in much smaller room, but as soon as Summer visitors make their appearance, you have to vacate the rooms you have got used to unless you are prepared to give a much larger sum than you had previously given. We are now at E. Grinstead, an old fashioned house in Surrey. The Summer families will be here shortly and we shall have to leave. I will let you know where we are, in the meantime Fred will forward letters and parcels to us from any of our friends. It has been an intensely cold Winter, it is 70 years since we had one so cold. We hope the cold has taken its departure as the sun has much power.

With kindest love to you and Harriet in which Edward and Fanny join also in kindest love to the children.

Ever your loving mother.



Surrey is next to Kent



A view of old cottages in East Grinstead's High Street, photographed, according to the printed caption, in 1883  
<http://www.photohistory-sussex.co.uk/EGrinsteadPhotgrsMS.htm>

**1891 March 18**

**East Grinstead, Surrey from Isaac's mother EI Dyason (aged 88)**

My dear Isaac

Your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Feb gave me a great pain. What great troubles have fallen on you\* I pray God support you and the dear mother. Under the bereavement I know your hearts are very very sore, my dear son and daughter, but the pretty little fellow is not lost to you, he still exists in happiness we can have no conception of. Our Saviour spoke of such as your baby boy "I say unto you their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven, therefore my dear children take the comfort of these words. I know the grief having passed through the same trial. I do not now wish him here, but rejoice that he, my baby George, has passed the river and will never more know pain and torment. I regret that you have had another loss in your cousin Julia. I believe she was an amiable bright woman. This world as you say has not much to offer but trouble and anxiety. We shall have our share but time softens our sorrows. I trust the children are pretty well by this time and Harriet the loving mother is not too much prostrated by all her sorrows. You forget, I think, your having scarlet fever when you were a child. I do not expect you will be in danger of having it a second time as you had it severely then. There were only three of you at that time but the older branches were very ill with it. Your Grandpa Dyason, Aunt Fanny and your Father all ill at one time. It was brought into the house by the servant who said nothing about being ill with it. I fortunately escaped. It made its appearance a second time in the family when they were all grown up but they recovered, tho we thought Charles would not.

I have to thank you my dear son for the present you kindly sent me though I doubt if I should keep it knowing the difficulties you have to strive against. I wish I had wherewith to help you my very dear children with all my heart. We have decided no longer to remain in lodgings, they are much more expensive than living in one's own house. We were we should save by being in lodgings but we find it is not so. As soon as we get settled I will let you know, for we are going back to Worthing. Edward will try bathing again, it may do him good. He is not well. London has suffered from continual black fogs, smearing all the windows. Fred and Charles look very badly, I often feel anxious about them, but I need not trouble you dear son with my griefs. I hope dear Harriet and the dear children are going on all right. Please write soon that I may know. May God bless you both and the little ones is the constant prayer of your loving mother.

We shall lease E Grinstead at Easter, God willing, and go to Worthing till we get settled, hoping to find a suitable house. We are having very great fogs but staying at home.

**Enclosed. March 19 1891 from sister Frances Dyason (aged 58)**

My dear Brother

I must send a line to say how sorry I am that so great a trial has come upon you. I well know from experience that you can truly mourn now but the time will come when you will rejoice. Think what has been spared and how safe and happy he is. We who have come such a long way on the road of life know how much there is to endure and how often we fall in the battle. Your dear little one has escaped all this and is far happier than all your love and care could ever have made him. I Trust when you receive this time will have softened the blow. I have often been going to tell you that there is great necessity to impress on your little one the love of truth. I hope they take after you in this respect. There is on one side of the family a great tendency to concealment and want of moral courage which leads people into much that is wrong and which they bitterly regret when too late.

Do not, my dear brother, take it as a matter of course that they will grow up truthful, but show them the beauty of it and also do all you can to train them for heaven for it is the one thing above all earthly things. I have put your name in full as you did not give any number and I thought the postman could not find you with initials only. I am sorry your letter was opened. Mother thinks it was the fault of the address. Was it?

With much love to all. Believe me dear brother your loving sister F Dyason.

*\*The death of Isaac Edward's young son, Cecil.*

**1891 July 28**

**Customhouse London from brother Fred Dyason (*aged 52, Isaac was 59*)**

My dear brother.

It is so long since I sent you a letter that you will probably be surprised to receive this from me.

