



My Dear Brother

The Letters of Thomas & Henry Hookham: 1830–1899

**from schooldays in Princes Risborough, Bucks
to later life in London and in Christchurch, New Zealand**



Sandy Macfarlane

EDITORS PREFACE

Letters and diaries are a very valuable source for social and economic history. Buckinghamshire is well served from this source for some of the major county families (for instance the Verneys and the Purefoys). This Buckinghamshire Paper deals with a middle class boy and his family. It is especially valuable because of the way the letters are supported by extensive research summarised in footnotes which should be read in full. The letters illustrate some important themes of Buckinghamshire, London and emigration history. A special feature from a Bucks viewpoint is the detail given about life in one of the many small boarding schools that were a feature of the small towns of the county in the Nineteenth Century. Another is the relationship between a London family and their 'Cadsden Cottage' in the Chilterns in the middle years of the century. DAVID THORPE

INTRODUCTION

On Saturday 16th October 1830 Thomas Hookham, aged nine, (identified in what follows as Thomas Hookham 4) and his brother Henry Thomas Hookham (known as Henry and about to celebrate his sixth birthday), sat down at their boarding school in the little market town of Princes Risborough in Buckinghamshire, to write the first of a series of letters that would bind the family together until Henry's death in 1898, followed by that of Thomas in 1899. The letters unfold a story of youthful optimism and the pragmatism of age, of comedy and tragedy, romance and changing fortune, but above all of a family that deserves recognition for its contribution to the world of the 19th century, ultimately in both its northern and southern hemispheres.

That the story can be told is remarkable in itself. In 1865 Henry emigrated with his family to New Zealand where these surviving letters were preserved by various members of the family, among them Henry's great-grandson, John Gilson, in Christchurch. In 1998, one hundred and thirty three years after Henry's voyage and when his name had been long-forgotten in Princes Risborough, a young woman, Venetia Lewis, left her home in the nearby hamlet of Cadsden to undertake the same journey, and by happy chance found employment in the New Zealand Government Department of Survey and Land Information in Christchurch where John Gilson was Senior Surveyor and Manager of the Survey Division.

Even then the story hung in the balance, for it was not until the day before Venetia was to leave the department that they spoke to each other and John Gilson, made aware of her origins, told her of the letters and their connection with Princes Risborough. The next day he showed her a photograph of a house with the pencilled inscription 'Cadsden Cottage enlarged' which Venetia was astonished to recognise as her own home and to realise, as she read through the letters with John and his wife, Paula, that it was also the country house of which the Hookham family wrote with such affection.

Over the following months the Gilsens generously passed copies of the letters, together with such family history as they had pieced together, to the Princes Risborough Area Heritage Society where they were transcribed. The ink has lasted well and for the most part the writing is legible without too much difficulty. It was a delight to see Henry's early childish hand develop as he learnt the exquisite copperplate of his formal letters from school; only his mother's writing eventually suffered, as age and distress overtook her.

Such problems as there were in transcription largely arose from a dearth of punctuation and the demands of economy; with postage charged per page, for instance, abbreviations were not infrequent and long letters had their early pages over-written at right angles by those that followed. For the main part the transcriptions match the originals, except where better clarity could be achieved by punctuation; where there is uncertainty about a word the suggested interpretation is given in square brackets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due to those who have helped create this volume from what was initially little more than a chance encounter between two unrelated individuals from opposite ends of the globe.

Firstly, to the families of Nancy Gilson, Marianne Grace Barker and Emily Rosa Marshall, granddaughters of the Henry Thomas Hookham of these letters through his son Henry Thomas, junr., for keeping the letters safe and granting access to them.

My particular thanks are due to Nancy Gilson's son, John, and his wife Paula, for their generosity in copying the letters and many family photographs and making them so freely available, and for their patience in answering so many questions.

I am grateful to Chris Kingham, Chairman of the Risborough Area Heritage Society, for his support, to John and Margo Dinwoodie for their careful reading of the text and advice in the preparation of the genealogical tables, and to the owners of certain of the pictures, identified in each section, for permission to reproduce them.

I am grateful to Jeff Northcote, (<http://weather.northcott.co.nz>) for the photograph of Christchurch in the Snow, 1895, which also appears in 'Canterbury, the Big Snow, 1992', published by Philip King Booksellers. The photograph of the First Meeting of the New Zealand Council for Women, 1895, is reproduced by courtesy of the Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago.

The greatest task was the research that fleshes out the bare bones of the letters, and for this I am immeasurably indebted to Rex Kidd, the Heritage Society's Vice-President, for his enthusiastic encouragement and the exhaustive investigation without which most of what follows would not have come to light.

I thank Nigel and Chloe Lewis for allowing access to documents relating to Cadsden House, and lastly, but by no means least, I thank their daughter, Venetia Ellis, who brought the letters to my attention and who was the catalyst for this adventure.

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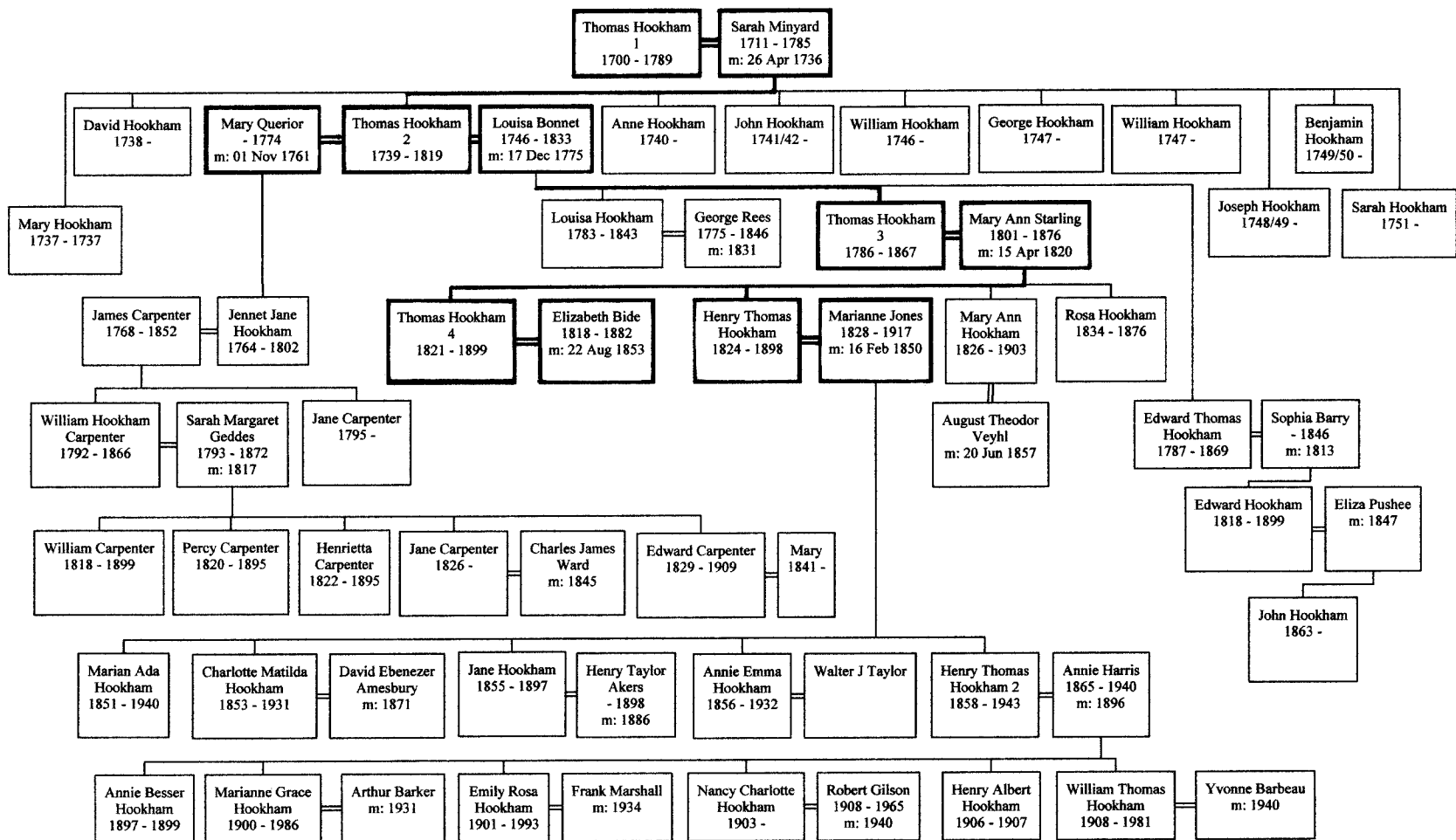
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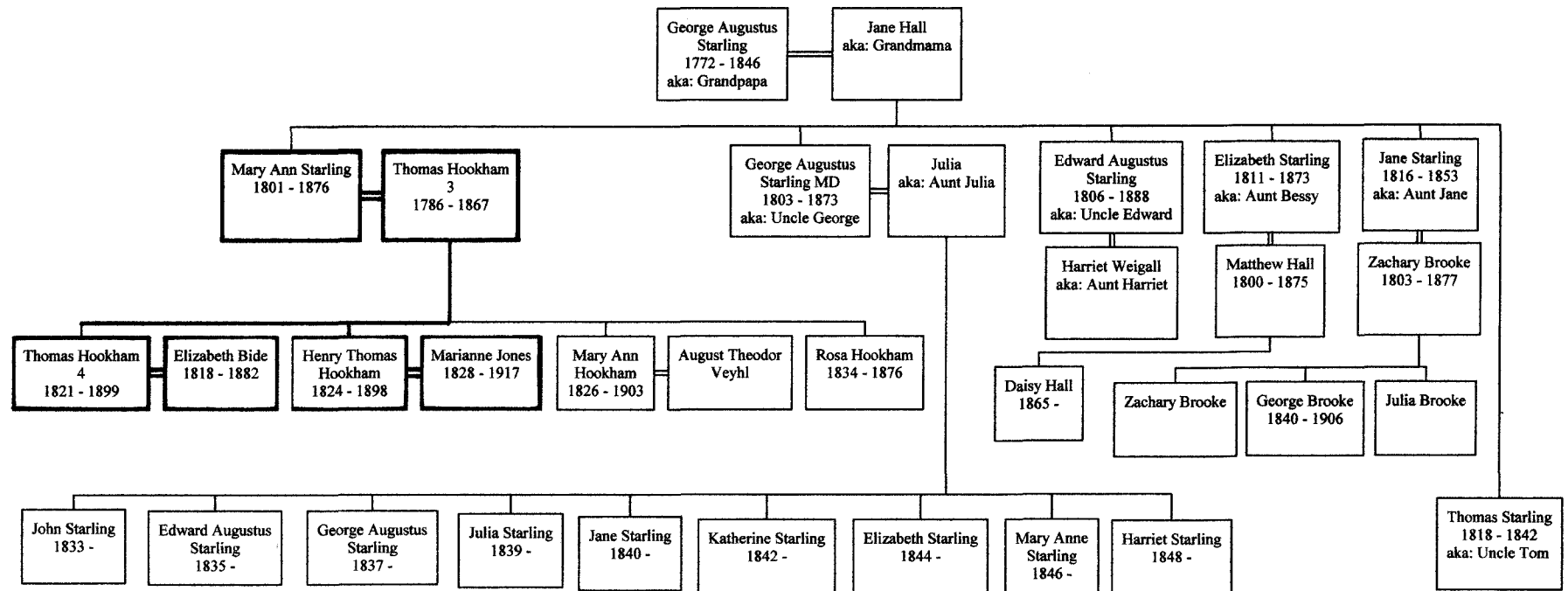
PART ONE THE BACKGROUND TO THE LETTERS

FAMILY TREES

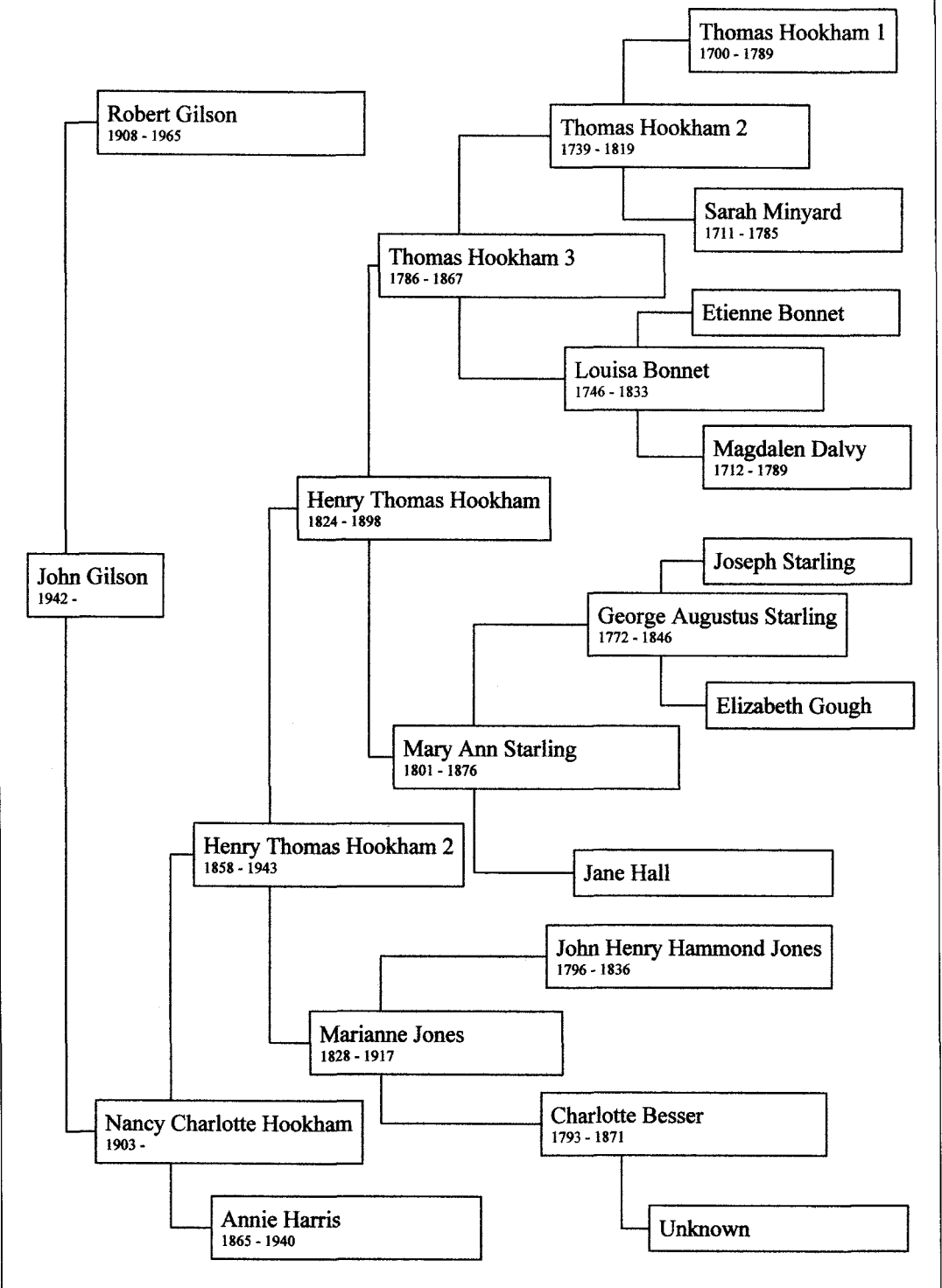
Descendants of Thomas Hookham 1



Descendants of George Augustus Starling



The Hookham Ancestry of John Gilson



Chapter One

The Family of Hookham

Thomas Hookham 1

The origins of the Hookham family, of whom Thomas Hookham 4 (1821-1899) and Henry Thomas, called Henry, (1824-1898) are the principal players in what follows, are obscured by the scarcity of records concerning 18th century London, and by the unreliability of spelling in records of any era. The earliest name known to John Gilson is that of a Thomas Hookham, born in the first decade of the 18th century and thought to have married a Sarah Mynard in 1736. The marriage register of St. Ann's, Soho, shows that a Thomas Hookham (but written Hockham) married Sarah Minyard on 26 April 1736 and the death of 'Mr. Thomas Hookham ... died Dec 1 1789 aged 89' was recorded in a Monumental Inscription in the Bayswater Burial Ground.¹

Thomas Hookham's passing was also mentioned in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and copied in the *European Magazine* for December 1789 as 'In Warwick Street, Golden Square, aged 88, Mr. Hookham'. Neither his birthplace nor occupation is known but the notices and the appellation 'Mr.' indicate a man of substance. The given ages at death, which imply a birth date in 1700 or 1701, make it reasonably certain that these records all refer to the same man. For the sake of clarity he will be identified hereafter as Thomas Hookham 1.

The Bayswater Monumental Inscription also records the death of 'Sarah Hookham, on 8th January 1785, aged 73'. No record of her baptism has been found but she was possibly a daughter of Edward and Anne Christiana Minyard, two of whose children, Olive and Edward, were baptised on 10 Jan 1710 and 26 June 1712 respectively at St. Ann's, Soho, where Sarah was later to be married. Given the Huguenot connection that is discussed in the next chapter, it may also be relevant that a M. Miniard, described as a Frenchman, was buried at St. Ann's in 1687.

Baptisms of eleven children of Thomas Hookham 1 and Sarah have been found, most at St. George's, Bloomsbury, although the first, of a daughter Mary in 1737, was at St. James's, Piccadilly, where the burial of a child of the same name is recorded in the following month. The name that most concerns this history is another Thomas who was baptised at St. Giles-in-the-Fields² on April 25th 1739. His parents are given as Thomas and Sarah Hooker, but their forenames and the date fit well with the births of the other children. Subject to correction he will be regarded as Thomas Hookham 2.