A few days since I went home for a short visit to my mother and when there I ascertained that Fanny had not communicated with you as I had believed it was arranged that she should, but had been under the impression that it was I who was to write. Through the mistake therefore of one of us there has been a little delay in conveying to you the news which I have to relate. I am sorry to inform you of the death of our Uncle Charles who died at his house at Ramsgate of bronchitis at the latter part of last month

He had been ill for some months with this complaint and had felt for some years previously the long inclement winters which we have had of late in this country, and which gave him a cough that was troublesome, bronchitis for some years, but it did not seem in a man otherwise strong and vigorous, likely to take a serious turn. Last winter however was an exceptionally severe one followed by a cold spring time (people kept their fires going here till June) and it was this which proved fatal to him. He was living in a private house in the suburbs of Ramsgate with Uncle Fred and a niece of his late wife's who was his housekeeper and had every attention and comfort and the best medical skill, but it could not save him. We are all exceedingly sorry as all our lives we had seen so much of him, and being the youngest of our uncles there was no great disparity in age between us. I don't know his age to a few years, but it was stated at his death to be 66. Uncle Fred felt his loss keenly. I must caution you very earnestly not to mention or refer to the matter in your letters to my mother. She would feel the loss in a manner that might have serious consequences. Though hale and fresh and cheerful she is exceedingly sensitive at losing any of her kin and it is the decided opinion of our sisters, who are well able to judge from being one or the other constantly with her, that it would be a dangerous proceeding to tell her of her recent losses. The doctor who attended her some little while ago said that care must be taken to avoid anything like a shock to her nervous system. Probably it may be unavoidable that she should be informed of Uncle Charles' death, but the matter must be done very carefully and slowly, and therefore I would ask you not to allude to the occurrence. She is not even aware of Uncle Paulin's or Uncle Isaac's deaths. In this peculiar shrinking from the inevitable removal by death of her relatives, she shows a strong resemblance to her mother who developed precisely the same trait. Though otherwise a woman of good sense and strength of mind and fortitude. We are anxious of course, and are sure you are the same, to preserve the head of our family and the stock from which we all spring.

As to Uncle Charles' property there is a will dated shortly after Uncle Paulin's death containing very precise and deliberate instructions as to the disposal of everything. Uncle F, Riches (husband of our cousin Mary Ann, Uncle Isaac's daughter) and the late clerk (now pensioned) to the principal firm of solicitors in the town are the three executors. The most valuable part of the property appears to be the houses with shops in the best part of the town, all freehold consisting of the old house which was the birthplace, now rebuilt by a company to whom it has been let on a lease of £90 a year. At the end of the long lease this house of course comes back again. Uncle Fred takes a life interest in this. At his death it goes to Mary Ann Riches and her children. There is another house in the same street near this one, the rent probably higher because not let on a building lease. Uncle Fred also takes this during his life; afterwards M.A. Riches and children. There is a third house also near the others. The niece, late Uncle C's housekeeper takes this third one during life, afterwards it goes to M.A. Riches. The same with Uncle Tom's two houses in King St – a central position but not so good as the others in Harbor St. These two houses were purchased by Uncle Charles and Paulin jointly, at Uncle Tom's death, and Uncle Charles inherited Uncle Paulin's share with the rest of his property. These houses are left like the others eventually to M.A. Riches and children, and finally also two small houses which were the property of Uncle Paulin. Having disposed of these he leaves sundry legacies. £100 to Aunt Isaac, £100 to the lawyer's clerk, his executor, £100 to a distant relative at Dover, £50 to our cousin Isaac (*Uncle Isaac's son*) £50 to a relative of his niece and that is all of specific bequests. Then he charges his estate with £500 as a Trust, the interest on which is a small annuity to Uncle Tom's widow. On her death (she is now between 50 and 60 years of age) this £500 falls into the residue.

After these deductions the residue is divided into three equal parts, Uncle Fred takes a third absolutely, our mother takes a third, that is the life interest in a third which is after her death to be divided equally amongst her children. Uncle Isaac's representatives, that is Mary Ann Riches and his son Isaac take the other third between them.

What the residue will be after paying all expenses and providing for the legacies and trust aforesaid I cannot give more than a surmise. I don't wish to underestimate, nor do I wish to overstate it. I never knew nor I think did any one what his property was, and now as to the portion of it which will form the residue. I only know that some £5000 has been realized and that there are some half a dozen small houses about the town to be sold and to come into the residue. I do not see or know where more than a gross total of some £6000 is to come from. Although he inherited all Uncle Paulin's property, yet there does not appear to be more than I have explained.

I will of course communicate with you when I know or will answer any question if I can and of course have no motive for any misrepresentation being situated like yourself and like the rest of our family with respect to the property. Uncle Charles took a leading part in Town matters, was greatly respected, and probably gave away largely in furthering the interests of the town.

Uncle Fred is very well and regaining his cheerfulness after the grief at his bereavement. I have seen him once since. I believe him to be kindly and affectionately disposed to all related to him, and will do his best with the estate, and though he has his own way of doing things he has plenty of good judgement and shrewdness. He wanted me to ask you to send him the last twelve months news – a monthly newspaper which you formerly sent – giving him the news, if any, of his old acquaintances in the locality where he lived in Australia.

Mr Riches, the co executor, is a straightforward trustworthy man and the third executor - an old and trusted acquaintance of Uncle Charles so that as far as their part goes, everything will be fairly and perfectly done.

I have seen the photos of yourself, my sister-in-law and your little ones with much interest and pleasure. My mother informs me of your recent loss\* in which I sympathise with you and your wife very much, but I hope that the affection of a good and loving wife and children, which I am pleased to think you possess, will alleviate your grief at your loss – a loss felt more probably by your wife even than by yourself.

In your uniform you look decidedly “fit” and capable of serving your queen and country if need be. You must not go in too much for being the “gay militaire” – however much you may look the character, and by your photo I must say you really do fulfil every essential that way. Tell Harriet this is only a joke. With love to you both and the children and best wishes

Always per yrs affectionately, F.Dyason

Ps I hope I have explained clearly that we divide equally one third of the residue after decease of our mother. I wish I could have told you of more as no doubt it would be useful and acceptable to you as to us here.

*Image of Cecil Dyason who died from scarlet fever in 1891, aged 21 months. Isaac sadly wrote in his diary at the time: “Poor little fellow weakening every hour slowly dying out exhausted.... baby swallowed last medicine about 7.30 then gasped for breath till 20 minutes to 11. Saw him, wife with me, draw last breath. Oh God.”*



1891 September 18<sup>th</sup>

**Huntington from sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Isaac,

Please accept our united thanks for your very kind present. I did not in the least expect anything and was very much surprised, as well as pleased. It will buy many little things which Mother can't do without. At her age stimulant is a necessity, in order to keep up the warmth of the body. Edward and I do not take it but she is obliged to have it. Then it will also buy her some warm clothing and please once again let me thank you.

I was very glad to find from your letter that you were becoming a little reconciled to your loss. Believe me as time goes on, you will not only be reconciled, but will rejoice you have been safe and happy. This I can say from experience. It was almost like losing a child of my own when Katherine died. I had nursed her from the time she was a month old, and was a bitter trial to part with her, I thought I could never feel any interest in anything again, but I have been thankful for many years that she was taken, and I have plainly seen it was in mercy. You can only but regret at present it is too soon.

I hope Harriet and the children continue well. I am glad they are getting on so well. I wonder if the talent for painting (for there is decided talent in the family) has descended to any of them, or the musical talent. If mother's voice had been cultivated she would have made a large fortune, but when she was a girl no notice was taken of anything. She had what is called a natural shaker and could shake on the upper B or C as long as she liked. Her voice was so wonderfully sweet too. It may re-appear in your children, as things usually do in the third generation. Edward has a very good soprano, but not to be compared with mother's. Fred has a sweet tenor voice, but not nearly so strong as Edward's but good enough for his voice to be a member of Barnaby's Choir; the best in London, I swear the Choral Society. The rest of us only have sing in the ordinary way.

Fred says he has written to you particulars of Uncle Charles' death, it was truly unexpected to us. We did not even know he had been ill. We never heard from them, nor saw them. There are three gone now whom mother thinks are still living. The doctor said he must avoid shocks for her at any risk, and she says she would not bear to hear any more new gone. He is sure she could not have it, so we are in a very difficult position. If you want to refer to them in letters to me will you please write on a separate piece of paper, because mother likes to see letters tho she never opens them unless they are addressed to her. They do not think there will be anything coming to us, or a very trifling sum. Fred no doubt has explained to you as far as he knows himself at present. We are still in lodgings, and most likely shall remain so through the winter as we have not been able to find a house within our means. So will you please continue to address to Fred at the Auction House, but will you address him as Esquire not Mr. Civil servants take that title by right, and all their letters are addressed so. He and Charles are both in the Civil Service, Edward's office was broken up, and he left on a very limited income, just enough to keep himself. I, as you know, left a very comfortable house to be with mother. Julia is married, Lizzie and Augusta are living with Hamilton who married Katherine. I do not think while he lives they will want a home but there are others of us quite unprovided for.

The home for mother is kept up by Edward's living with us, and by what Fred and Charles contribute. You know of course that there are none left now of the Dyason family, they are all gone, and there is only one left on mother's side, Uncle Fred. I have only seen him once since his return from Australia, that was only for a few minutes. Uncle Charles we have not seen for years, he was thought by some people to be pretty well off, but we do not know at all what his circumstances were, we only know, as no doubt Fred has told you that the greatest part of what he had is gone to Uncle Isaac's children. I am very glad to say mother still keeps well. She sends her kindest love to you and Harriet and all the children. I do not think she will write to you this time. She does not write many letters now as the doctor said she was not to stoop over anything more than she was obliged to do – of course, as you know, she is a great age now. After the very bad fall she had last Autumn shook her a good deal, still we hope she may be spared to us for many years to come.

Grandmother lived till she was 95. Uncle White was the same age, and active to the last. He had a little greenhouse and the last Spring he mended the glass on the house getting up the ladder without assistance. I wish very much they had their portraits taken, they would have been so interesting to us, but strange to say they have left nothing of the kind, not even in later days a photograph of any of them. I had one of Aunt Fanny, Uncle Roger and Uncle John, but they have all been stolen with some other little things I had. We were very pleased with the last photograph you sent us of yourself. We think it is the best you have ever had taken. Has Harriet had one taken lately? We have only one of her taken some time ago. I must finish now, as I do not want to lose this mail, and the post office is more than a mile distant. Please give my kindest love to Harriet and the children, and with the same to yourself.