Thomas Hookham 2

After his baptism nothing more is known of Thomas Hookham 2 until his marriage to Mary Querior,³ on 1st November 1761 in St. Thomas, Barbados. All the surviving Parish Registers and Wills for Barbados have been transcribed but this marriage is the only reference they contain to anyone with the surname Hookham or Querior.

Why Thomas and Mary were in Barbados is a mystery. Thomas could possibly have been serving an apprenticeship if he had been there from the age of 14, and perhaps Mary Querior also. Britain was at war with France from 1756-63 and both the Army and Navy had bases in Barbados.

The only known child of this marriage, Jennet Jane Hookham, was baptised at the church of St. George the Martyr⁴, Queen Square, London, on 26th June 1764, when her parents were living in Red Lion Square. The same year, according to Tinsley's *Random Recollections of an Old Publisher*,⁵ saw the foundation of Hookham's Circulating Library, which was to figure prominently in the lives of this and the succeeding two generations.

Jennet Jane Hookham married James Carpenter, a bookseller, in 1789 at St. George's, Hanover Square, and had two children by him, William Hookham in 1792 and Jane in 1795. William Hookham Carpenter had a distinguished career as Keeper of Prints at the British Museum, while his wife, Margaret née Geddes, a prolific artist, was one of the foremost portrait painters of her day, of whom an obituary notice in the *Art Journal* said 'Had the Royal Academy abrogated the law which denies a female admission to its ranks [she] would most assuredly have gained, as she merited, a place in them; ... the doors of the institution are yet too narrow for such to find entrance'.⁶

Thomas Hookham 2 first appears in the London Directories in 1768, as a bookseller in New Street, Hanover Square, later moving to Hanover Street shortly before the death of his wife, Mary, in 1774. The exact date of her death is unknown but the Monumental Inscriptions of the Bayswater Burial Ground where she was buried on 19 December 1774 include 'Mary Hookham, wife of Thomas Hookham of this parish ...' the rest of the inscription being illegible.

One year after Mary's death, Thomas Hookham 2 married again, on 17 December 1775 and this time to Louisa Bonnet. The marriage had a somewhat difficult start as in February 1776 Thomas Hookham 2 appears in a list of bankrupts.⁷ His name is absent from London Directories from 1777 to 1780 but in 1781 he reappears as a bookseller at 147 New Bond Street. There are three known children of this second marriage: Louisa, born 19 December 1783; Thomas, born 28 September 1786; and Edward Thomas, born 30 September 1787.

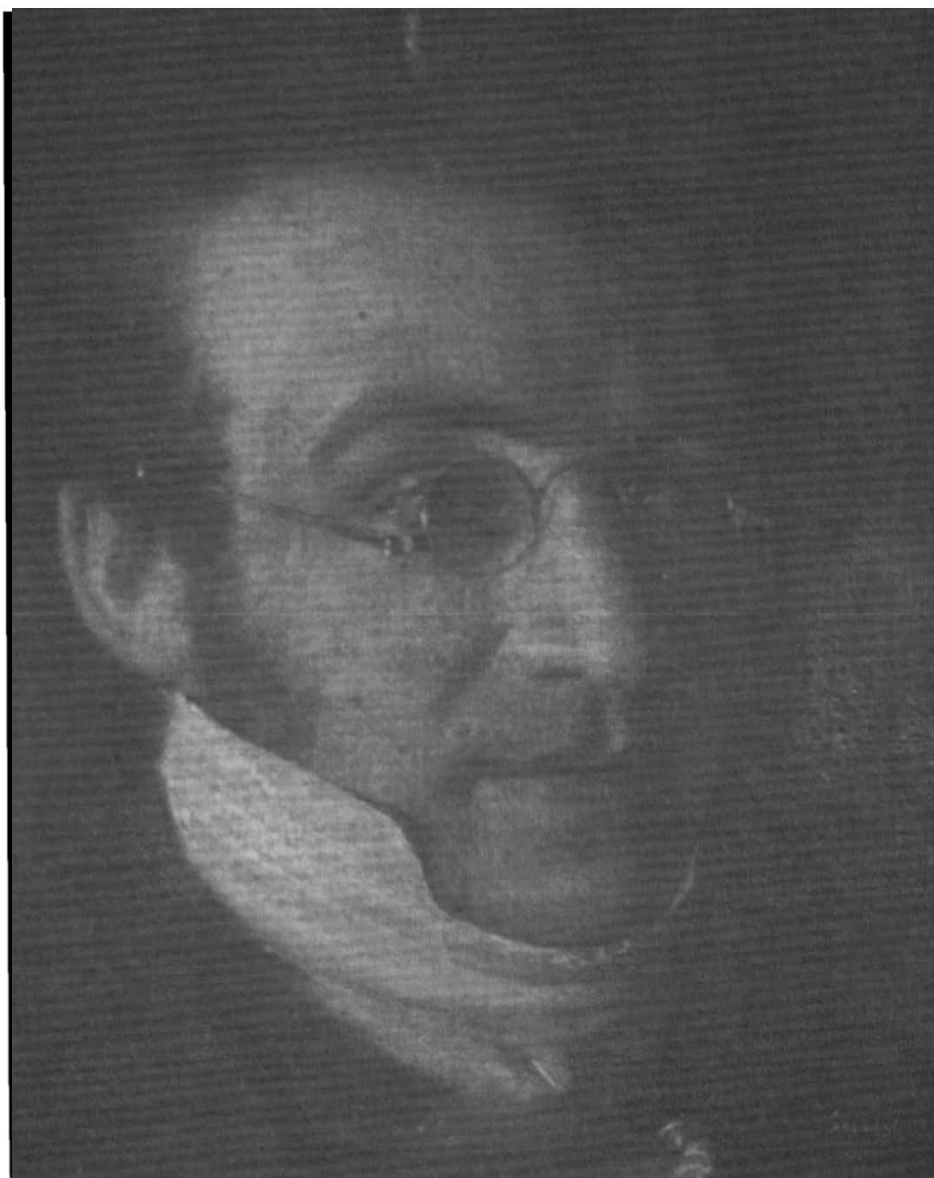
By 1791 Thomas Hookham 2 was at 15 Old Bond Street, which was to remain the family home for the next eighty years and where his Library achieved renown. At some time about 1814, after handing over the Library and its associated business to his two sons, he acquired a freehold house in Lower Tooting, Surrey where he died aged 80, being buried at Carshalton on 10th April 1819.

His widow, Louisa, died on 3 April 1833 and is also buried at Carshalton. Neither she nor her 'beloved' daughter Louisa, figure in the Hookham letters but the latter's husband, George Rees, is worthy of mention. A native of Pembrokeshire, he graduated as a doctor of medicine in Glasgow in 1807. He founded the Pembroke House Lunatic Asylum in Hackney and later became medical superintendent of the Cornwall Lunatic Asylum in Bodmin. Returning to London, he died at his house in Euston Square on 7 April 1846, three years after Louisa's death in 1843.

Of the two sons of Thomas Hookham 2 and Louisa, the younger, Edward Thomas, plays little part in the story. He married Sophia Barry in 1813 and they had several children of whom a son, Edward, is probably the 'Ned' mentioned in the letters. Sophia died in 1846, after which Edward Thomas lived with a married daughter in Dover, where he died in 1869.

Thomas Hookham 3

It is the elder brother, Thomas Hookham 3, who is the more important to the story, building on his father's foundation to make the Circulating Library and associated Literary Assembly internationally renowned.



1. Thomas Hookham 3, aged 30 From a portrait by W. Etty, RA

In 1820 Thomas Hookham 3 married Mary Ann Starling, shortly before her nineteenth birthday. She was the daughter of George Augustus Starling, a lawyer specialising in conveyance of property, and would later establish her own literary credentials with such works as *The Life and Times of Margaret of Anjou*.⁸



2. Mary Ann Hookham, née Starling, aged 37
From a pencil drawing by Margaret Carpenter

There were four children from this marriage, Thomas Hookham 4, born January 1821, Henry Thomas, born 22 October 1824, Mary Ann, born 1826 and Rosa, born 3 August 1834; a more detailed account of their lives will be gathered from the letters, but Mary Ann seems to have made an unfortunate marriage in 1857 to August Theodor Veyhl, appearing alone as a lodger in the 1861 Census, separated from her husband. She appears eventually to have gained a private income, perhaps as an annuity on his death. Rosa gained some qualification as a hospital Housekeeper or Matron, but perhaps because of continuing ill health, struggled to find employment and died in the same year as her mother, 1876. Mary Ann outlived all her siblings, dying on 12 November 1903.

Thomas Hookham 3 made 15 Old Bond Street his home, but before his marriage seems already to have owned a country cottage in Cadsden in the parish of Monks Risborough, Buckinghamshire, of which more later. Initially using it intermittently as a rural retreat, he made it his home on his retirement in about 1856 with the intention of spending his latter years there. Sadly, as his wife recounts in a letter to Henry, events, notably the illness of his daughter Rosa, forced him to leave 'his beloved home' and move back to London, where he himself soon became ill and died in 1867. Even before his death there had been a marked decline in the family fortunes and his widow spent most of the rest of her life in straitened circumstances, dependent on the generosity of relatives despite the implications of the fulsome obituary in 'The Gentleman's Magazine' for July 1867: 'The deceased gentleman bore a great name amongst the literary circles of the last generation ... His name was familiar to everybody in Europe who took an interest in any literary subject.'

Thomas Hookham 4

It was Thomas Hookham 4 who attempted to carry the Hookham Library forward, but the third quarter of the 19th century saw changes in the way libraries were used and was also turbulent in terms of company law. The business foundered in 1871 through a combination of competition and ill-advised financial transactions, themselves to some extent arising from his brother Henry's decision to emigrate.



3. Thomas Hookham 4.

Thomas struggled to make a living through his contacts in the book trade and the poignancy of his situation, and that of his mother and sisters, is all too plain from the letters. He and his wife Elizabeth, who appear to have been childless, had to leave the Old Bond Street home and in 1881 had rooms at 17 Store Street, off Tottenham Court Road. Elizabeth died in January 1882 and Thomas on 18 May 1899 and at his death his effects were valued at only £44-11-6, compared with his cousin Edward Hookham, who died in the same year and left effects of £558-1-1.

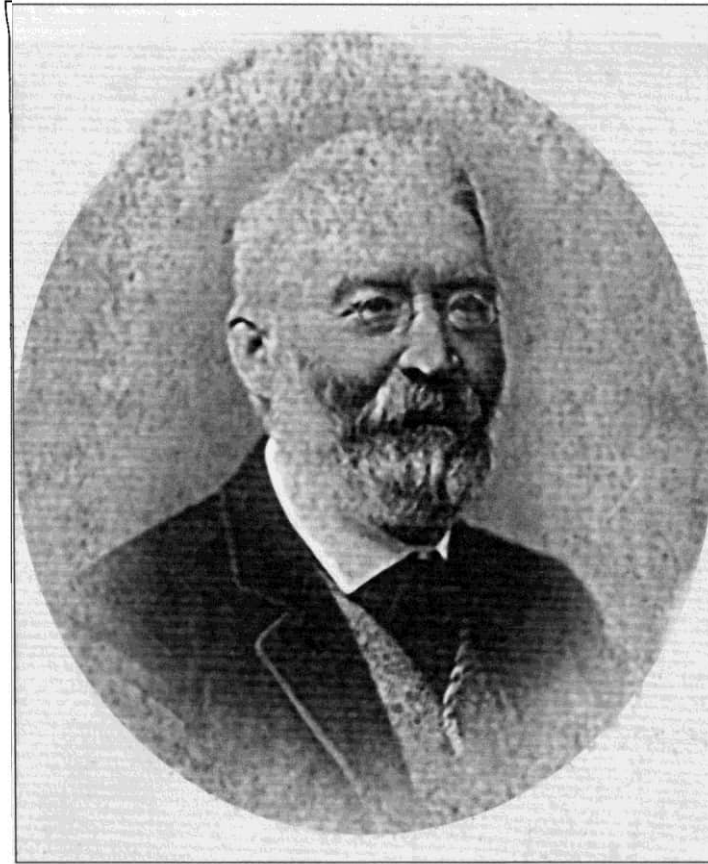
Henry Thomas Hookham

Thomas's brother, Henry Thomas, (the Henry of the letters) had married Marianne Jones on 16 February 1850, though his early letters refer to her as Marian. She was the daughter of John Henry Hammond Jones and his wife Charlotte, née Besser. The Besser family was comparatively wealthy, but the letters will show that family intrigues seem to have conspired to cheat Marianne of any inheritance.

Henry and Marianne had five children, Marian Ada, born 1851, Charlotte Matilda, born 1853, Jane, born 1855, Annie Emma, born 1856 and Henry Thomas, born 1858. On 10 June 1865 Henry and his family boarded the ship 'The Tudor' and set sail for New Zealand, arriving at Lyttelton in the South Island on 23 September.⁹ His brother, again quoted by Tinsley, later commented that Henry 'had a hankering to emigrate, thinking he would gain for [his family] in a better future far away, and was desirous himself of a more active kind of life'.

On first arriving in New Zealand Henry took to farming, acquiring Highfield Farm near Kaiapoi, but soon turned to teaching, first at Kaiapoi Island and later as Head Teacher at Yaldhurst. Three of his daughters, Marian Ada, Jane and Annie Emma also entered the teaching profession, the first-named most notably as the successful headmistress of St. Michael's Church School, Christchurch, at a time when the government, in 1877, had banned the teaching or reading of the Bible in primary schools and withdrawn financial assistance from church schools in pursuit of 'free and secular education'.

On his retirement in 1882 Henry received a glowing testimonial from the School Committee.¹⁰ He moved to Jacksons Road, Fendalton, two miles from the centre of Christchurch, where, pursuing a lifelong interest, he became New Zealand's first Chess Champion in 1879. In 1896, as age began to take its toll, but still actively interested in all that was going on around them, particularly in politics and social justice, he and Marianne moved to Onslow Street, St. Albans, only a mile from the centre of the city. Greatly affected by the unforeseen death of his daughter, Jane, in 1897, he became increasingly frail and died on 24 November 1898.



4. Henry Thomas Hookham
1824 – 1898



5. Around the Chess Table at Jacksons Road, Fendalton
l. to r. Jane, Marian Ada, Annie Emma, Marianne and Henry Thomas Hookham, senr.

1. Bayswater Burial Ground is in the parish of St. George, Hanover Square, London. This large parish was created when the church was built in 1724 and was taken from the even larger parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, necessitated by the building of the new districts that we know as Mayfair and the West End. In 1764 St. George's obtained land in the Bayswater Road for a Burial Ground, not far from the present Marble Arch. Burials there ceased in the late 1890s and early in the 20th century such Monumental Inscriptions as were still legible were recorded. Although Golden Square is in the parish of St. James, Piccadilly, Thomas Hookham 2 was living in New Bond Street in the parish of St. George when his parents died and presumably he arranged their burials.
2. St Giles-in-the-Fields was a hospital in the mediaeval period and the former chapel became a parish church in 1547. The church was re-built in 1630 and again in 1734. and St. Giles-in-the-Fields would be the most likely alternative to St. George's, Bloomsbury.
3. Nothing is known of Mary Querior's antecedents, but the marriage of a Thomas Querior to a Susan Gregry at St. James, Westminster, in 1716 may be relevant; they had a daughter, Mary, baptised on 1 November 1723, also at St James, Westminster. Although sixteen years older than Thomas Hookham 2, this does not rule out the possibility that she is the Mary Querior who became his first wife. Mrs. Mary Hookham's age at marriage and at death are not known, but if they are one and the same person she would have been 40 when her daughter, Jennet Jane, was born and it might explain why there was only one child of the marriage, and why Mary died so much earlier, by 45 years, than her husband.
4. The church of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square was another (1710), necessitated by the expansion of the built-up area, this time in the northern part of the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn.
5. *Random Recollections of an Old Publisher* William Tinsley, 2 vols London 1900. A letter from Thomas Hookham 4 to William Tinsley, also quoted in *Mudie's Circulating Library* G. L. Griest, 1970
6. Smith, R. J., *Margaret Sarah Carpenter* Biographical Notes for a 200th anniversary exhibition at Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum, 1993
7. Bankruptcy was not uncommon in the 18th and early 19th centuries. One creditor for £100 or two for £150 could apply to the Magistrates for a Bankruptcy Commission to be appointed. The debtor could retain the wearing apparel of himself and his family, necessary household goods and furniture and tools of trade, but everything else had to be surrendered and sold. A year after the Bankruptcy was declared a dividend was paid to the creditors and a second after another six months. In the case of Thomas Hookham only the second dividend is listed, on 1st August 1778.
8. *The Life and Times of Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England and France, and of her father René the Good, King of Sicily, Naples and Jerusalem*, 2 vols. Mary Ann Hookham, pub. Tinsley Brothers, London, 1872
9. The log of the Lyttelton Harbourmaster for 12th October, 1865, records the arrival of the *Tudor*, a vessel of 1,785 tons, under Captain F. Wherland, carrying as passengers 96 men, 98 women and 70 children. The Lyttelton Times spoke of it as having had a protracted voyage of 103 days, owing to light winds as far as the Cape of Good Hope, and that two children had died on the voyage. The ship was quarantined, no doubt because of one case of smallpox at an early stage in the voyage, but was soon released and was described by the Commissioners as 'one of the most orderly ships we have had in port for some time'.
10. John Taylor, Chairman of the School Committee, in addition to praising Henry's academic achievements, wrote that 'His moral and social character, and gentlemanly bearing during the whole tenure of his term here, have been of a most exemplary kind, and while the Committee very much regret [his] leaving the district, they are pleased to think he is doing so for the purposes of retiring from the turmoil of an active school life.'