With very many thanks,  
Ever your affectionate  
F Dyason

**1891 November 26**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac,

I am very glad of your letter of October 19<sup>th</sup> which I received two days back. You have been very much in my thoughts lately. I was thankful you were all in tolerably good health when you wrote and I trust continue to be so. You tell me the Enemy unfortunately has made an entrance into your pleasant land. I am so very sorry to hear this. I am sure it is not rightly named, Influenza appeared nothing more than a severe cold and people used to recover from it if they used the usual remedies as for a cold. There are so many poisons now that may bring disease and death. No doubt cremation would have been the right course for the world's health. I believe the poisons from the unearthing of various diseases are most disastrous to the living. Then all these mummies of men and animals that were brought from Egypt, the hundreds of cats that were brought for manure. Who can tell what damage they have done, as we know insect life though buried for centuries have come to life on being exposed to the sun and air. As the whole world is affected by the same malady I believe it proceeds from poisonous exhalations of animal matter principally. I may be wrong and the disease may proceed from other causes. I hope most sincerely you may all escape. Quinine is universally used here and it is taken as preventive by persons of all ages. It is said by the medical men, as soon as anyone is attacked he should immediately go to his bed and keep warm using the diet and medicines the doctor prescribes and to remain in bed some days till he is free from fever or pain.

We have had extremely rough weather this Autumn and very unsettled nearly all the farmers. The sea has been at times very boisterous and we were at times afraid it would come over the road into our house but all through this month (November) the weather has been calm excepting at the beginning when several wrecks took place at places along the South Coast. Farmers are very much tired; at the early part of the Summer the crops looked exceedingly fine, but later on heavy rains and high winds had blown the beautiful dancing grass and deluged the land and turned the corn and other ripening fruits into black useless vegetation. But Winter has begun, we are all hoping it will be a mild one. The weather today is mild which I hope we feel thankful for.

You ask about the family and what they are doing. I remember telling you some time ago Fred and Charles are in the Customs House and live in London. Lizzie, or Bessy as you call her, and Augusta lives at Highwood in Yorkshire with their brother-in-law Mr Hamilton and have been with him to conduct his house ever since poor Catherine's death, with the exception of a few months succeeding his loss. Julia and her husband live at Worthing at present. Fanny lives with me and Edward. Had it been seasonable weather this last summer I think Edward would have been most benefitted by being on the sea. He cannot stand long, when walking he has frequently to rest, but I hope he will not always remain so though his back often fails. I thought the children would be amused by the Christmas card I sent to them. Happy Christmas and every blessing in the coming year. Edward and Franny send their love.

1892

1892 February 2

Littlehampton from Isaac's mother EI Dyason (*aged 89*)

My dear Isaac

I am very glad to see by Harriet's letter that the cold you had did not turn to Influenza. Harriet's good nursing prevented disastrous effects. The epidemic is almost universal, here at Littlehampton where we are till the Spring, is a little more advanced. We could have gone back to Worthing after leaving Scofield but we could not get a house, one that would do.

I hope to move with a house in the Spring. I think Edward has felt the frequent changes is benefiting him a little. He can stand a few minutes at a time which he could not do a little while ago. This place is about 5 miles from Worthing and is close to the sea. Fanny and Edward are recovering from Influenza.

Charles\* is ill in London, he has had a worse attack and is confined to the house away from his Office. This is the third attack within two years. I feel very concerned about him. Fred is on the spot and knows his state. Infusions help. We are in lodgings. The people do not like anyone who is sick brought into the house as it would prejudice others that might be coming against them taking the rooms. We shall if possible take the house we were in recently for as soon as ever we can have it, that way someone of the family who is ill can come to us to be nursed.

It is most fortunate that Harriet is one of those capable women who is able to take charge of her household. It is a great blessing when this is the case. I sincerely hope Harriet will be blessed with health and strength for very many years and let me congratulate you my dear son on the many successful ways in which your two young daughters have passed in the late conservatorium exam at the Exhibition and no doubt it was a surprise to all present there that children so young should do their part so well. Great credit is due to their music teacher first for her careful superior instruction and to the children for their application and their persevering industry. I myself was greatly surprised and pleased. I could quite enter into your feelings while listening to their playing and hearing the applause so justly bestowed on them.

Wishing you and yours will be granted health and every blessing with kindest love Mother.

*\*Charles is aged 47*

**1892 February 10**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I received your kind letter this morning enclosing the New Year's gift. Thanks very much for the same and also for your good wishes for the present year to us all. I also wish a continuation of the same for years to come. I trust you all in Australia will have a happy new year and many more to come.

I am rather disappointed the Xmas cards did not reach you as we thought the one for the children was so ingenious and would please them. We sent by the same post as the letters. We did not fold it twice as we thought it would spoil it which made it a rather large Xmas card. Littlehampton is a very old fashioned place and there was not a very great choice and possibly the child may not have cared for it, its loss is no great matter. I intended to send by the last mail. I had my letters written but could not get the little book in time. I send it by this mail by book post. Will you please give it to the children with Grandma's very kind love and a kiss to each from me.

I am very glad to hear there is the prospect of a very good wheat harvest and fruit as well. We have not had a very good harvest for a few years past. Early droughts and later cold winds and rains have spoilt the crops. We expected as a cold a Winter as the last one, up to the present time we are agreeably disappointed. The weather has fortunately been mild and pleasant. The stormy winds have lulled since those terrible weeks took place, at least along our coast. I hope we, all of us, may have quiet weather this year.

You say Influenza is dying out. It is so here, it is in most cases a mild form. Edward and Fanny are getting rid of it. In Charles' case it is in its obstinate form. His doctor says he must have change and a long rest. You may know the saying "To be long sick is to be sooner well." I'm afraid Charles does not like the rest. It is a strange thing that the whole world seems in a state of suffering, no state or condition is exempt. Our Royal Family has met with severe losses which of course you have seen by the papers and a great many of our noted men have died from Influenza and other causes. I believe it is a general opinion that we are nearing the end. The case of the Jews seem to confirm it, with the horrible sufferings of the Catastrophe that have taken place. I am very sorry to hear that so many have been brought to distress and ruin by the dishonesty of others. It is so strange that we cannot trust one another. Speculation ruins many a one. A man may be led to it but it should not be with another's money without the other's consent.

We have not seen the face of the sun for the whole week but as Spring is approaching we hope for warmth and suns kisses. While we are in this world we must expect our share of trouble and sorrow but we hope a brighter existence is reserved for us in heaven, let us watch and pray.

I occasionally see Julia, I will give her your love. She has no children but plenty on her husband's side. Fanny and Edward send their kind love. I remain my dear son your ever loving mother EI Dyason.

(up front) We shall be soon leaving here as the people will be getting the house ready for summer lodgers. I will let you know our address. Again thanking you for your kind gift.

**1892 June 19**

**From Isaac's mother EI Dyason**

My dear Isaac

I was truly glad to receive your letter of the 15 April. I had been anxious about you all lest you should be ill. I am truly thankful to know you were in tolerably good health. It is kind of wish of you to send Harriet and the children to the seaside. I am pleased to hear Emily has received benefit from the change. I hope the other children with their dear mother have also gained strength and health from the sea breezes. I think my dear son your health must need nourishing. Cannot you take a holiday now that the family has returned? It could not fail to do you good. It would give a turn to your thoughts and strengthen you to bear the trials and disappointments it may be of this our mortal life. Troubles seem much heavier to us when our affairs are low but with renewed health "mountains become molehills" as the old proverb says.

I am sorry you have so much heat and so little rain for the Spring, you thought there was a prospect of a good harvest. Here it has been disappointing. Has want of rain spoilt it. Here it is true as you say, (generally) our harvest is spoiled by too much rain. Our prospects are good at present for the future harvest. I trust yours have not been failures. I bring to mind your saying (I believe it is 'Hope on') all is wisely ordered. I have been much impressed with the Epistle to 'Innocents day'. The language is so exalted, Revelations fourteenth. Will you dear son read it? It will give abundant satisfaction and comfort. I also want you to commit to memory a verse in St Peter beginning with "Who His ownself bear our sins in His own body on the Tree". I do not want you to look despairingly at events, there is very much to be grateful for. I am sure you will admit that.

We are again at Seaford for the Summer. We are not able to take the house we thought of going to, the garden would cost too much to keep in order and the house appears too great. Our letters from you can reach us safely as usual. I am thankful in being able to say we are all well at present. I think Edward is stronger but not able to stand for a very long time. Charles had a severe attack of influenza in the Spring. He was in critical care for some time, we were very doubtful if he would get better. The doctor got a nurse as he said he would require very careful nursing and Charles was under the doctors hands for a long time. He was extremely thin and was not suffered to take a change for some months. I am glad to say he is all right again. This is his second attack. Augusta is not well yet, is weak and thin. Fred, Fanny and Edward have all been victims, but not so bad as Charles. I hope this terrible scourge will pass away. We have very little of it now.

There will shortly be a general election. If Gladstone is at the head it will be the worse for the Country. We shall know shortly. This town is close to Arundel where the Duke of Norfolk's seat is, a great deal of it belongs to him. Many of the people are Roman Catholics. The Duke is a good sort of man and does a great deal for this town. Arundel is nearly all Roman Catholic.

I hope you will get a sensible, moderate man at the head of your affairs. I am sorry you lost your cousin Julia. I wish her daughters may be prosperous and happy. Accept my kindest love to yourself and your dear wife and children. Ever your affectionate mother

E I Dyason

Fanny and Edward send their kind love.