Chapter Two

The Huguenot Connection

Whilst it has not yet been possible to trace the Hookham family back beyond the early 18th century it is clear that it includes a Huguenot element through its distaff side. This may not be surprising given that it has been said to be statistically probable that over three-quarters of all Englishmen have Huguenot blood in their veins¹, but it may well have influenced both the private and business interests of the family. Among the Huguenot refugees who came to England from France and the Netherlands between the 16th and 18th centuries to escape religious persecution, and who have been estimated to amount to some 180,000 – 190,000 over that period, were printers, bookbinders, paper makers, plantsmen and gardeners. All these trades may be seen reflected in the daily life of the Hookhams.

Through the 16th – 18th centuries two distinct communities developed in London, one in Spitalfields, in the East End, with its thriving textile and similar industries. It was from this that the first certain Huguenot introduction to the Hookham family came, with the marriage of Thomas Hookham 2 to his second wife, Louisa Bonnet, in 1775.

Louisa was the daughter of Etienne and Magdalen (Madeleine) Bonnet and had been baptised at the French Huguenot church called the Artillery Church, in Artillery Lane, Spitalfields. Her father's occupation is not known but he was the second of Magdalen's three husbands, the third being Jacob Papineau, a leather dresser in Bermondsey, by whom she had another daughter Mary. Magdalen herself came from the more affluent community that had grown up around what was then the Savoy and Leicester Fields, now the West End. She had been baptised at the Glasshouse Street and Leicester Fields French Chapel, and was the second surviving child of Isaac and Marianne (or Marie Anne) Dalvy.

There is, however, the added possibility that Thomas Hookham 2 was himself of Huguenot descent through his mother, Sarah Minyard. Again, nothing is known with certainty of her parentage but her marriage to Thomas Hookham 1 took place at St. Anne's, Soho and, as mentioned in a previous chapter, the only reference to a similar surname at that time is to the burial of a M. Miniard, identified as a Frenchman.

Among the many constraints leading to the Huguenot exodus had been a ban on the publication of any books, whether or not they had any bearing on their religious beliefs, and it must have come as a relief to find that even though England was not without its prejudices they were free, subject to the rules of various guilds, to practice whatever occupation they chose. Huguenots were prominent amongst artists and craftsmen in the West End, and being part of that environment may have encouraged Thomas Hookham 2, at the age of 25, to expand his bookselling business into the library that was to become a byword in literary circles; in achieving this he received help from his wife's family, particularly from her uncle John James Dalvy..

In his Will, proved in 1793, John James Dalvy, who was quite wealthy, included several specific bequests of money, bonds and personal items and also of four leasehold messuages, two of which were in New Bond Street and Bruton Street in the occupation of Thomas Hookham 2, bookseller.

The Bruton Street property was left to Thomas Hookham 2, while that in Bond Street was divided, half to one of Dalvy's neices, Louisa's half-sister Mary, and half shared by Henry Carpenter², pewterer, and Jacob John Papineau, leather dresser, subject to their paying any profits to his other niece, Louisa Hookham, 'such profits not liable to use of Thomas Hookham but for sole use of Louisa Hookham'.

On a more domestic note, the influence of Huguenot plantsmen and gardeners has already been noted. Robert Gwynne writes '[What] matters is ... the way they popularised the idea of small scale gardening ... By emphasising the cultivation of one variety of flower and bringing it to perfection [they] paved the way for florist's feasts and so for the flower shows of our own day'.³ Alan Shipp, holder of the British National Collection of Hyacinths,⁴ writes 'In 1573 some bulbs were sent to the Vienna Botanic Gardens whose Curator, Carolus Clusius, later moved to the Botanic Garden at Leiden in Holland, which led to the formation of the Dutch bulb industry. New varieties were greatly prized, and in the early days could command high prices - in 1753, when some 350 varieties were available, a single bulb of 'Staten General' was offered at 600 guilders, the equivalent of about £4,000 today'.

Among the letters of 1834-6 are several referring to the passion of the Hookham family for Hyacinths, and the intense rivalry both within the family and with neighbours. The young Henry, aged nine, writes to his mother 'I hope you will pick me out a better Hyacinth this time than you did last as it had no chance of winning the prize'. His brother, Thomas 4, complains in February 1836 that his sister, Mary Anne's, 'Princess Elizabeth has turned out a provokingly beautiful flower .. but luckily it will not be out in time.'

By the mid-19th century some 2000 varieties were being offered, developed from the original *Hyacinthus orientalis* of Asia Minor. The letters give names and descriptions of twenty nine of these, most of which have since been lost to cultivation. Only one is still known with any certainty, Grande Blanche Imperiale, which has recently been re-introduced to the National Collection from Lithuania, and this was one chosen for display by the unfortunate Henry in 1836. Again his brother writes 'besides what befell it before you left, all the leaves were knocked off, one after the other, and at last the flower itself.' Out of such setbacks Henry developed a love of nature, which showed itself in drawings, in his time at The Cottage and in New Zealand.

1. R D Gwynne, *Huguenot Heritage*, 1985, Sussex Academic Press.

2. What relationship, if any, there may be between this Henry Carpenter and the James Carpenter who married Jennet Jane, daughter of Thomas Hookham 2's first marriage, remains to be ascertained.

3. R D Gwynne, *op. cit.* p. 88

4. The National Hyacinth Collection is held at Waterbeach, Cambridge.

Chapter Three

Hookham's Circulating Library and Literary Assembly

In 1764, Thomas Hookham 2 extended his bookselling business to include a Circulating Library, declaring his ambition 'to promote the interest of society, by the encouragement and dissemination of literature'. That there was a need is reflected in the autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, co-founder in 1731 of America's first subscription library, the Library Company of Philadelphia, who wrote that when he visited London in 1724 'circulating libraries were not then in use'. In fact, surviving advertisements suggest that some service was already available, but on a very small scale, nothing like that eventually achieved by Hookham's. In her *Memoirs* Madame de la Tour du Pin, forced to flee from revolutionary France in 1794, writes of her joy at receiving 'ten volumes from Hookham's Library [and] a catalogue of 20,000 volumes of every kind, in English and French'.¹

It is of interest to this story that Princes Risborough, where the grandsons of Thomas Hookham 2 went to school, did not acquire a library until the second decade of the 19th century. The Rev. Richard Meade became curate there in 1811 and by 1816 had established a small parochial library in the newly-acquired Parsonage in the Market Square. It consisted of 120 works, chiefly in Divinity and Classical History.²

Although Hookham's Library may fairly be regarded as a family business, and remained as such for a hundred years, it seems to have started in New Street, Hanover Square in the name of Hookham & Halbouche.³ That partnership does not appear again, but possibly the same Halbouche appears in 1785 with another Circulating Library, Shlunt & Halbouche. As mentioned in a previous chapter, Thomas Hookham 2 was declared bankrupt in 1776 and perhaps these events were connected, since when he reappeared in business the library had become simply Hookham's. It was already a name that came quickly to the lips of the literary world; Hannah More, one of the most influential writers of her day, mentions it in her satirical poem *Florio*, published in 1786 – 'for he, to keep him from the vapours, subscribed to Hookham's, saw the papers'.⁴

In 1791 Thomas Hookham 2 took his son-in-law, James Carpenter, into partnership in the bookselling, stationery and book-binding branches of the business, and his nephew, Thomas Jordan Hookham, similarly into the circulating library.⁵ By this time he had moved to 15 Old Bond Street, which was to be home to both the family and the Library through the next generation. Perhaps this was in part to accommodate a new venture, for in that year he fitted up 'at a very great expense, an elegant suite of apartments' to house his Literary Assembly, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family, nobility and gentry and with a subscription of two guineas per annum. This supplied 'all the Periodical and diurnal publications of repute to be met with on the continent, in Great Britain and Ireland, the East and West Indies, as well as the Foreign Gazettes'. To keep the company as select as possible 'none but subscribers may be admitted, nor any person as a subscriber unless introduced by a member or known to Hookham [although] respectable foreigners, whose residence may not exceed three months will be admitted for that period, by the introduction of a member, to see the Gazettes of their respective countries, on paying *One guinea*'.⁶

It is evident that Thomas Hookham achieved his ambition from the, albeit rather jingoistic, obituary that appeared in the *Monthly Magazine or British Register* after his death in 1819 – 'the march of knowledge, in England, has been greatly accelerated by the successive enterprises of Batho (sic)⁷ ... and Hookham; and ... as these institutions are peculiar to the British Isles we are probably more indebted to these projectors than, at first sight, we may be willing to allow, for that general diffusion of intelligence which raises the population of Britain so far above other nations.' One can only wonder what Benjamin Franklin might have had to say about that conclusion, had he been alive to read it.

The business now passed to Thomas Hookham 3 and continued to prosper through the first quarter of the 19th century, remaining a focal point for the literati of the day. Thomas and his brother Edward were well known to Shelley and Peacock. Shelley at one time had rooms in Thomas Hookham's house, but the relationship was somewhat stormy and his correspondence contains some vituperative references to Thomas.⁸ Thomas was particularly upset at Shelley's infidelity and shocked when Mary Shelley took her own life in 1816. Edward and Peacock, on the other hand, were constant and intimate friends; Edward published many of Peacock's works and when Peacock fell on hard times secured him three grants of aid from the Royal Literary Fund.⁹

In its early days the Library was open, Monday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. but by 1829 this had become 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. In common with other booksellers, Hookham's also sold tickets for the theatre and opera and the letters between Thomas 3's sons, Thomas 4 and Henry, include many references to the London stage; one instance is Thomas 4's account of a performance of *La Gazza Ladra*, May 1836, when audience dissatisfaction led to all the players leaving the stage in disarray, the Magpie alone remaining, caged on his perch. It was in that year, however, that the genteel veneer of the book trade began to crack, when, as the letters show, bitter competition erupted over the apportioning of opera boxes.

1836 might have witnessed a more immediate disaster, when fire broke out at number 12, Old Bond Street, the home of a tailor called Absolom. Thomas 4 sent a dramatic account to his brother Henry, still at school in Princes Risborough.¹⁰ The fire engulfed number 12 and spread backwards to the Western Exchange, a largely timber structure opening onto the Burlington Arcade and built in about 1820 as an early experiment in luxurious shopping. From there it caught the back parts of numbers 13 and 14, the latter being James Carpenter's property. Hookham's, next door, was saved by the collapse of the Exchange roof, but the flames raged for five or six hours before being brought under control and only after damaging several houses further down Old Bond Street and completely destroying ten in Burlington Arcade.

Number 15 does not survive in its original form. Pevsner¹¹ says that it and No. 16 were rebuilt in 1911, but if so a conscious effort seems to have been made to retain some of the original charm of the frontage. In Tallis's *London Street Views*, 1838-40, it appears as a three-storey house with attic windows, the first and second floors, where presumably the family lived, each having three windows looking on to the street and those of the first floor being surrounded by ornate ironwork. Today it is the home of the long-established

Fine Art Gallery, Colnaghi, with its own library. The upper floors have two instead of three windows, but still with attractive ironwork.



6. 15, Old Bond Street John Tallis *London Street Views, 1830-40*



7. 15, Old Bond Street, 1992 Photo: R. A. Kidd

The first serious threat to Hookham's, and ultimately the library's undoing, was the advent of Charles Edward Mudie in 1842. No more poignant account of this can be given than that of Thomas Hookham 4, in extracts from the letter referred to earlier to his friend William Tinsley.¹² 'Mudie started in King Street, Holborn, and invented a scale of terms of subscription, cutting so much lower than he need have done, that the result was, thanks to persistent advertising, the making of his name, but the ruin of many lending libraries in London and the country, and the surrender to the public at large of almost all that made the library business worth doing. In 1848 he removed to the present premises in New Oxford Street, and gained a more extensive and firmer hold upon the public with his new terms.'

'... so matters remained until 1854, when, finding so many others willing to extend their carriage drive from Eaton Square to New Oxford Street for the sake of saving on their library subscription, we were the first to alter our terms to a competing scale. But it was too late. There is no denying that the long delay had been very damaging, and the new scale of terms exercised a continuously prejudicial effect upon our position.'

'Mudie's establishment then became a leviathan; and, to add to the difficulties of the situation, Smith's was started shortly afterwards, as you so well know, and, with a similar scale of terms, assisted by his capital, it soon became another vast institution. The Library Company (Pall Mall) soon after rushed into the arena, and had it been guided by wisdom and experience of the trade, would have made a third leviathan, instead of dying almost a natural death.'

'Our change came about in this way. My brother had a family of five children and had besides a hankering to emigrate, thinking he would gain for them in a better future far away, and was desirous himself of a more active kind of life. Whether he would not have done as well here had he remained may be a question but, after twenty-three years in New Zealand, they are all doing very well there. I looked about me for the means, on the part of my father and myself, to buy his share or pay him out.'

'Those were the early great days of companies, and some one introduced my brother to a City firm of lawyers, who were adepts at that kind of work. He was pleased with the idea, and pushed it but I was at first not at all disposed to sell absolutely a concern which had then been just one hundred years in our family, and my father was naturally still less so. The superior price to be obtained in this way, however, eventually overcame all our scruples. I cannot help thinking that nearly £25,000 should, with judgment and knowledge of the business, have been enough backing to have enabled the proprietors to cultivate successfully a book lending and selling business in the face of all opposition.'

'It might have collapsed at the end of eighteen months if the gentlemen of the board, who knew nothing whatever of the business, had been permitted to have their way; for after extravagantly absorbing £7 10s. of the £10 shares, and leaving besides a large debt which necessitated the calling up of ten shillings more, they invoked a general meeting at the end of that time, and proposed to wind up. I dissented, and was appointed general manager under a new board of directors and I did carry it on for six years from that time, making a total of seven years and a half that the English and Foreign Library Company had existed.'

'When we did really collapse - in the month of September, 1871 - the directors chose to sell to Mr. Mudie the subscribers and the books actually in their possession, while the bulk of the stock of the library passed into the hands of the liquidator, to be sold piecemeal, and about as injudiciously as might have been expected. The St. George's Hospital, to which the property belongs, had the only power to close, and the Board of Governors exercised it by disposing of the new lease to a stranger as the highest bidder, after having been satisfied to renew the lease four times previously to my father and grandfather.'

'I ought to have bought the old library back myself but I was sick of [the affair]. And still another mistake was when the Hospital offered to me personally a new lease of the premises at £425 per annum. I hesitated, and they put the house into Rushworth's hands and the new tenant has had to pay £550 annum ever since.'

Tinsley himself had doubts about the wisdom of Henry Hookham's emigration. He ended his own account of this affair with the words 'I well remember being in Bond Street the morning after Madame Patti's first appearance'¹³, and Henry Hookham made no doubt about her becoming as great as Jenny Lind¹⁴, saying that with health and good management Madame Patti would earn more money than Jenny Lind - a prophecy more than fulfilled. Mr. Hookham should have stayed in Bond Street, and backed his opinion by buying seats for Patti's singing, and he would have made a fortune.'

Thomas Hookham 3 did not survive to see the demise of the Library, nor, one hopes, to have any idea of the straitened circumstances under which his family would live thereafter. Thomas Hookham 4 struggled to find employment, largely as a bookselling journeyman, but whatever he may have said above about the impact of his brother's departure on the Library he knew no blame could be attached and there is no trace in the letters of anything but the greatest love and affection between them.