**1892 July 3**

**HMC London from brother Fred Dyason**

My dear brother

Some time has elapsed since my last to you informing you of the death of our uncle Chas and the deposition of his affairs. I dare say you have been expecting to hear further from me and now that the property has been all realised I am able to give you the exact figure of the amount which has been invested in the funds for our mother's benefit during her life and which is afterwards to be divided amongst her children. According to a letter I received the other day from Mr Riches, one of the three executors and the husband of our cousin, nee Mary Ann Pearce (as you are aware, daughter of our late uncle Isaac Pearce) and also according to a recent letter from Uncle Fred to our sister Fanny, the amount so invested and apportioned is £4100 to £4200, which will come to us bye and bye, and we all wish and I am sure you concur in the same wish, that that date may be as distant as possible. There being eight of us, and I don't think there is the least desire anywhere that the number should be less, the amount of our individual shares, although welcome to all of us, is not large and is not likely to lead to those feelings of impatience which the expectant heirs are sometimes supposed to possess. The estate has been a matter of some difficulty and anxiety to the executors and Uncle Fred told Fanny it had been a great worry. The legal knowledge and experience of one of them (Mr Parker) was of much help to the others and I believe they have worked hard to achieve the best result possible. Uncle Fred and Riches being equally anxious to do so on our account as their own. I have had a letter from Mr Riches proposing to make a present to Mr Parker who is not well off and asking if we would join in it. Mr Parker had a small legacy under the Will but probably his trouble and time entitle him to a further small recognition from the legatees chiefly interested. I replied that I thought there would be no difficulty in our joining in our due ratios in any little present that might be contemplated. I have asked how much it would be and should think that a £5 note would be as much perhaps as we should be expected to contribute towards it. I am sure Uncle Fred would not wish us to do more than we could spare. I think the best way would be to let him deduct the small sum from the annual payment of interest to our mother and we could reimburse her.

I have not seen Uncle Fred for some months but shall run down to Ramsgate shortly. I seldom go when I take my holidays in any other direction than home. My mother always wants our company and as they (she and Edward and Fanny) live a rather secluded life in the country with few friends and acquaintances, the various visits of myself, Chas, Lizzie and Augusta are looked forward to by them and are of benefit both to them and to ourselves – at Easter, Xmas and occasionally during the summer. The girls from the North don't go so often. I believe Uncle Fred felt the loss of his brother very much. As a family the Pearces were very united and Uncle Chas although the youngest was really the principal in influence and success. Your recollection of the old house, now pulled down and rebuilt upon modern lines are pretty exact considering how young you were: and also of the position generally. The house was some 200 or 250 years old and possessed as you describe a kitchen with red brick floor, spacious chimney places with earthenware tiles, all illustrated, and panelled wall to the sitting rooms. The property was Uncle White's and left by him to grandma, his niece. Besides the house Uncle White left the members of the family about £300 each, Uncle Paulin left his money (some £4000) to his brother (Uncle Chas) but the bulk of the property was entirely his Uncle C's own achievement. There was a good retail business to the place and Uncle C was very smart in business and anything he put his hand to. Ramsgate was but a poor field for a man of his enterprise and had he been in the North or the Midlands he would probably have made a large fortune. As it was he did very well and from the low ebb of affairs when he took the management over from his father under whom a thoroughly good old fashioned business of the days of the Regency when the town was a royal and aristocratic resort, had frittered away to nothing. The fortune of the family began to mend and the men being of thrifty habits, although not as pushing as Uncle C they gradually recovered the position which all along they ought to have occupied. Uncle C mellowed considerably in character towards the end of his time, so much so that he was esteemed as well as respected by the whole town and when he died the flag was hoisted half mast on the East Cliff which I have never known done except for celebrities of high position. He had been as energetic in municipal matters as in the business and benevolent also and his funeral escorted by a detachment of police, firemen and the volunteers. He was also a good musician and he brought the raw material of the village and of St Peters to so high a musical standard that the old church was

always crowded on great choral occasions. The massive old Norman church and the churchyard to it contains the bones of many an ancestor and on the walls are the tablets containing their records, some are in the old black letter characters. I remember two figures engraved in brass in particular. The Huggett tomb (one of only two in the church) speaks of the family as an "ancient family" and the coat of arms upon it which I suspect you possess and have had described it, therefore more genuine than most of those assumed by some of the nouveaux riches who buy them readily at the College of Heralds whenever they like to invest a couple of guineas upon them. As a matter of fact I believe our grandmother's family was one of very fair position and superior to her husband's whom she married as a young girl for his good looks. He was a very handsome man I have heard and of very amiable kind nature but not calculated to cut his way to fortune and he failed to realise what I believe were his youthful bride's anticipation at that point – I do not know if you care for all this detail of what is really now ancient history, but from your enquiries I imagine you may. Of all the race there are now only two survivors, the last and I think all the way along almost the best – our mother, as staunch and steadfast as the old church aforesaid, still remains as a monument of cheerful industry and good example and healthy equanimity of character – a fine example of the good old English stock – uncle Fred the same – good health and pluck, good spirits and very fair abilities and actuated by really conscientious motives and considerations in all they have to do with, and carrying the same into all their actions and everyday life – and both alike in their invincible habit of always looking to the bright side of things upon every occasion.

Although you have ties now that bind you to the future rather than the past you can I am sure fully enter into the admiration with which we all regard the head of our family. Your little ones are I suppose now becoming big ones and I get news of them and of you when I go home. I have received all of your letters to mother I believe and always forward them promptly to her. We are all fairly well but those who had influenza still feel the effects which I have and which appear to cling to some who have had it for several months afterwards. I shall be pleased to answer any question you wish to give as to the estate. I would have told you the money has been invested in consols (2½). We have had the coldest June for 25 years.

Your affectionate brother F Dyason.

Mother has sent me a portion of your letter asking for your baptismal certifi. I will endeavour to find it for you. A baptismal certificate generally, but not necessarily, included date of birth. There is, however, no other proof for births prior to June 1837 when the Registration Act was passed, therefore a baptismal certificate is sufficient when there is no register. Insurance offices will accept other proof of age such as a declaration of self or parent, copy of Family Bible and you can get them to ratify your policy with their acceptance of such evidence.

1899

1899 February 22

From Isaac's mother EI Dyason (*aged 96 this is the last letter in the collection from Isaac's mother*)

My dear Harriet

I'll send a few scarfs and a tie by this mail – five in number, which I hope are the kind you want. I must apologise for their sameness as I can get no other pattern. The shops at Worthing do business of that kind themselves and do not care to provide materials for others by which they gain their own living. However you will find this colour and material will wear very well as your brothers find is the case. I am sorry Emily is not well. I suppose you have had her throat examined and if the uvula is the cause of the cough Emily will have lost it by this time, as if the cough still continues use Bow's Linament or Roche's Embrocation applied outwardly, spreading by the hand on the chest and covering it by a piece of soft old linen rag. These, either the one or the other, will take away the cough in 12 hours. The former application was perfectly true in my own case and in that of an elderly friend of ours, these two were rather severe cases. If the children have not had whooping cough, by applying Roches Embrocation it will turn the cough into a common cough. This was my mother's experience with all her children. If Emily should find it necessary to try this expedient she had better remain in bed for one day: most likely you may know of these remedies.

I am very pleased to hear Emily still continues her studies in those subjects which suit her taste, as in that case she will most certainly make advances and will overcome the difficulties she will meet on her way. I am also much pleased with Amy's industry. She has accomplished a very great deal. Both she and Clarence are doing well and have every encouragement to work on. In their last exam they have competed with those who are older than themselves and have carried off the prizes which the older pupils were too indolent, I presume, to work for, so ever they must work steadily to gain that knowledge which is necessary and useful to them now, and will prepare the way to further advancement in learning and more arduous studies.

I hope Clarence will like the tie and the girls will like the scarfs (plural scarves now). My dear Harriet, I think it is time for you to have a share of commendation. Only fancy all the labour of heat in making that quantity of jam, it must have been most trying. Then the putting all into separate jars, tying (sic) them all down and placing all in their separate divisions.

It is very nice to have a good milk that you know is wholesome. I suppose you do not have to boil it before using it as you know it is perfectly pure and healthy. It is very satisfactory to have the cow in your own management. I should think the pretty creature is a great favourite with all the family. Does the use of milk incline the children to grow too stout? That would be rather a drawback would it not? Milk diet only agrees with one of this family. That is Charles. It causes giddiness with the rest of us. I used to try it but was obliged to give it up. We can take it with coffee or tea and milk puddings.

I have not yet sent the photographs back as I wanted too. However if you could spare one or two of which you could spare. I have sent Clarence's papers with the other things. I hope my son will not think he is quite forgotten. Oh no, he is pre-eminent which you dear Harriet will endorse I am confident of. The beloved husband and the beloved father of an affectionate family. You will see one of the ties or scarfs is for him. I hope dear Harriet you will like the colour. I am thankful to say we are all well at present, with kindest love from Edward and Fanny and myself to you and my dear son and kind love and kisses to each of the children. I remain ever your loving mother.

(across the front) We are at present without a servant consequently Fanny has not time to write to her brother, just at present, but will do so shortly. Today is very fine though the weather has been stormy.



Roches Embrocation

**1899 May 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Monkton West Worthing from sister Frances Dyason**

My dear Brother

We are very much obliged to you for your handsome present to our mother which she received a day or two before we left for our holiday. It will enable her to have drives and many things which she could not have had without your kind gift. The drives did her so much good last year. She has been better and stronger ever since. They gave her a fillip and she has not gone back since. She is also so pleased that you do not forget her. She so often talks of you. You are her first born and the flower of the flock as aunt Polly so often used to tell us and made our jealousy.