For Henry's part, he did his utmost to provide both moral and financial support to his mother and siblings. His own circumstances in New Zealand were far from affluent, but he sent money home whenever he could and he put a great deal of business in his brother's way. At Kaiapoi, his first home in New Zealand, he carried forward his grandfather's ideals. A small private circulating library had been formed there in 1859 by a Mrs. Pavitt in her fancy goods store in Charles Street. An appeal for a Town Library in the early 1860s had met with no response, but a later one was more successful. Henry Hookham arrived there in 1865 and through the two brothers over two thousand second-hand books were obtained, making the Kaiapoi Library the best of the early collections in the district.¹⁵

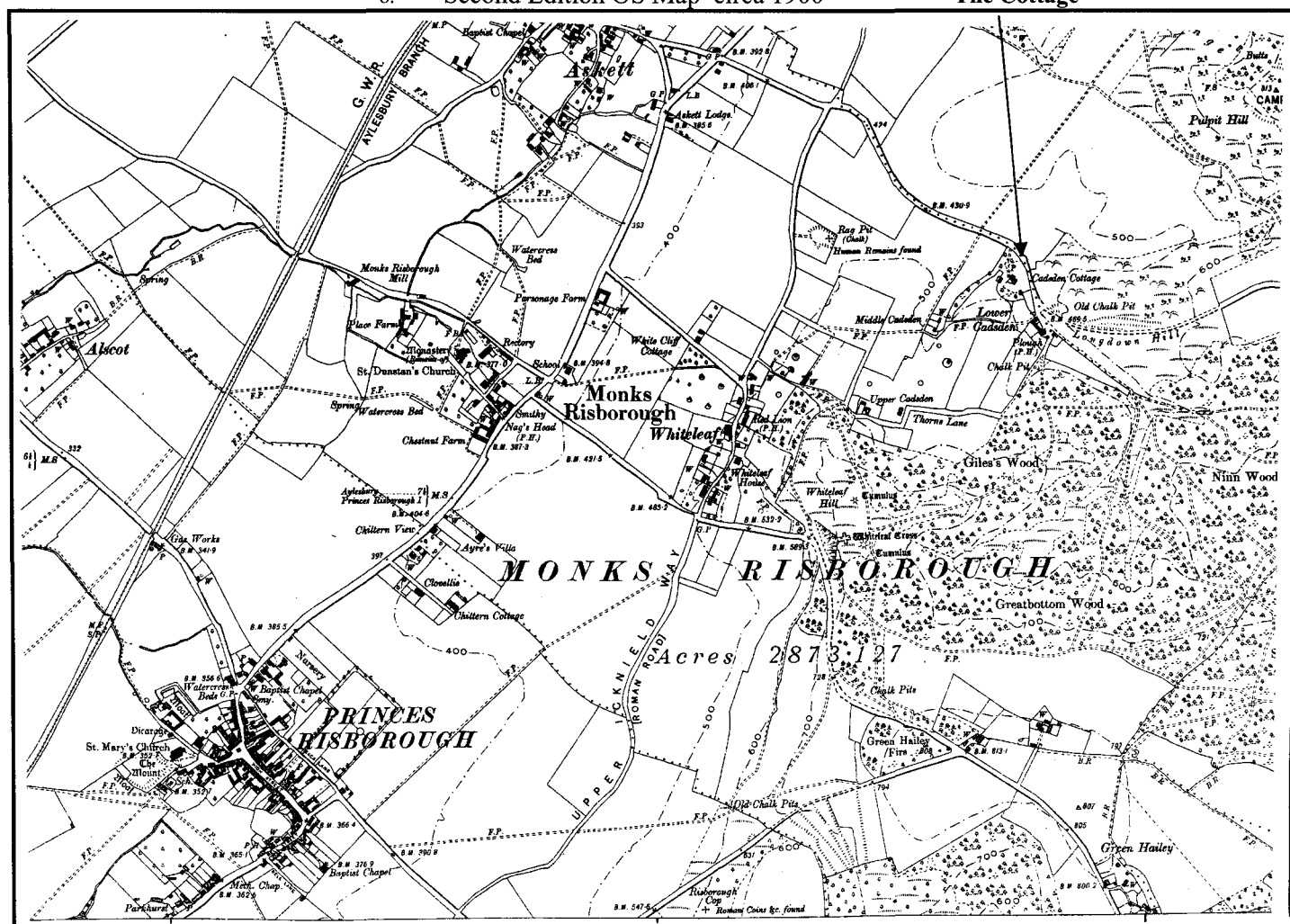
Thomas's last letter to Henry is dated December 9th 1898. In it he acknowledges a further gift from Henry, £2 presented with typical tact and gratefully received as such, as a token of remembrance of Henry's beloved daughter, Jane, who had died the previous year. As he wrote that letter Thomas was unaware that a fortnight earlier, Henry himself had died. On April 27th, 1899 Thomas wrote to his beloved niece, Henry's youngest daughter, Annie Emma, a letter inscribed by her as 'Uncle Tom's last letter'. He is overwhelmed to have received a legacy from Henry's estate, and writes poignantly of 'my dear good Brother'. By the time Annie received his letter he and Henry were together again, for Thomas died on May 18th 1899.

1. *Memoirs of Madame de la Tour du Pin*, ed. F. Harcourt, Harvill Press 1969.
2. The Aylesbury Reference Library holds a copy of one, rebound but with its original bookplate that states 'given to the Parochial Library of Princes Risborough, 1816'. It is a robust attack on the Church of Rome, entitled *The Madness of Disaffection and Treason against the Present Government*, by George Olliffe MA, Minister of Wendover and Great Kimble.
3. Heal Collection of Trade Cards, British Museum.

4. The author is mindful of More's reprimand, also from *Florio*, to those who 'ruin half an author's graces, by plucking bon-mots from their places'.
5. Ian Maxted *The London Book Trades 1775-1800* probably quoting from an advertisement in *The Times* of 22 October 1791. James Carpenter, it will be recalled, was the husband of Jennet Jane, Thomas Hookham's daughter by his first wife. Both partnerships continued until 1798.
6. Advertisement in *A Picturesque Guide to Bath, Bristol, Hot Wells ...* printed for Hookham & Carpenter, 1793.
7. Batho's, or Bathoe's as appears to be the correct spelling, might claim to have precedence over Hookham's Library, William Bathoe having taken over Thomas Wright's 'Entertaining (Circulating) Library' which had been in business by 1740 at 132 Strand. Hookham's was, however, the only one still run by the founding family.
8. *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Fredk.L. Jones, Clarendon Press 2 vols. 1964.
9. The Corporation of the Royal Literary Fund was established in 1790, its object being to administer assistance to authors of genius and learning, who may be reduced to distress by unavoidable calamities, or deprived, by enfeebled faculties or declining life, of the power of literary exertion. It is still active and in 1999, launched a Fellowship scheme designed to place writers in universities and colleges all over the United Kingdom.
10. Thomas Hookham 4 to Henry Hookham, 28th March 1836. A detailed report appeared in *The Times* of the same date.
11. Pevsner, *N Buildings of England, London* 1951-74.
12. William Tinsley *Random Collections of an Old Publisher* London 1900.
13. Adelina Patti was born of a Sicilian father and Italian mother in Madrid in 1843 She made her London debut in Bellini's *La Sonnambula* at Covent Garden in 1861. After a short time in London she made her home in Wales, where she died in 1919.
14. Johanna Maria Lind was born in Stockholm in 1820. Better known as Jenny Lind, 'the Swedish Nightingale', she first appeared in London in 1847, in Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*. She settled in England in 1856 and died at Malvern, Worcestershire, in 1887.
15. Kaiapoi Public Library, Waimakariri District. Information leaflet, published on the Internet, 2004. Craig Sargison, District Librarian and Mark O'Connell, Kaiapoi Service Centre/Library Coordinator.

8. Second Edition OS Map circa 1900

The Cottage



Chapter Four

The Cottage

What led Thomas Hookham 3 to acquire property in Monks Risborough remains unknown, but he first appears there as a proprietor in Land Tax records for 1815.¹ There is no description of the property at that date, but the occupant is given as John Gill², who appears to have been at the same property in 1813, when – Frith Esq. was proprietor. It seems certain that this was what the family knew as The Cottage, more formally Cadsden Cottage.³ Frequent references in later letters suggest that they may also have had property in Brighton.

Although by 1820 Thomas Hookham 3 is listed as both proprietor and occupier and his elder daughter, Mary Ann, was born there in 1826, it seems that to begin with The Cottage was used only intermittently, as a rural retreat from life in Old Bond Street. Some evidence for this comes from the fact that Thomas Hookham (and later his sons) took an active interest in politics, yet his name appears only intermittently in the surviving Poll Books for Aylesbury and he probably only voted there when in residence. A return after a period of absence is noted in a letter dated 16 October 1830 from Thomas Hookham 4 'I am delighted to think you will return to the cottage next April. I am sure everyone will welcome your return here'.

The Cottage was certainly let for quite extended periods and the first description we have of it comes from an advertisement in the Bucks Herald of 2 June 1832 for its letting, furnished, for two or three years: –

'The Cottage ... surrounded by Pleasure Grounds and Gardens, consists of two sitting and four bedrooms, kitchen, larder, and cellaring. There are also a chaise house, stables, &c, with two fields, the whole comprising between four and five acres. The Cottage is situated at the foot of Longdown Hill in the neighbourhood of Hamden and Checkers (sic) and in the immediate vicinity of some of the most beautiful scenery of the Chilterns'.

Cadsden's micro-climate was said to be the envy of gardeners, with flowers persisting well into autumn and re-appearing in early Spring. A local saying held that 'If you can gather seven different kinds of flower on the first of November you would have seven happy months.'⁴ Small wonder that it was regarded with such affection by the family and featured so prominently in the childhood and courtship of the younger son, Henry, who at the tender age of eleven was taking his responsibilities seriously, escorting prospective tenants, keeping an eye on the house and garden and liaising between his father and Henry Baddams, the gardener, to whom, following the custom of the day, he always referred as plain 'Baddams'.

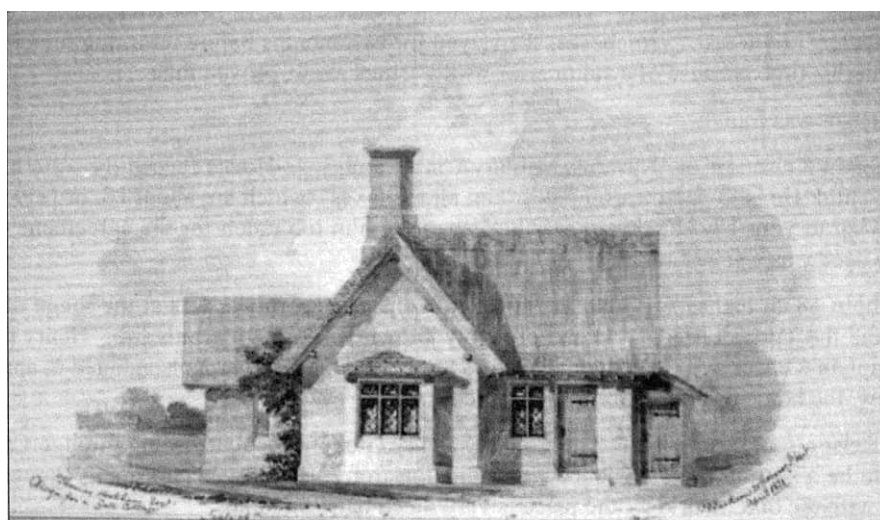
In August 1836 he writes to his parents:

'I went to the Cottage on Saturday, and stayed there the afternoon. I find that a great many of the vegetables, viz: peas and beans are going to waste, not having been picked at the proper time. It is Oats that Mr. Partridge⁵ has sowed in the Field above the orchard, and they are now in ear and getting ripe.

You told me to see if the Wallnuts [sic] were too far gone for pickling, there is a capital lot on the Great Tree, but they have all got large kernells in them: The barberies are quite ready for preserving.'

Henry enjoyed his relationship with Baddams and his wife, who lived in the grounds of The Cottage in a thatched cottage built for them by Thomas Hookham 3. Henry's concern is apparent in the last letter we have from his schooldays, dated 8 June 1839, in which he writes that 'Baddams has been very ill for the last 3 weeks.' This illness proved fatal, and Henry Baddams died that same year, aged 43, to be succeeded by his son, William.

The Baddams' cottage was demolished some time after the Hookhams left Cadsden but in a sale document of 1887 there is a brief description of a brick and thatched gardener's cottage and among the Gilson papers is the painting reproduced below, which it is very tempting to believe may have been the Baddams' home.



9. Design for a Gate Cottage for Thomas Hookham, Esq By G. Jackson, 20 Grosvenor Street West, April 1831

Caleb Stratton, son of, and eventual successor to John Young Stratton as headmaster of the school the boys attended in Princes Risborough, also acted as an agent for Thomas Hookham 3. In February 1837 he supervised the felling of trees:-

'I beg to inform you that I have measured up the Timber and that it contains 12 Load and a half, which at £1.12s.0d. per 40 feet, as it is sold in our neighbourhood, comes to £20. 0. 0. exactly but the expense of cutting down amounts to £1.' He shows his own regard for the property when he adds 'I trust when you see your Cottage you will not much miss the view of the trees or regret your cutting them down. I consider the place much improved.'

£20 was a considerable sum in 1837, equivalent to £1,060 in 2002,⁶ but it came opportunely, for there were the inevitable expenses in maintaining this second home such as the accounts submitted at the same time by East the plasterer for £5.15s. and Biggs (probably one of two brothers from Monks Risborough who were bricklayers) for £3.8.3. In addition there were local taxes to be paid, and the usual oversights in dealing with the authorities. Caleb Stratton outlines some on 27 February 1837:

I have now to acknowledge your letter containing your duplicate of assessed Taxes which I have filed & delivered to ... the Assessor of this district, with a letter stating that you have filled up the paper as soon as it came to hand, it having been left at the Cottage in mistake & further I hoped that this explanation would be sufficient: I have entered - 1 Poney for which you will have to pay £1.1.0 p^r annum & 1 House dog 8/- p^r ann:

Every person who rides a horse above 13 hands, must pay £1.8.0 p^r ann., under 13 hands 1.1.0 per ann. Ponies not exceeding 12 hands in height, which are used solely in drawing of Carriages with wheels, each of less diameter than 30 inches, and not at any time used for Riding, are exempt from duty; the reason I parted with my Poney was, that Riding him, I was liable to the 1.1.0 Tax, and my Poney would not go in harness.'

The family's fondness for The Cottage shows clearly in letters written by Henry when he was courting his future wife, Marianne Jones. Those days will be covered more fully in a later chapter but, for example, on 24 June 1849 he writes:

'[This] is the place I most wish of all places to have your company in, yes, and intend to some day, my dearest. I enclose a "forget me not" gathered in "lover's walk" this morning where I wish I had had you with me.'

Despite mostly happy associations The Cottage saw its tragedies. A Slab and Memorial Tablet in the parish church of St Dunstan record that in 1849 Charlotte, beloved wife of Walter F. Robinson Esq. R.N. of Tottenham, Middlesex, and presumably a tenant, died at Cadsden Cottage at the age of 32, followed two days later by her infant daughter Lucy Maude, aged nearly 4 months.⁷

Perhaps the greatest sadness for Thomas Hookham 3 came at the end of his days. No letters from the 1850s have come to light, but it is probable that when he retired in 1856 at the age of 70, handing over the Library and associated business to his two sons, he hoped to spend his remaining years at The Cottage. However, by the mid-1860s the family income was falling, for reasons that will be discussed later, and when his daughter, Rosa, became ill and the family doctor, Thomas Warren, gave his opinion that she could not live through another winter at Cadsdean, he agreed to leave 'his beloved home' and returned to London shortly before his own death in 1867. In the event Rosa survived him by ten years.

The death of Thomas Hookham 3 left his widow in dire straits. The Cottage, which he had re-mortgaged a year earlier, was her only source of income but letting brought its own problems. On their return to London, she wrote to her son Henry, who was by then in New Zealand:

'the cottage was let for 12 months to a lady, who proved no lady, who had a family of 5 children who might be called "destructives" so much mischief was done by them in one year! I tried, in vain, to recover damages but ... I would not go into court - and have heard nothing from her since.'

Following her husband's death Mrs. Hookham, unable to find a tenant, returned to The Cottage for four months, but early in 1868 removed all the furniture and, finding nowhere to deposit it, rented a cottage in Monks Risborough, which she describes as 'the dwelling formerly of Dickie Darvill who now lives at Prestwood'. As it was able to accommodate the furniture and have 'charming views, so like our former house' this was probably 'The Haven' which seems to have been enlarged late in the 19th century, but it may have been the much smaller 'Maytrees'.⁸ Whichever, she stayed for two months before returning reluctantly to London, again in pursuit of Rosa's interest, but this time because of a suitor who, as the letters show, proved false.

By November 1868 a new tenant was found:

'My tenant [is] Captain Kelson of the Naval & Military Club Cambridge House Piccadilly - He has been married 6 years, has a wife and one child. He is to pay me £60 a year and all the taxes - which are about £8, or [£]9 per annum. The delay in his coming was owing to your Uncle Edward Starling⁹ charging him too much for the agreement - At last he (Uncle) took off £6 and then the deed was signed.'

Thomas Mortimer Kelson, born 1835, had served with the 46th Regiment in the Crimea, was at the Siege of Sebastopol and had the Crimea Medal with Clasp and the Turkish Medal. He had probably known Risborough all his life: Henry Gibbons,¹⁰ a diarist from Bledlow Ridge, says that Captain Kelson was related to Mr. James Grace and a Mortimer Kelson, aged 6, appears in the 1841 Census at 'Wardrobes', Loosley Row, the home of James Grace, a notable farmer.

It would seem that Captain Kelson sought solitude at The Cottage. Henry Gibbons recounts riding through Cadsdean on 14 June 1870 and passing what 'appears to be a sort of Villa residence - and judging from the entrance appears as though the inhabitants did not court much communication with the outer world ... the place is very much barricaded up.'

Kelson remained at The Cottage until 1873 but his departure was abrupt. Mrs. Hookham, by then utterly dependent on his rent, was shocked when without warning he removed his family and furniture. She was even more shocked to discover that rain had been

pouring in from the roof into the sitting room and kitchen, the roof having been neglected, and that she was unlikely to receive her rent as Kelson then asked to be released from his Lease, though baulking at the suggestion of a year's rent in lieu.

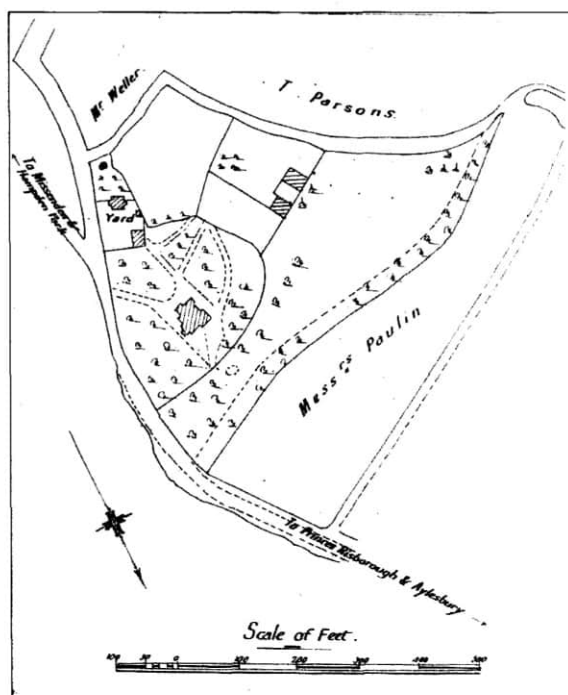
The Cottage is not mentioned again in the letters, nor is there any reference to the Hookhams in the Deeds later than the transfer of mortgage already mentioned, in 1866. It was sold in 1876 and again in 1880 when a John Whittingham Margetts bought it. At some time in those years it was considerably enlarged, possibly by Margetts who ran it as a Boarding House before selling it on in 1884 to the Chiltern Hills Healtheries Company Limited. This was an ill-fated early venture into the field of 'health farms' or, as the Articles of Association describe it, 'a sanatorium and hydropathic establishment' which was wound up only three years later.¹¹ Known then as The Healtheries, on its return to private hands and a brief period as 'Cadesdene House' the spelling reverted to, and has remained as, 'Cadsden'.



10. Cadsden Cottage when known as The Healtheries

This is the photograph shown to Venetia Ellis by John Gilson. The original cottage had been enlarged by Thomas Hookham 3, who almost certainly added the forward wing on the right of the picture and a similar wing at the rear on the left. Further alterations were carried out at the rear when it became the Healtheries.

11. Plan of The Cottage grounds, 1889



1. Buckinghamshire Records Office (BRO) Ref. Q/RLP
2. The Posse Comitatus of 1798 lists a John Gill of Monks Risborough under the Labourers, but in the summary of persons having draught horses, etc. on p. 54, John Gill is listed as having 5 horses, 1 wagon and 2 carts. None of the 6 Friths listed would appear to be Esquires.
3. Several alternative spellings occur in the letters and documents relating to the house: The local name was Catsden, and this was used in the Poll Book for 1850. The Hookhams preferred Cadsden although in 1868 Mrs. Hookham writes Cadsdean. Towards the end of the 19th century Cadesdene is also used.
4. Leonard Bull, *A King's Highway*, Regency Press 1978. It should be noted that this clemency of climate has rarely been experienced by the Lewis family at Cadsden, and they consider the old adage to suggest improbability.
5. Mr. Partridge and his wife were presumably tenants. They have not been identified although there were other Partridges in Risborough itself.
6. John McClusker, *Comparing the Purchasing Power of Money in Great Britain from 1264 to Any Other Year including the Present*, Economic History Services 2001. www.eh.net.
7. Rex A Kidd *The Monumental Inscriptions at St Dunstan's, Monks Risborough*. 1980.
8. E.D.McGown *Monks Risborough: The Cottages* private publication 2003.
9. Edward Augustus Starling was Mary Ann Hookham's brother, and a Solicitor in London. The letters show that the Hookhams in general did not hold lawyers in high esteem.
10. Gibbons, Henry. *Journal 1869-71*. Transcribed by Dr. Dorothy Nevin. Buckinghamshire Record Office D/X 1317
11. National Archive ref. BT/31/3469/21000. The Company was incorporated in 1885 by a consortium of seven, including an accountant, architect, goldsmith, watchmaker, gentleman and clerk and led by Thomas Parsons, whose *Lion Brewery* was a major employer in 19th century Princes Risborough. Its nominal capital of £25,000 was divided into shares of £5 of which two hundred and five had been taken up by 1886, the holders including other well-known local names such as the Revd. Thomas Evetts, Rector of Monks Risborough, Samuel Adcock, grocer and postmaster, and Thomas Warren, surgeon, whose father had been the Hookham family's doctor. Less than a year later it was voluntarily wound up, though it was not until 1906 that it was finally dissolved by notice in the London Gazette.

Chapter 5

Mr. Stratton's School

Although two early local charities recognised the importance of education, namely those of Lady Catharine Pye¹ in 1639 for the education of poor children, and of Richard Stratton² in 1772 securing a nomination to the Bluecoat School, Christ's Hospital, there have been, until now, very few known references to education in Princes Risborough prior to the foundation of the British School in 1836 and the National School in 1841.³

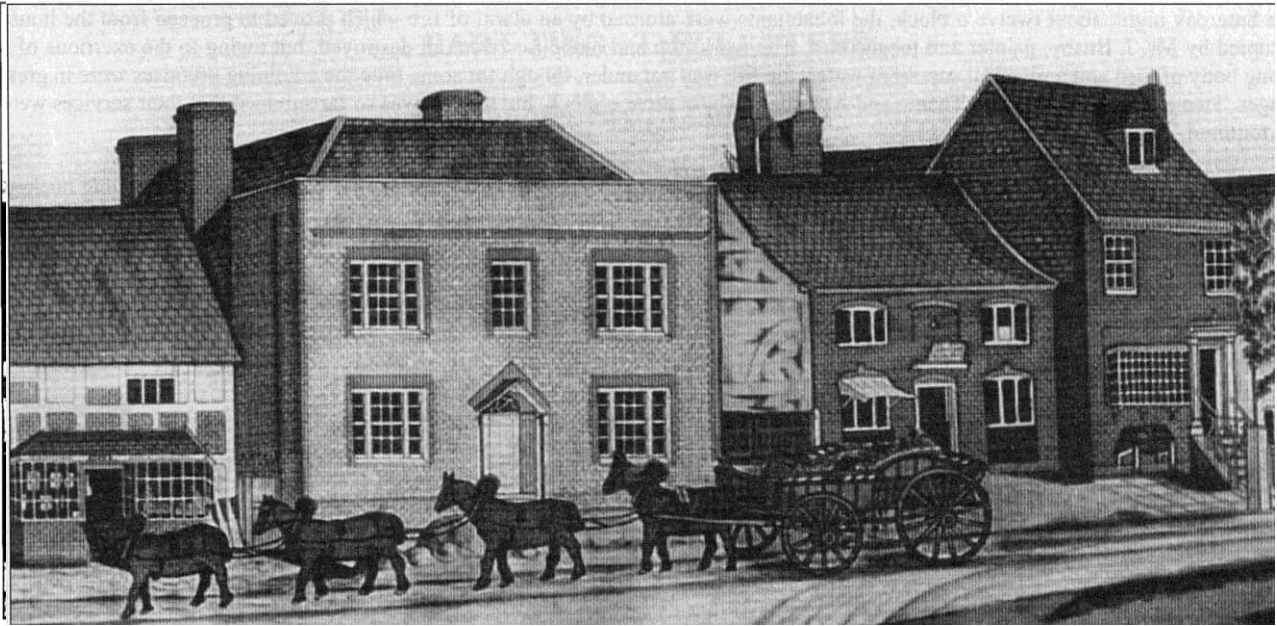
The earliest references are no more than the identification of individuals as schoolmasters in connection with other matters: William Beddall in 1693; John Bristow in 1749; and William Simpson in 1798.⁴ The first name that might be connected to this narrative is of William Griffiths, whose Will⁵ was witnessed by John Young Stratton in 1797. It is John Young Stratton whose school features in these letters; until they came to light the school was no more than a name gleaned from early Local Directories. It is in Pigot's Directory of 1831-2, as a day school for boys, though in reality it was also a boarding school. There were three others, Mary Hester's day school for girls and Mary Thorpe's day and boarding school, in the High Street, with Thomas Terry's day school for boys in Duck End (now Bell Street).

The 1831 and 1841 Censuses provide only a small amount of information on the school. In 1831 John Young Stratton is shown as 'schoolmaster with a household of 5 males and 2 females. In 1841 his household numbered 15. Of these 8 were boys aged between 8 and 13. John was then aged 80 and Caleb 30. It is interesting to note that at Lower Cadsden Thomas Hookham, aged 55, and Henry Hookham aged 16 were in residence.

The schoolhouse, which no longer exists, appears in a view of the Market Square, painted in 1802 by the Rev. John Mountfort.⁶ The school is the small house to the right of centre; the house on its left remains largely unchanged, now Barclays Bank. In the original the sign above the door is legible: 'John Stratton, Bookbinder'.

John Young Stratton was born in 1759, the son of William and Elizabeth (nee Young) Stratton. His education was probably no more than was available locally, possibly from the William Griffiths mentioned above, with whom he clearly had at least a formal relationship, but it fitted him for a life of public service. His father was a barber and peruke maker and initially John followed in his footsteps, but by 1796 he was Vestry Clerk until that post was given to an attorney and he was appointed Deputy Overseer.⁷ Pigot's Directory of 1823 identified him as Postmaster and Bookbinder and by 1842 he is listed among the Nobility, Gentry and Clergy.

John Young Stratton married Elizabeth Gilks, in Cuddington, in 1792 and they had seven sons and two daughters. Two of the sons, John Young Stratton junr. and Caleb were educated at Christ's Hospital, through the Stratton Charity.⁸ The former appears to have made his career away from Risborough, and in 1851 was at the Charterhouse in the City of London, a former priory which had become a school and almshouse.



12. Detail from 'A View in Princes Risborough, 1802' by John Mountfort.

It fell to Caleb, born in 1809, to join and eventually succeed his father, not only as schoolmaster, but also as Postmaster and Registrar of Births and Deaths. He married Arabella Hewes in Princes Risborough in 1836 and the letters suggest that he established his own school in that or the following year, in what had been Mary Thorpe's ladies' academy, probably now No. 34 High Street. The birth of his son, John, is recorded in a letter dated 18th April 1837, when he writes to Thomas Hookham 3 "...in answer to your kind enquiries .. my Wife and Boy are doing well .. my Wife gets up now much as usual; the Boy grows very nicely." This 'Boy', John, was also, like his father and uncle, to be educated at Christ's Hospital.

The last child of John Young Stratton senior and his wife, Elizabeth, to be mentioned is their daughter, Mary, born c. 1805, and perhaps the greatest support to her father after the death of his wife in 1824. She was housemother to the 30 pupils who were in the school in August 1836, keeping a watchful eye on their health and washing the twelve boarders on Saturdays. She remained with her father until his death at the age of 86 in 1845, after which she married William Bridgwater, a farmer, of West Wycombe.

No precise date can be given for the foundation of the school, but it was clearly well-established when the following advertisement appeared in the Bucks Gazette and General Advertiser on Saturday January 9, 1830:

John Young Stratton informs his friends, and the public in general, that his PREPARATORY SCHOOL for YOUNG GENTLEMEN under Twelve Years of Age, will re-open after the present recess, on MONDAY, 18th JANUARY.

Terms – Board and Education in Latin, English, Writing and Accompts, £20 per annum, washing not included. Payments to be made half-yearly; and a quarter's notice or pay previous to removal.

The daily routine was set out in a letter of 29th September 1834: breakfast at 6 a.m., out to play 8.30 – 9 a.m., lessons till 12 noon, dinner and out to play until 2 p.m., lessons until 5 p.m., out to play until 6.30 p.m. then staying in 'to do what we like until 8 p.m. and then go to bed'. Writing on 7th February 1835, Henry implies that he spends all his time on Latin and Greek, including recapitulation on Saturday and Greek Testament on Sunday, and in this he was envied by his Aunt Bessy, who wrote 'I should like to know something of [Greek] myself but young ladies are not permitted to have such advantages as you do of being instructed in the dead languages.' In reality the curriculum was much broader; English language and literature, art, geography, history, botany and zoology all played their part, together with theoretical and practical instruction in mathematics, including trigonometry.⁹

Living conditions were, perhaps, Spartan; in September 1834 Henry says that the schoolroom is to be boarded, 'which will be much more comfortable for the Winter'.

The boys were encouraged to make good use of their spare time; Henry, besides enjoying the simple pleasures of the day, an iron hoop, a peashooter, ice skates, etc. was an avid reader, pressing his father for the latest works of Capt. Marryat. He learnt to play chess and took an active interest in politics and in these the child was father of the man, for in his later years in New Zealand he was greatly concerned about social justice and also became the country's first Chess Champion.

Caleb Stratton died from an 'inflammation of the brain' on 18th January 1845, four months before his father, and the school probably came to an end then, for in 1861, despite the existence of the British and National schools, George Eggleton was moved to found his Chiltern College, in Queens Road, 'to meet the great demand for a sound middle-class education in this district'. The final blow came some twenty years after John Young Stratton's death, when his old schoolhouse came to an ignominious end. In an evocative letter of November 1868 Mrs. Hookham tells Henry, by then in New Zealand, that it had recently been destroyed by fire.¹⁰ The Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News of 17th October, 1868, gives this account:

'On Saturday night, about twelve o'clock, the inhabitants were aroused by an alarm of fire which proved to proceed from the house occupied by Mr. J. Busby, painter and tobacconist. The workshop and outhouses were all destroyed, but owing to the exertions of a strong body of men and a plentiful supply of water, the fire was got under, though for some time the adjoining premises were in great danger. Two engines arrived from Thame and Aylesbury, about three o'clock, but the fire was so far subdued that their services were not required.'

Imagine the scene as described by Mrs. Hookham – the fire blazing all night, Mrs Rumsey and her two aged sisters carrying buckets of water from their house on the left and, from the haberdashery on the right, Miss Clark, 'a dressy person', up a ladder in a loose garment, curlers and nightcap and, above all her hat



13. The former schoolhouse after a fire, 1868

1. This spelling appears on a portrait in the possession of the National Trust. The wife of Sir Edmund Pye of Bradenham, Lady Pye bequeathed Quash Farm, in Towersey, Oxfordshire, to Bradenham, West Wycombe, Towersey, Princes Risborough and Hitchenden, principally to improve the teaching of English.
2. Lipscomb *A History of the County of Buckingham* 1847. A native of Princes Risborough, Richard Stratton bequeathed £500 to Christ's Hospital, for the children of the hospital, provided for one boy from Princes Risborough, 'being not less than seven, nor exceeding nine years of age, be maintained and educated there until of a proper age to be put out apprentice'.
3. Macfarlane & Kingham *Princes Risborough Past* pp 77 – 83 Phillimore 1997. The British School was one of many promoted by the British and Foreign School Society, originally the Lancastrian Society, founded by a Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, in 1808. Although non-denominational, it was favoured by the town's Nonconformist families, reflecting the Society's Quaker roots. The National School was promoted by the 'National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church', and in 1907 was officially renamed the Church of England School. However, for all practical considerations both schools were open to all, with a capacity for some 280 pupils.
4. The first two relate to property transactions, Buckinghamshire County Records Office, ref d/3/19 and d/3/120. The third is from the Posse Comitatus.
5. Public Record Office *Wills in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury* PROB/11/1281/582.
6. According to the Marriage Registers, John Mountfort was Curate at Princes Risborough between August 1801 and December 1802 and afterwards at Monks Risborough until 1811. The painting, from a private collection and so informative, is regrettably one of only two of the locality by Mountfort to have come to light.
7. The Posse Comitatus of 1798 describes him as 'Tythingman and Barber'. Tythingman was a term usually applied to the Constable or his deputy, but in this case may refer to his appointment as Deputy Overseer.
8. There appears to be no relationship between the families of Richard and John Young Stratton, or indeed with the other candidate in 1801, William Stratton, son of a local butcher.
9. 16th May 1839 'We levelled with Mr. Stratton from Risborough to the top of the Cross, which is 400ft'. The Ordnance Survey datum differs by less than two inches.
10. The house was eventually replaced in the same style as the haberdashery and is today a dental surgery. See letter from Henry Hookham dated 22 May 1835 about his own dental treatment at the *George* and associated notes concerning Mr. Lukyn, the dentist.

PART TWO THE LETTERS

Chapter Six : 1830 – 1842

Schooldays

Principal Characters in this Section

Members of the Hookham & Starling Families (see charts in Part 1: pp. iv – v)

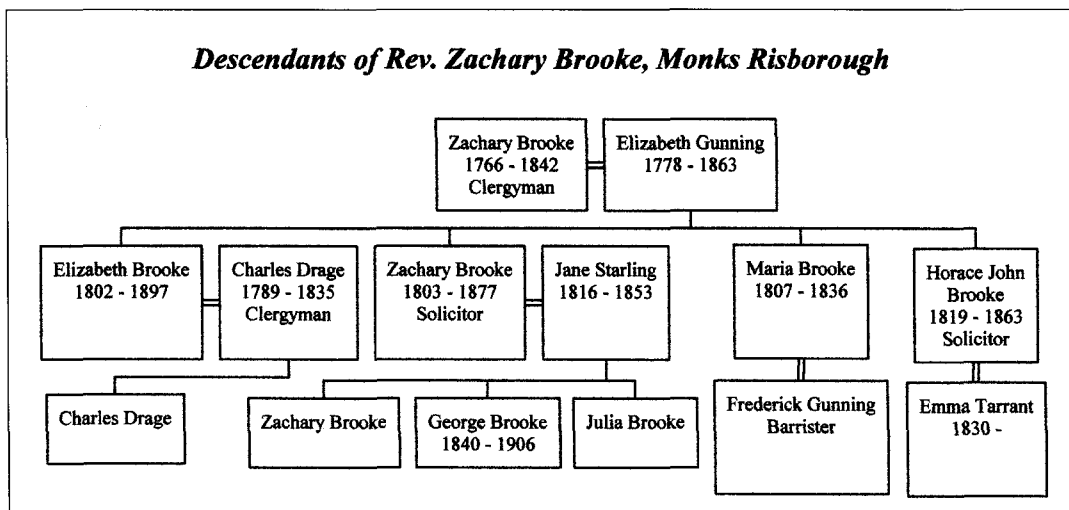
Papa	Thomas Hookham 3, 1786 – 1867
Mama	Mary Ann Hookham, née Starling, 1801 – 1876
Thomas	Thomas Hookham 4, son of the above, born 1821
Henry Thomas	Henry, son of the above, born 1824
Mary Ann	Daughter of the above, born 1826
Rosa	Daughter of the above, born 1834
Grandpapa	George Augustus Starling, 1772 – 1846
Grandmama	Jane Starling, née Hall, wife of the above
Uncle George	George Augustus Starling, MD. 1803 - 73
Aunt Julia	Wife of George Augustus Starling MD
Uncle Edward	Edward Augustus Starling, 1806 - 1888
Aunt Harriet	Harriet, née Weigall, wife of Edward Augustus Starling
Harriet Jane	Daughter of Edward and Harriet Starling
Aunt Elizabeth	Elizabeth (Bessy) Starling, 1811 - 1873
Aunt Jane	Jane Starling, 1816 - 1853, married Zachary Brooke
Uncle Thomas	Thomas 'Tom' Starling, 1818 - 1842

Members of the Brooke Family (see chart below: p. 29)

Mr. Brooke	Rev. Zachary Brooke, Curate of Monks Risborough
Mrs. Brooke	Elizabeth, née Gunning, wife of the above
Zachary Brooke	Eldest son of the above, born 1803, Solicitor
Horace Brooke	Younger son of the above, born 1819, Solicitor
Mr. Gunning	Frederic Gunning, barrister
Maria Gunning	née Brooke, wife of the above, 1807 – 1836
Charles Drage	Grandson of Rev. Zachary Brooke

At Princes Risborough

Mr. Stratton	John Young Stratton, headmaster
Miss Stratton	Mary, his daughter
Mr. Caleb	Caleb Stratton, his son
Mr. Norris	John Lovegrove Norris, physician & surgeon, High Street
Mrs. Norris	Sarah, née Gain, wife of the above
Mr. Baddams	Henry Baddams, gardener at The Cottage



Saturday 16 October 1830 Thomas 4 to his Mother Princes Risborough.