She watches the children's progress and Harriet's care of them more especially as she is now concerned about Emily. She says she is at a most dangerous age which you, accustomed to look on her as a child, do not perhaps recognise. I do most earnestly hope she will not be led away to make an imprudent marriage, it means a lifelong misery. You know dear Brother it "runs in the family". How very different our lives would have been if our grandmother had married the solicitor from her boarding school as she then intended to do instead of the man whom she met at a ball and all her life bitterly regretted it. She often used to say the high mettled racer had come to the hounds. Unfortunately making undesirable marriages runs, as they say, in both families, but more especially we get it from our grandmother's side. Her father began it, grandmother, her sister, nephew and all followed as well as uncles, and the disposition has not died out in our generation by any means. The nephew Paulin Huggett, the heir to Stone Farm was engaged to be married to a Miss Brown, a daughter of one of the "Elder Brethren of Trinity House". In those days they were all gentlemen and all well off. Her trousseau was all prepared and everything ready when he announced he had married a flower girl from one of the theatres and not even a good character. Of course his life was ruined and Miss Brown's also. Our Grandmother had not the slightest idea of what she was marrying into. She thought she should have her carriage etc... Her mother was a widow and one not at all likely to look after her daughters. When they have once taken a fancy to anyone the mischief is done, it is too late as they never listen to reason. There are so many needy men in these days who hate to work and are always on the look out for a girl with a little money, especially among teachers, they haven't such grand opportunities. I will not write on the subject any more as it will weary you.

I am very sorry Clarence has been expecting the stamps so long. Fred and Charles are not in offices in which foreign stamps come in their way at all. Fred is in the Treasury and has to do with paying out money. Charlie is in the Stationary Department and has all the parliamentary papers to prepare but he says he will save any if he can get them. We are very sorry that Harriet has been so ill. We have taken this cottage for a month, it is quite in the country in one of the prettiest Surrey villages. We hope the weather will soon be warm, we have had a very cold spring. Julia, Edward and I have had several bad attacks of influenza this winter that we thought we must have a change. Julia has been away a month at Malvern with her husband and Edward has come home with it...

Yr affectionate sister  
Frances Dyason

1915

1915 January 27

Monkton, West Worthing from sister Frances Dyason (*aged 82, Isaac dies in 1915 aged 83*)

My dear brother

I was glad to get your letter, and to hear that all are well. We were very much surprised to hear that Clarence was married, and was coming to Europe. I had one short letter from him while they were in America, but could not write to them, because they gave me no address. That was in June. I heard no more from them till the end of November, when they said they were coming to England. As we had not heard we thought they were afraid to come on and had gone back. So as Julia was not at all well we decided to go to Brighton for a short time to see a doctor there. However, just before we left, we had a note from Clarence to say they could come for a few days, but as we had taken rooms, we were obliged to go. They came to us on Xmas Eve, and Xmas Day, and left the next day Saturday. We were sorry their stay was so short, but they said they were obliged to go. I was shocked to find Clarence had paid 17 shillings for a bedroom which I had already paid for, as it was mine and which I had gone out of for him. Of course we can never get our money back. If he had spoken to me I could have told him it was already paid for, but it is not a matter of much moment. I do not know if they came to see our houses at Worthing. I do not think they went north, the weather was so very unusual and boisterous but they did not seem to mind it.

Julia and I thought Clarence very much like the Pearce family in figure and action, but more like the Dyasons in face, especially like his cousin John at the Cape. It is strange that Amy should have married into a Scotch family. Julia thinks it is a very good thing to bring quite a fresh element into the Dyason strain, she says they so badly need it. Our branch is gone from this part of the world. There are only Charlie's three girls in Valence left. Two of them are married not very well but they are better off than if they were single. They have been married 4 years but at present have no children. They both married Irishmen. One is a Romanist the other a Protestant. The girls are all Romanists like their mother who is Irish. She is I think 50 this year. I am very much obliged to you for having so generously sent the dividends from Charlies share all this time. It has been a great help to them. Of course we have done the same. You will remember when Charlie died his consuls\* were divided into 7 shares of which each of us had one. We have left these shares to them in our Wills as of course they are not ours, but belong to Charles. We offered to give them his share when he died, but they said they would rather we kept it for an emergency. I suppose you have also left the share to them in your Will, or they would not get it unless you have expressly stated they are to have it. Amy has sent me a photo card of her three little ones. They look sturdy little things. From what we have heard of Elizabeth we think she is like our Elizabeth, your old playmate. Julia has not been at all well for some time. She had influenza last winter and then Fred's illness and death and the worry of the war have been too much for her, but I am thankful to say the little stay at Brighton did her good, and the fresh doctor we saw there.

Lizzie and Gus (=Augusta) are fairly well. You remember our cousin Isaac Pearce? He is still living at Ramsgate. He has been married three times, and is the last of the Peaces with the exception of one son (his only child). I am glad to say his is being well educated. I do not know if he is being brought up to anything. He will have enough to live on from the money his father had left him from our mother's brothers. It seems strange two large families of ten children each should have almost gone out. I hope when this reaches you the travellers will have safely arrived. They will be able to tell you what they think of us!! I do not wonder letters get lost. I see on board a steamer for Australia the mail was stolen and lots of letters lost. I hope Harriet and Amy are well. You will have heard of the German raid on our coasts. We never know when they will come next. If we are blown up here you will see it in the papers. What cowards they are.

With much love to all Your affectionate sister

Francis Dyason

\**consuls* = *government bonds*



Caption reads: hole made by Zeppelin Bomb, Back of Albion Hill, Ramsgate, 17/5/1