In which Thomas acknowledges the dangers of smoking, hopes to see a King or Queen, and Henry is over-eager for his sixth birthday.

My Dear Mama

I hope you and all at home are still quite well. I thank you for your very nice letter as also for the kind advice which it contained; I promise never to smoke a Cigar again without your approbation and I must tell you that I purchased it unknown to Mr Stratton who knew nothing of the affair till he was informed of it by Mrs Norris, but I will never do the like again.¹

I have been all thro' Vulgar Fractions and am now working at Practice which I shall soon get over and shall not be long before I enter upon Decimal Fractions which I think must be as easy as Vulgar Fractions.

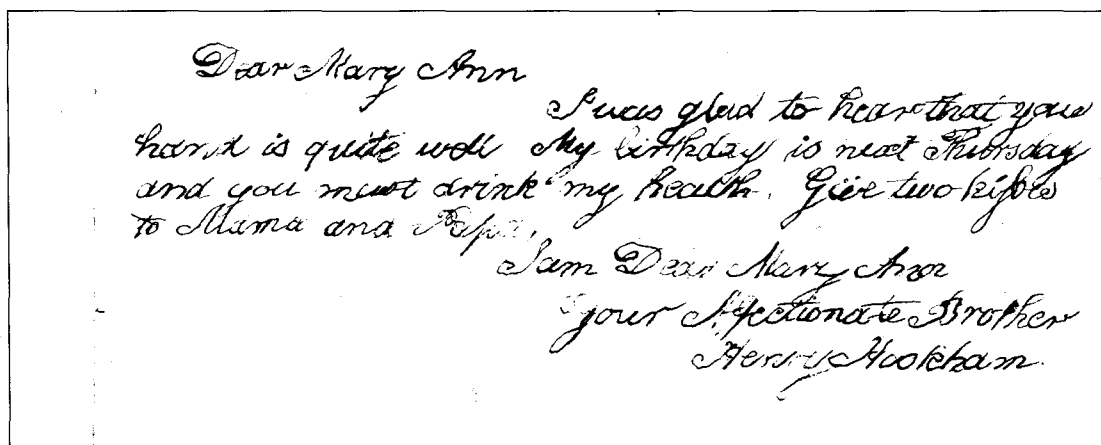
I have construed all thro' the Syntax and am now reconstruing As in praesenti² the second time. I hope you will not go to London before the Christmas holidays as I much want to see the King and Queen not having yet seen either a King or a Queen in my life.³

I am delighted to think that you will return to the cottage next April. I am sure every one will welcome your return here. We all drank Papa's good health on his birthday and the toast was "may his sons grow up to be both a credit and a comfort to him in his old age". Miss Stratton made a nice cake for the occasion and we opened the Bottle of Port Wine which you sent last half year in case Henry should be ill which by the bye we should never have tasted had it been kept till then as Henry and myself present no appearance of ill health. Henry's birthday is next Thursday, it is also Risboro fair day⁴ so that we shall have a holiday, he hopes that you will not forget to drink his health. We were both of us very glad of the Sea weed which we think very pretty.

We have a new School fellow named Quelch⁵ who is very clever but he knows nothing of Latin. Poor little William Powell (whom Uncle Thomas well knew) is dead he was taken ill of the brain fever and died after 3 days illness.⁶ Robert Winslow⁷ has been ill but is now getting better and will soon return to School again. I must now conclude with my kind love to Grandpapa Grandmama Aunts Harriet Elizabeth and Jane Uncles George Edward and Thomas and a kiss for [sic] me to you and Mary Ann.

I remain Dear Mama, Your affectionate and dutiful Son, Thomas Hookham

This letter includes a postscript from Henry to his sister, Mary Ann, reproduced below as it appears in his own hand:



The image shows a handwritten postscript in cursive ink, enclosed in a rectangular border. The text is written on a single sheet of paper and is addressed to 'Dear Mary Ann'. The handwriting is fluid and characteristic of a child's script. The postscript mentions Henry's birthday, his health, and gives love to his mother and father. It is signed 'I am Dear Mary Ann your Affectionate Brother Henry Hookham'.

Dear Mary Ann
I was glad to hear that your
hand is quite well My birthday is next Thursday
and you must drink my health. Give two kisses
to Mama and Papa.
I am Dear Mary Ann
your Affectionate Brother
Henry Hookham

14. Henry's handwriting when nine years old

1. Thomas may have learnt his lesson about smoking but will be found having problems with snuff in 1837 and lecturing his Uncle Thomas about the latter's smoking in 1842.
2. 'as of this moment'.
3. George IV died 26th June 1830 and was succeeded by William IV and Queen Adelaide.
4. At this time Risborough had two annual fairs, on 6th May for cattle and 21st October for pleasure. Thomas and Henry seem over eager for the latter's birthday, which was on 22nd October.
5. In the 1831 Census a Mrs. Quelch is listed at a house in the High Street.
6. On 3rd October 1830 the burial is recorded of William Powell, son of William and Frances Powell, aged 10. His father kept the *Cross Keys* in the High Street. The comment 'whom Uncle Tom well knew' suggests that Thomas Starling may himself have attended the school. So rapidly fatal a 'brain fever' suggests Meningococcal Meningitis – Caleb Stratton was to succumb to a similar condition in 1845.
7. Robert Winslow, 1822 – 53 lived next door to the school, in what is today Barclays Bank. He eventually succeeded his father as a miller.

19 December 1831 Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa and Mama,

I am desired by Mr Stratton to inform you that our Vacation commences on Thursday the 22nd December instant, and terminates on Monday the 23rd. of January next; and that he hopes the improvement made by me during the last half year, may exceed your expectations.

I am, Dear Papa and Mama, Your affectionate and dutiful Son, Henry Hookham.

19 February 1833 Henry to his mother

Princes Risborough

My Dear Mama,

I was very glad to receive the Cake and the good things you so kindly sent us. I am happy to say that we are both quite well, and as happy as we can be. I thought I should like to write you a letter, as Thomas has done so, or else you would think it strange. We were glad to have Uncle Thomases [sic] Letter, which we must answer when we can send free of expence. The Birds are quite well, and we feed them every morning, and the Cat is dead, so we shall keep them safe for you to see when you come down.

We have been to the Cottage, and Mr. Baddams was doing the railing; we are both quite happy, and shall be very glad to see you. You will please to give our very kindest love to all our kind friends.

I am, Dear Mama, Your affectionate Son, Henry Hookham.

1 December 1833 Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

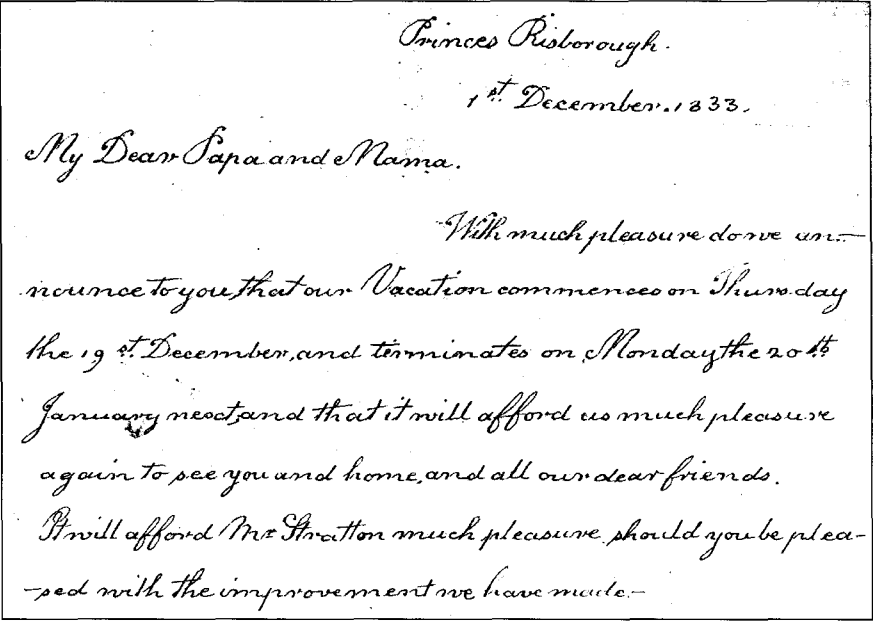
My Dear Papa and Mama.

With much pleasure do we announce to you that our Vacation commences on Thursday the 19st (sic) December, and terminates on Monday the 20th January next; and that it will afford us much pleasure again to see you and home, and all our dear friends.

It will afford Mr. Stratton much pleasure should you be pleased with the improvement we have made.-

Perhaps you will be pleased to arrange which day we shall come to London, if it should be inconvenient for you to come to fetch us, Mr. Caleb will feel great pleasure in bringing us up with him; and you could send to meet us at the Coach Office, but of course we would rather you came to fetch us. I am happy to say that my cough is much better, Mary Ann is quite well, we are in high glee at the prospect of soon seeing you, and with affectionate Love to you Dear Papa and Mama, and all our good friends.

I remain, Dear Papa and Mama, Your affectionate Son, Henry Hookham



Princes Risborough.
1st December. 1833.
My Dear Papa and Mama.
With much pleasure do we announce to you that our Vacation commences on Thursday the 19th December, and terminates on Monday the 20th January next, and that it will afford us much pleasure again to see you and home, and all our dear friends.
It will afford Mr Stratton much pleasure should you be pleased with the improvement we have made.-

15. Henry's handwriting when nine years old

2 April 1834 Henry to his brother, Thomas Hookham 4

London

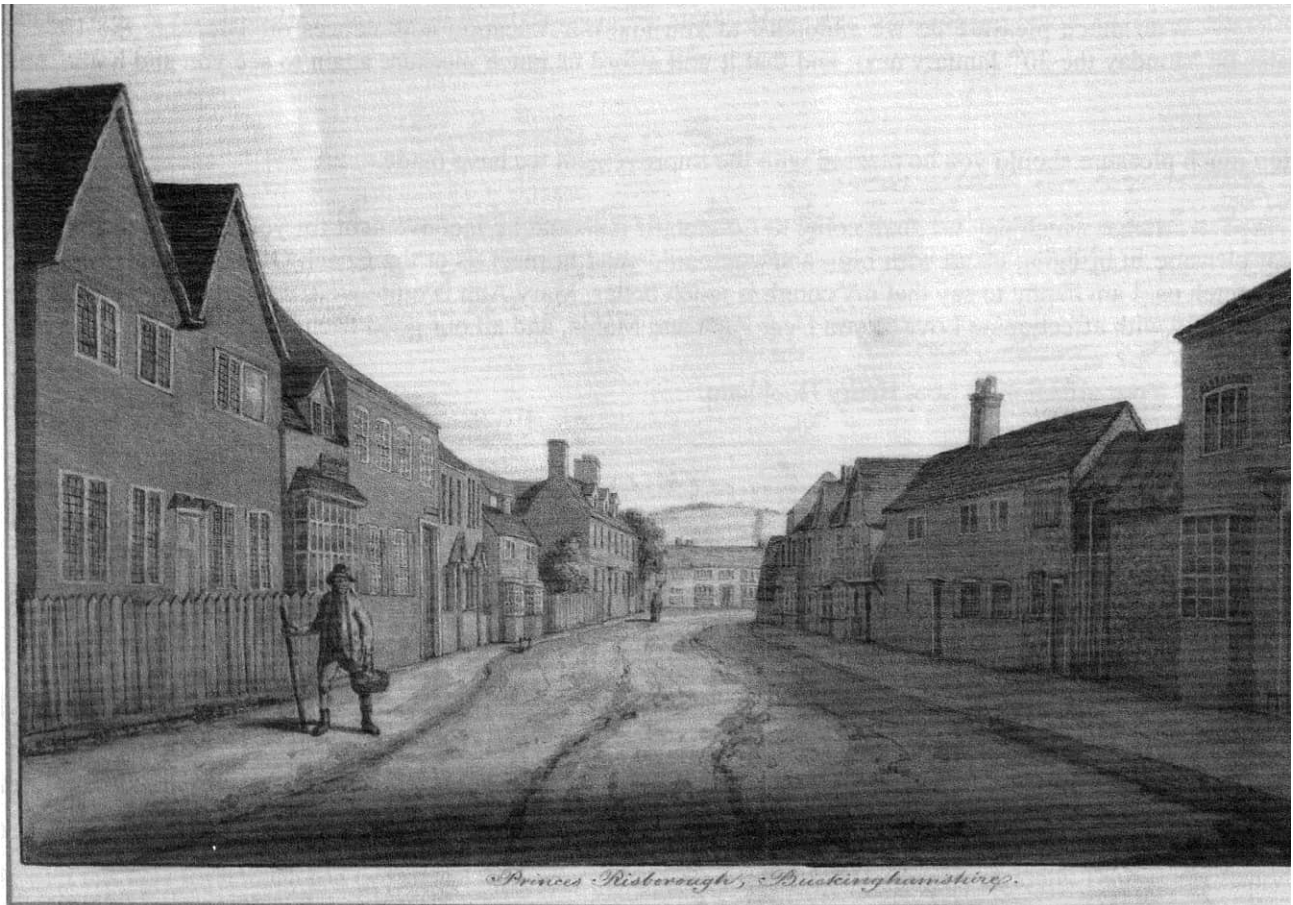
Henry has his weekly wash, and has an encounter with Mr. Norris, the surgeon

Dear Thomas

I hope you are quite well. Mary Ann has been very ill but she is now quite well. I was very glad to hear such good news yesterday and that you were quite well, and now I will tell you why I came to London, when I went to Risborough I found that I had a little lump on my neck and it went on increasing and on Saturday when Miss Stratton washes us all, she saw this great lump¹ and she told Mr. Caleb, who took me up to Mr. Norris² and then Mr. Norris looked at it and examined it and then he gave me some lotion to rub on it every day which I did till Good Friday when papa and I went up to Mr. Norris again and Papa asked him what he should do and Mr. Norris said that Papa must take me to London and have the advice of some Physician here and that's how I came here and now I must say good Bye

I remain your affectionate Brother, Henry Hookham

1. Mention of a cough in the previous letter, coupled with the fact that it was size rather than pain that drew attention to this lump, suggests a possible diagnosis of a tuberculous cold abscess, though approaching dental problems may have had some bearing. Despite excision or drainage it, or another, continued to trouble him for over a year.
2. John Lovegrove Norris was a much respected physician and surgeon. The Buckinghamshire Record Office (BRO PR 175/18/5) holds a copy of his application to attend the poor of the parish, dated 31st May 1813, for the sum of £50 per annum in which he states his intention 'to do honour to the profession and give universal satisfaction'. To the shock of the whole community he took his own life in 1838 when severely depressed, by ingesting laudanum and prussic acid. Mr and Mrs Norris lived in the large house with three dormers, just left of centre.



16. Princes Risborough High Street, c.1835, by John Buckler

Henry suffers from toothache and gets caught up in a hurricane

Dear Mama

I hope you are quite well, we cut the Cake after dinner on Sunday and we all drank Papa's health after dinner wishing him many birthday anniversaries we all send our unbounded thanks for the Cake which we found very good indeed, my neck is healing very fast and the scab is come off and my health is very good. I have had a little rheumatism in my leg but that is now quite well.

I have done 385 lines of Virgil I am past the Active voice in Greek Grammer (sic). I hope you will pick me out a better Hyacinth this time than you did last as it had no chance of winning the prize last time.¹

I am glad to tell you that my tooth ache is quite gone away since I wrote to you last and I think it was the Cake that brought it on though I must not complain of Aunt Bessy's nice making. Please to tell Aunt Bessy that I get on with my drawing pretty well though I don't draw very often as most of the Boys have gone home for their quarter's Holidays. I think it is my turn to come home for my Holidays. I think I shall like my watering place very much as Mr. Caleb and I have measured how far it is and have found it to be 92 miles from Risborough on the Map.² We have got now 9 boarders. Mr. and Miss Stratton as also Mr. Caleb and the boys are all quite well. we are going to have the School Room boarded which will be much more comfortable for the Winter next Friday. We have got altogether with the Boarders 28 boys.

About a week ago we had a terrible hurricane which I was out in only comming (sic) from Mrs. Norrises I got wet through but it was not so bad here as about 2 miles off for there it blew a great many trees down, the rain came in torrents, a man was milking a Cow in a cowhouse and the wind blew him the Cow and his stool into the yard and the Cowhouse up in the air. Also as the people were sitting in the Vestry at Monks Risborough the wind blew 2 great sheets of lead off the Church up in the air. it also broke a greate many windows in the towns roundabout.³

And now I will tell you the rules of the day. In the morning get up at 6 O'clock have our breakfast and get done by 7 sometimes not till halfpast then stay in till halfpast 8 then go out and play till 9 then come in and stay till 12 then go to dinner and get done by one then go and play till 2 then come in and the day Boys go out at 4 and we go out at 5 O'clock then play till halfpast 6 then come in and stay in to do what we like till 8 and then go to bed, thus ends the day.

I think Rosa is a very pretty name but I like Harriet better.⁴ I have read some of the life of Bonaparte about the battle of Waterloo and like it very much only not so much as the voyages and travels, and now I must say good bye.

I remain your affectionate and dutiful son, Henry Hookham.

1. A full account of the family's Hyacinths will emerge through later letters.
2. This was probably Brighton, which is mentioned in several of the letters.
3. The hurricane occurred on 11th September 1834 and was reported in the 'Bucks Herald of 20th Sept in almost identical terms.
4. Henry's sister, Rosa, was born on 3rd August 1834. The comparison is with the name of his cousin Harriet, born 1831, daughter of Edward Starling and Harriet, née Weigall.

7 February 1835

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Henry sets out his Classics timetable and Mr. Philps's foreman is assaulted

Dear Papa and Mama,

I hope you are quite well, as I am, I take my Sarsaparilla twice a day.¹ We have got some bottled porter² which I take twice a day, I have Mutton chops or Beef stakes (sic) for Dinner,

I went to Cadsden the day you left me and gave Baddams the clothes and paid Conquest³ the Bill, I have construed 10 lines of Homer's Iliad, and 5 verses of Greek Testament, and 40 lines of Virgil construed and parsed and said them by heart, besides Latin and Greek Grammar. I like the Homers Iliad very much it begins thus⁴ - sing, O Goddess the destructive wrath of Achilles Peleaus'es son which brought innumerable woes upon the Greeks and prematurely sent many valiant souls of the Heroes to Hades and made them preys to the Dogs, and all Birds but the will of Jove was fulfilled. From what time indeed at first both Atreus's son the King of Men and the divine Achilles having contended stood apart. and who then of the Gods set together them two to fight in contention; the son of Latena and Jove being enraged the King excited an evil disease throughout the army and the people were perishing. My Greek Testament begins thus - I am the vine, the true and the Father of me is the husbandman.

On Monday I do Virgil and Latin Grammar, on Tuesday Homer's Iliad and Greek Grammar, on Wednesday Virgil and Latin Grammar, on Thursday Homer's Iliad and Greek Grammar, on Friday Virgil and Latin Grammar, Saturday recapitulation day Sunday Greek Testament. There are 9 boarders.

If you please could you send me some pocket handkerchiefs as I have but one at school. Last Friday evening 3 men knocked Mr. Philps's foreman down and robbed him of his money gave him sev'ral blows but a boy who was standing by saw them and went and told other persons who caught two and they found the other in bed asleep at a publichouse.⁵

I remain your affectionate and dutiful son, with love to all, Henry Hookham.

1. Sarsaparilla, extracted from the root of plants of the *Smilax* genus, was introduced to European medicine in the 15th century from the Americas, its name derived from the Spanish *Zarza* a bush, and *Parilla* a small vine. Though prescribed as a prime treatment for serious conditions such as cancer and venereal disease, its more general use, as in Henry's case, was as a tonic.
2. Porter was developed in the early 18th century to combine the best qualities of ale and beer, and like sarsaparilla, was regarded as beneficial to convalescence. At this time there were two maltsters in the Market Square, Abraham Lowe and Jonathan Clarke, the latter at what is now called 'The Gables.
3. John Conquest of Cadsden, wheelwright and Beerseller.
4. The letter is a word by word translation; the Greek has been omitted from this version.
5. On the 11th March 1835 Henry Stanton and William Thompson were charged at the Bucks Assizes with assaulting George Childs, steward to Mr. Philps, with intent to rob him. They were found guilty and sentenced to seven years transportation.

18 March 1835

Mrs. Hookham to Henry 15 Old Bond Street

Henry is complimented for his work but reminded to be obedient and respectful to his elders.

My dear Henry

We have been highly gratified by your very nice letter which tells us indeed all that we were anxious to know. It is a very good thing that your neck is quite well and I am rejoiced to hear it. I think if it is at all tender you had better keep on the plaisters because that will defend it should you have any blow when you are at play with the boys - but if it is not tender you may leave it off - The Sarsaparilla you must continue until I write to you further about it - and if Miss Stratton thinks you go on well with the porter continue that also.

We are glad to hear you get on so well with your lessons. Do not forget that your first lesson is obedience. Obey God, that is keep his commandments, and do what you are told is right in the word of God - Obey your masters /or your parents when they are with you/ and respect their opinion much more than your own, for you know you are still very young and cannot know what is right so well as they do.

I am happy to say Mary Ann is a very good girl, and very obedient - I seldom have to speak to her more than once. She is very industrious with her needle - She reads to me twice a day. She writes me Copy - and she practices her music. Aunt Bessy teaches the music. Besides these she is learning Geography and grammar twice a week, and we have bought a new spelling book and she gets a column by heart every day.

I shall make her write to you the next time we send but tonight we have not time, for she is making a pretty apron to give her cousin Harriet Jane, of white muslin braided all round with red and little pockets.

Mary Ann sends her love to you: she was delighted to hear that her favorite (sic) Maria Hester¹ was coming to London; she has often asked me to invite her here and now she is "sure she will come".

Indeed I should like very much to see her if her friends would bring her to spend a day with your sister, but I do not know how to manage it - Mary Ann thinks much about paying you all a visit too, but that also I cannot manage now.

Little Rosa is quite well and happy, and gets fatter every day. She drinks whey and has had steamed pudding once - Mama has nothing to do for her but kiss and play with her. She was coming down stairs the other day and Sir Arthur Clifton² was coming out of the drawing room; he crossed his arms and stood still and stared at her until she was out of sight!

Mr. Gunning³ has sent us a most excellent account of Tom. Uncle Edward and Aunt Harriet have been to Hastings. Uncle George and Aunt Julia are in London.⁴ Uncle George is very ill.

We all write in love to you

Believe me your Affec^t Mother M. A. Hookham

1. Maria Hester, 1821-1862, daughter of John Hester, baker, High Street. In 1840 she married Thomas Abbotts Warren, surgeon, who succeeded Mr. Norris.
2. Sir Arthur Clifton, a retired Cavalry Officer, Knight Commander of the Order of Hanover 1832. The 1841 Census suggests that he had rooms at 15 Old Bond Street.
3. Frederic Gunning, barrister, husband of Maria, née Brooke.
4. Uncle George Augustus Starling, MD, and his wife. He had just established his Practice in Bishop's Stortford.

23 March 1835

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa and Mama,

The dentist will be here in about 3 weeks, and he will look at my teeth: I have found in the Box - "Clarke on Children" which you told me to send, and I have found in the Box too, a History of Scotland and Ireland which I like very much; as also a Map of London. I have sent the Parcel to Mrs. Baddams as I had no time to go myself.

I am glad to say that my neck is quite healed up; nor does there remain any of that softness: I take my Porter twice a day, the same as before. I was very much pleased to hear your account of little Rosa. I have done 70 lines of Homer's Iliad now, construed and parsed: and 1 section of Caesar. construed and parsed: and 215 lines of Virgil, construed and parsed: besides Latin and Greek Grammar: in the Greek Grammar I have got to the Verbs in μ , I was very sorry to hear the bad news that Uncle George was so very ill. With love to you and all at Home.

I remain; your affectionate and dutiful son, Henry Hookham.

March 1835 Aunt Bessy (Elizabeth Starling) to Henry (undated and no address given)

Melancholy news of Miss Brooke, and the limited education allowed to 'young ladies'

My dearest Harry

I dare say you think from your Aunt Bessie's long silence that she had quite forgotten the promise she made when you left home of writing often to you: but if you have thought thus you have been under a mistake for I began a letter to you some time ago but from various reasons have been prevented concluding it, and indeed I have not lately felt quite equal to letter writing.

We were very much shocked as you may suppose by the melancholy news of the death of poor Miss Brooke;¹ it was so sudden an occurrence that it quite overcame us for the time and will be long and deeply felt by us all: what a heavy affliction it is for her family to lose one so young, so amicable, and so dear to them! What a loss will our dear friend be in the once merry and happy circle at the Rectory! But my dear boy I will no longer dwell on this subject which must be as distressing to you as to myself; but when we have our friends thus taken from us in youth we must feel it an awful warning to stand prepared for our own fate for who may say that he has another day to call his own?

It gratified me very much, dear, to learn from Mr. Brooke (who called here with Horace on his return to town)² that you are getting on so nicely and that your health was much improved: I trust that it will continue so and that you will quite get rid of the swelling in your neck which has given yourself and your Mama so much trouble and anxiety. I am glad that you like the Greek for I should consider it must be a very fine language - it has a very noble sound when read: I should like much to know something of it myself but young ladies you know are not permitted to have such advantages as you do of being instructed in the dead languages. I am anxious to know whether you draw at all now? I am ashamed to confess I have not practiced at all latterly but when the weather is fine and I can sit in my little study again it will be a great inducement - I shall expect you to come and help me in the holidays.

We had a very nice letter the other day from Tom indeed I think it the best he can send us - ...[a round fragment of the letter is missing here] ...chiefly related to the different pro [...] which he wanted to have an account of previous to settling in life. I think he has a strong predilection in favour of a soldier's life but that is very natural at his age and will no doubt wear off as he gets older; he appears to be quite well. Your Mama has not been well but is now much better.

Mary Anne grows very steady and attentive. She comes here twice a week to take a music lesson. [the remainder of the letter is written over and at right angles to the preceding]

Little Rosa grows and improves daily and is the most good tempered little dear that I ever saw - she [has? fragment missing] always a smile for us. - Little Cousin Hatty has been very dangerously ill, but has quite recovered - Mary Anne is going to dress two handsome dolls, one for Hatty and one for Amy. We sent Hatty a set of tea-cups and saucers when she was ill and a kettle and other apparatus and she makes tea sometimes for her Papa now.

I must say goodbye Harry dear for it is now twelve o'clock and every body is in bed but myself and I am beginning to be a little sleepy and so you must excuse me if this is a very dull and uninteresting letter. Aunt Jane is gone to Stortford today and all there are quite well.

I have now I think told you all the news except that we have not had one song since you left, so you see you are the only patron of our vocal performances - We will make up for it in the holidays will we not? I must really say goodnight. Remember me very kindly to Miss Stratton who is I trust quite well and also give my compts. to Mr Stratton and Mr Caleb and

Believe me always to remain Your very affectionate Aunt Bessy

1. Susan Brooke, daughter of the Rev. Zachary Brooke and Mrs. Elizabeth Brooke of Monks Risborough, died 13th February 1835, aged 29.
2. Probably Susan Brooke's brothers, Zachary, born 1803, solicitor, and Horace, born 1819.

18 April 1835

Henry to his sister, Mary Ann

Princes Risborough

My Dear Mary Ann,

I hope you are quite well. I received your letter last Tuesday about 2 O'clock. We made out your Italian tolerably well. I was at Mrs. Edmonds' when your letter came who, had invited me to spend the day there, and Miss Stratton sent them up. I spent a very nice day there, and read all my letters to Mrs. Edmonds.¹

Could you send me some Lupins and a few other seeds when you send next, as I am turn'd Gardener again. I have got a new book of the Heathen Mythology² with such very curious stories in, one in particular: Vulcan was also one of Juno's children but as soon as he was born Jupiter seeing him so ugly and deformed, kicked him out of Heaven and in the fall he broke his leg. Many other such stories as these we all send our united love to you.

I remain, your very affectionate Brother, Henry Hookham.

1. Probably Cordelia, wife of John Edmonds, retired jeweller and silversmith, who lived at the White House in the High Street.
2. Possibly *Heathen Mythology made easy: or a guide to classical learning* (1799).

22 May 183[5]

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

(the original is dated 1834 but the postmark on the address page confirms 1835)

Encounter with Mr. Lukyn, the dentist and after effects of Inclosure of the Parish Fields.

My Dear Papa and Mama

I feel much pleasure in writing to you as it is a long time since I wrote to you last. I have a great deal to tell you of this time. Mr. Luckyn (sic) the Dentist,¹ came the other day and I went into the George Inn to bear my operation. He took out four of my teeth, and says there are nine more to come out when I am about 13, and then filed and cleaned all my others which took him an hour. His charge was two guineas, very reasonable indeed considering that he came here on purpose for me! including toothbrush and powder. My neck is, I am glad to say gone down a great deal since Miss Stratton wrote to you last.

I thank you very much for all the nice things you sent me, which, I am assured took you no small trouble to get.

There are gone from our Parish 60 persons to Manchester, and there are to go 60 more next week. We think it will be a great relief to the Parish. There has been a great many go from Bledlow.² I have done 140 lines of Homer, 250 lines of Virgil, and finished the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

I could not take the letter to Mrs. Baddams but sent it by one of my Schoolfellows. Please to tell Mary Ann that I delivered the small parcel to Mary Darvill,³ also that the flowers which she sent me are coming up beautifully. We were very sorry to hear you say that Mary Ann would not come down to see us. It will be a great disappointment! as we have been reck'ning upon seeing her a long time past, and I think she had better come directly the weather is so fine.

Summer is now begin'ing with us; yesterday and today were the two finest days we have had this year. I have been on visits since I wrote to you last. First to Mrs. Brooks where I met with a companion Charles Drage⁴ he came down to spend his Easter Holidays, also to Mrs. Norris' where I met also with a companion, and to Mrs. Edmonds' so I spent my holidays very happily. My wants are all done away with something else more worthy shall occupy their place. I think I have not such a numerous lot as Tom has. With love to you and all my friends

I remain your very affectionate and Dutiful Son Henry Hookham.

Caleb Stratton adds a postscript to Mary Ann Hookham in Henry's letter of 22 May:

My Dear Mary Ann,

Your brother Henry has given me permission to write at the end of his letter and I avail myself of the opportunity of saying, how glad we all shall be to see you, and as the weather is so fine now you had better come directly, as Henry's neck is getting better. You may come by the New Sociable called the Omnibus which puts up at the George and Blue Boar, Holborn, which place it leaves at a quarter before 9 on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays for Risboro. The fare is 6/- inside and the man would take care of you, it arrives at Risbro abt. 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

In the expectation of soon seeing you I am, Dear Mary Ann, Your affectionate (sic) friend Caleb Stratton

1. William Lukyn, dentist, of Oxford, made pre-arranged tours 'in any part of the counties of Oxford, Gloster, Hereford, Worcester, Warwick, Northampton, or Buckinghamshire'. Three advertisements are reproduced after these footnotes, for the insight they give into dentistry in the early 19th century: the first, from the 'Bucks Herald' of 2 May, 1835, is for the tour in which Henry was treated; the second, from the 'Bucks Gazette and General Advertiser' of 8 September 1838, outlines the extent of service provided; the third, from the same edition of that paper, is a public denial by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University of Mr. Lukyn's claim to be 'matriculated' by him, following a request by another dentist for a similar privilege.
2. Unemployment rose sharply after the parish Inclosures and those affected were encouraged to migrate to Lancashire and Cheshire to supply labour for the wool and cotton mills. Eyes were also turned further afield: on 4th January 1842 a party of young men, agricultural labourers, left Princes Risborough for Sydney, Australia.
3. Mary Darvill was probably the daughter of Richard Darvill, farmer, of Monks Risborough. She was the same age as Mary Ann Hookham.

4. Charles Drage was equally probably the son of the Rev. Charles Drage of Westerfield in Suffolk, who had married Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. Zachary Brooke of Monks Risborough.

Mr. LUKYN

Matriculated by the Vice Chancellor of Oxford

RESIDENT DENTIST TO THE UNIVERSITY,

Cowley House, Oxford

Mr. LUKYN extirpates disease, removes pain, remedies irregularity, and corrects deficiencies of the Teeth upon anatomical and pathological principles

MIDLAND COUNTY CIRCUIT APPOINTMENTS

Friday 7th. May - Swan, Fenny Stratford, 9; George, Brick Hill, 11; Swan, Leighton, 1; George, Aylesbury 3 o'clock.

Saturday 8th May - George, Risboro' 10; Crown, Thame, 2 o'clock.

Engagements are particularly requested to be Addressed to Mr. Lukyn at the Inns, as these Circuits are made from previous engagements.

Constant attendance of duly qualified and skilful practitioners of ten years experience in the metropolis

Mr. LUKYN,

Dentist to the University of Oxford,

MATRICULATED IN 1832

All the Diseases of the Teeth permanently eradicated at one sitting, and artificial teeth, of unequalled workmanship and ingenuity, adapted at one sitting. Honourable practice, fixed fees, and no charge for travelling,

Mr. Lukyn's Preparations:- Kali, to beautifully polish and clean the teeth. Gum Lotion for painful gums. Cement for filling teeth. Dressing for painful teeth, and toothbrushes in sets, to be had of Simmons, Thame; Scott, Risborough; Loggin, Aylesbury; Hawley, Winslow; Sirett, Stallworthy, Buckingham; and throughout the Midland Counties.

Honourable Distinction at the University of Oxford

Having been assumed by Mr. Lukyn, under the absurd title of "Matriculated Resident Dentist to the University," - *Notice is hereby given*, that such office or distinction does not, nor ever has existed as will appear from the following evidence :-

Brazen-Nose College, Oct 21, 1831

"Sir, - In reply to your request to be matriculated, urged upon me on the ground that another has obtained a professional advantage, by having been admitted to that privilege, I am compelled to remark that that plea, if allowed, would lead to the indefinite continuance of an acknowledged evil: while I have given you, on the other hand, a sufficient proof, in having had recourse to your assistance, that no one person of your profession, more than any other, has any testimony from the University to his skill, or any peculiar claim to be employed by its members,

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"A T Gilbert, Vice-Chancellor."

"To Mr. Edward King, Surgeon dentist, 18, Merton Street, Oxford

17. Three notices about Mr. Lukyn, the Dentist

10 June 1835

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa and Mama,

I hope you and all are quite well. I write to inform you that our Vacation commences on Thursday the 18th. Instant, and terminates on Monday the 20th July next, and that we hope you will be pleased with the improvement I have made during the last past half year. Mary Ann is quite well and very happy and sends her love to you and all, in this letter.

We have had two or three successive hot days. We both went to Mr. Tarrant's on Monday and spent a very pleasant day; and Mr. C. Stratton came in the evening to join us and Mr. Tarrant and his family came part of the way home with us.¹

Mary Ann has slept so very well, so very well, since she has been here that she does not breakfast till nine O'clock. I suppose you will make arrangements about our going home. We learn from Mary Ann that Grandmama² is composing a book. I hope she will have success.

My second tumor [sic] still keeps down, and I have left off the Lotion. Mr. and Mrs Brooke and the Ladies are quite well. We send our united love to all. Mr. Stratton's and Miss Stratton beg particularly to be kindly remembre'd to you

I remain, your affectionate, and dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

1. John Evans Tarrant (1783 – 1848), retired Solicitor of Dean Street, Soho, London. In 1829 he bought property in the hamlet of Alscot, Princes Risborough, where he built a substantial house, Alscot Lodge. He and his wife, Matilda, have a large tomb surrounded by iron railings in St. Mary's churchyard, Princes Risborough. Their youngest daughter, Emma, married Horace John Brooke, younger son of the Rev. Zachary Brooke.
2. Jane Starling, probably working with her daughter, Elizabeth, on *The Noble Deeds of Woman*, q.v.

15 October 1835

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Henry shows tact to his Aunts and advises his parents of the power women have over men.

Dear Papa and Mama,

I hope you and all at home are quite well. I take this opportunity of writing to you, as Horace Brooke is going to London tomorrow. I am glad to say I am quite well and getting on I think tolerably well. I wrote to Tom, about a fortnight past. The Fair is next Wednesday and my birthday I believe next Thursday but you must refer to the book of our births.¹ I contemplate that day as having the pleasure of reading letters coming from you and relations.

Please tell Mary Ann that I shall be very happy to receive a letter from her whenever she has the inclination for writing. Also please to tell Aunt Bessy and Jane that I hope some day or other the pleasure of receiving and reciting a letter from each of them; but as a letter perhaps would be rather too tedious and long for them I only require a note.

I went to Mrs. Brook's last Saturday, and there I got the *Stories of Waterloo*² to engage my attention, in one of these was the story of a Gentleman independent who fell in love with a lady in an adjoining house and just as the Marriage was agreed upon, another suitor presented himself with more money than the former offered his hand which he accepted and he ran off with his prize: the former was so much discouraged by this, that he resolved never again to set his affections on that sex; he then travelled to France but being Weary of Gay Company, he travelled to Italy where he broke his leg and was carried to a gentleman's House who was then going to travel and left the Care of him to a lady who's name was Elizebeth (sic) this he loudly protested against and desired that he might travel with them but his leg being in a very bad condition he was obliged to stay. Elizebeth who attended him charmed him so much by her conversation that he resolved once more to confide in her he was just about to marry her when a Colonel of Lancers drove up to the door want (sic) to see Elizebeth. What! said the gentleman wants Elizebeth! he wanted her hand in marriage but she refused it. After that he married her and they lived together afterwards very happily. I relate this only to show what power women have over men. Give my love to all at Home. I hope you will write to me as soon as you can,

I remain ever your very affectionate Son Henry Hookham.

Mr Stratton would feel very much obliged to you if you could help him to,

2 Ream of Salimpost plain,³

1 Ream of Superfine gilt edge,

100 penny Pens

Mr. Stratton and Family beg leave to be respectfully remembred (sic) to you.

1. It was not unusual for those born before the establishment of Registration Districts in 1837 to be unsure of their birth date. William Syred, a sawyer from Longwick in the parish of Princes Risborough, in an unrelated Statutory Declaration of 1892 relating to property in Princes Risborough, can only say 'To the best of my knowledge information and belief I am of the age of fifty years and upwards'.
2. *Stories of Waterloo*, by W. H. Maxwell, was first published in 1829. The 1834 edition had 163 pages octavo.
3. Perhaps a misspelling of Palimpsest, paper from which writing has been erased to allow it to be written over again.

21 October 1835 Thomas Hookham 3 to Henry

My dear Harry

Your letter to me and mama gave us much pleasure and we laughed heartily at your account of the Tale which you had read of the Stories of Waterloo.

I have no doubt of your continued improvement under the able tuition of Mr Caleb, and there is no observation which he addresses to you which does not merit your serious attention. It is very kind of him to assist you in drawing, and I feel confident that drawing may, at a future time, be of great utility to you, and I am sure that it will always afford you pleasure.

Your mother has sent you a present on your birthday, the Fables of Esop [sic] and I have sent for your amusement, the Life of Buonaparte¹: I wish you to take an early opportunity to return the latter when you have read it.

In addition to the cake Mama has sent a bottle of wine, in order that you may ask Mr Stratton, Mr Caleb & Miss Stratton to take a glass with you on your birthday, and any little boys that Mr Stratton pleases. We shall drink your health at home wishing you many returns of the day, and the way to make those days happy is to be good.

Believe me, my dear Harry, Your affectionate father, Thos. Hookham

1. Possibly *The Life of Buonaparte* 4 vols (1828 – 30) by William Hazlitt

October 1835 Aunt Elizabeth Starling (Bessy) to Henry [no address and date illegible]

My dear Harry

I must confess that it did not occasion me any surprise to be reminded in your letter to your Mama that it was time to write to you: indeed I have treated all my correspondents in a very negligent manner for some time past: not that I have been idle either, so that you must forgive my long silence dear boy and I will endeavour to make the “amende honorable”. You would have received a birthday congratulation from me had I not been from home at the time: I have been staying for a week at Rochester a place I do not think you are acquainted with. It is on the road to Dover and the ride from London to Rochester is quite exhausting. You have a view of the Thames great part of the way.

I suppose you heard all about our trip to the Isle of Wight and Brighton. We passed through Shoreham on our way to the latter place and at sight of the handsome bridge there could not but recollect the circumstance of your walking there and not being able to cross it for want of money to pay the toll.¹

I hope that you have got on with your drawing since Papa was at Risborough for he gave us a very good account of your progress. Mary Anne is very industrious with her music - it is the greatest pleasure in the world to teach her she is so attentive and good: she has learnt by the bye one piece which she does not at all like herself but has persevered in acquiring it because she said it was a favourite air of Mr Stratton's! Little Rosa grows very fast and is as good as ever: you will have fine fun in the holidays with her.

Your Papa has put his hyacinth roots into water but I do not know the names. Mine are the “Grand Vainqueur”, the “Staten General”, the “Lord Byron”, the “Radamanthus”, the “Marquis de la Coste” and the “Grande Blanche Imperiale”. We already begin to feel anxious about them.

We hope to be very sociable this winter but do not intend to be so gay as usual. I must tell you that we are to have a meeting here every Wednesday for needlework and to play at the Games or read aloud. Will you join us when you come home? I must not forget to tell you that I am thinking as soon as I can find time of studying “insects” and their history which I am sure I shall find highly interesting. If therefore in your walks you should meet with any specimens pray take care of them for me. I was amused to find that you had been looking at the Comet the same night that I was.²

I shall quite hope to hear from you soon, meanwhile with the united kind regards of our circle to Mr & Miss Stratton and Mr Caleb

Believe me ever dear Harry Your affectionate Aunt Elizabeth

[Addendum written across last paragraphs]

Your Papa is anxious about the fate of a hamper which was sent to Mr Stratton to be filled with honey and he fears has been lost.³

1. This no doubt refers to Henry's visit to his 'watering place', mentioned in his letter of 29th September 1834 and walking from Brighton to Shoreham.
2. Halley's Comet, which was seen from London on 23rd August 1835.
3. Honey was a valuable home-produced commodity as an alternative to white sugar, which had to be imported from the West Indies.

7 February 1836 Thomas Hookham 4 to Henry 15, Old Bond Street
In which Thomas is jealous of Mary Ann's Hyacinths and corrects Henry's spelling.

Dear Henry,

As Mama thinks you will be disappointed in not receiving your parcel so soon as she promised you, I am about to write you a few lines to tell you that you may expect it on Tuesday or Wednesday next. What I have been telling you may be good news to you, but I have now got bad news to tell you concerning the Hyacinths; your Violet Superbe is double, although it does not show it much but it is not out at all, it has not even got a tinge of the colour; your Superbe Royale has hardly improved at all since you went, your Grande Blanche Imperiale is double, and shows it very much, besides what befell it before you left, on account of which I have left it in the window, without trying to forward it; but your other three, Violet Superbe, Superbe Royale and L'amie de Coeur (which by the bye was tinged soon after you left) have all been put on the mantle shelf, & every means has been taken to forward them, notwithstanding which not one is out enough to show; the night before last May Anne (sic) & myself were left at home & we had a blazing fire here all the evening; none of mine have even the tinge on them; but Mary Ann has been more lucky, her Alamode will perhaps be the only one to take, unless Mama's Temple of Apollo will be out enough, which I almost doubt, though I hope so for your sake, & I shall intercede that it may be taken in order to give you more satisfaction; the Sun is now shining upon it very brightly in the window;

Mary Ann's Princess Elizabeth has turned out a provokingly beautiful flower, it is so symmetrical, but luckily it will not be out in time, I use the words provokingly and luckily because she boasts so very much about it, although, as Aunt Jane says, she is but a child.

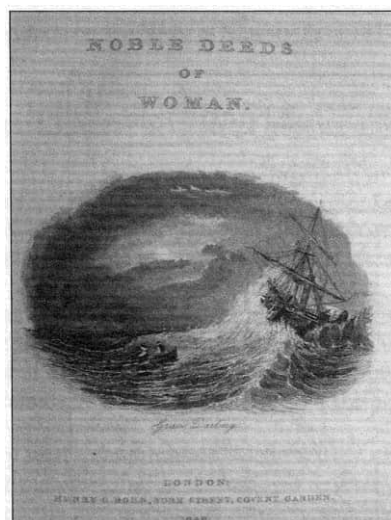
But I must now return to other things, for I have almost unconsciously been filling up a page about the Hyacinths. I have only got this to say that if I do not get on better next year I shall resign my membership and retire from the Society, as, by the bye, Miss Stokes does this year, for I am not less provoked on account of yours than my own, & I hope you will be satisfied that I have done what I can; indeed since you went I have taken much more care of yours than my own, but it has been such very bad wether (sic) lately, within this last week or so, & the season has been a bad one altogether for Hyacinths.

We have not yet heard from South America, but I begin to think that I shall have to go there. Your letter amused us very much; I think we can muster all you want to send you unless it is the Goldsmith's History of Rome and Greece,¹ which, if Papa cannot get ready by the time, we can send in the next parcel. I shall not have time, as I am now in the Library, to write to you again by this parcel I think, but I may write a few lines; I will get the stick for the hoop, the Eau de Cologne, Greek Testament, Wax Tapers, and Candlestick if possible, but Mary Ann says she cannot find it. You have spelt a word wrong, Ode Colonge, it is a French word or rather 3 words, and ought to be spelt Eau de Cologne, it is literally Water of Cologne.

All are well at the Square², they have some beautiful Hyacinths there. I suppose you mean Edition, when you say you wish success to the Second Addition. You mean the Second Edition of the Noble Deeds³, do you not?

The Opera begins about the Middle or End of this Month; the affair between Lord Nugent & Stuart⁴ will not come on yet, as there are so many cases to come on before. I have asked Papa, & he says that there is no appearance at present of another General Election. Remember me kindly to Mr. Stratton, Miss Stratton & Mr. Caleb & Believe me ever to be,
Yours most affectionately, Thomas Hookham

1. Goldsmith, Oliver. *A Roman History* (1769) and *A Grecian History* (1769).
2. Leicester Square, where the Starling family resided.
3. *Noble Deeds of Woman* by Elizabeth Starling, first published in 1835 by Thomas Hookham 3



18. The plate is from the 9th edition, 1891, published by George Bell & Sons of York Street, Covent Garden, succeeding Henry Bohn.

4. George Nugent Grenville, Lord Nugent (1788 – 1850), an Irish title. He was MP for Aylesbury in the Liberal interest 1812 – 32 and 1847 – 50. The 'affair' referred to has not been traced.

Thomas, now at the Library, looks to South America, writes of rivalry among the booksellers, and, his own spelling now having been corrected by Henry, calls him "a very 'cute fellow'".

My Dear Harry,

I was very glad to receive the other day a letter from you as we had been expecting one some time before, I have been trying this last two or three days to write an answer to it, but have not been able until the present moment. I am engaged in the Library all day, from 10 in the morning until 6 in the evening so that I have only 2 or 3 hours in evenings to do anything of this kind, & I have lately been obliged to write 2 or 3 letters to my schoolfellows, besides making out my accounts, reading useful books &c.

I have now to tell you some news which you will like to hear, viz, that we have heard from South America, but I cannot anticipate whether you will be pleased or not with the remainder of the news, that Consul Hood¹ can find no situation for either of us, besides which he has a son of his own, 13 years of age, to provide for, he thinks of returning to England himself in the summer of 1837, but if any thing agreeable to Papa's wishes should turn up before that period he will write, & let us know. He wrote Papa a very kind letter, & said that if either of his sons did go over there he should find great happiness in his making his house a home.

Last Tuesday Week I went to the play with Papa, to Covent Garden Theatre,² we saw acted Paul Clifford,³ the Intrigue,⁴ & Quasimodo,⁵ the latter was a very horrid piece, but exceedingly grand & very well performed, it was attended with great applause; Paul Clifford was very capital, but the most amusing was the Intrigue, it was capital fun! I have not time in this letter to tell you about it, or else I should like to. We had in Paul Clifford the favourite song of Huzzah for the road sung by Mr. Collins!

The Opera⁶ opens on Saturday, the day that you will receive (sic) this letter. There has been a great fuss about the boxes, Laporte⁷ will not let the Booksellers have any, therefore the Assignees have sold them their boxes; Sams has proved treacherous to the other Book-sellers, & has turned over to Laporte's side, who has allowed him to have his boxes; I have not time to explain to you all the circumstances, but it arose from Laporte's raising the prices of the Boxes &c; & his persisting in opening an office a little higher up in Bond St just opposite Ebers's in opposition to the Book-sellers, and Sams has been plainly discovered in a deliberate lie.⁸

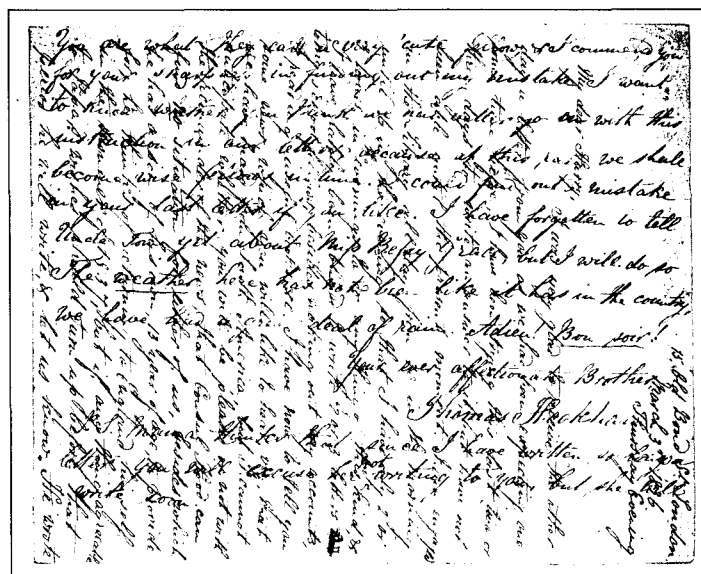
Uncle Edward Hookham⁹ has been ill this last month with a sort of low fever, & is still very ill; it proceeded from his continually taking Calomel,¹⁰ & having at last caught cold upon it, I have been to see him several times.

[Friday Evening] I have not been able to write any more today before Post-time, therefore you will not receive (sic) this until Sunday Morning. The Opera business is at last settled, the Office is to be opened in Bond St. & we have all got our Boxes which we had last year, except Andrews, four of whose boxes Sams has got this year through his perfidy. Mama will get you a pair of my trousers made to fit you & send them down in a parcel as soon as she can. Your Violet Superbe has turned out shockingly bad. We have since I left had other accidents with the Grand Blanche Imperiale, all the leaves were knocked off one after the other, & at last the flower itself. Your Superbe royale was in some way checked before you went to school, for it will not grow at all & remains in the same state in which you left it; but the L'amie de Coeur has turned out a very pretty flower, & although short it is very symmetrical, & sweet-scented. My Lord Nelson is a fine strong flower in full bloom, but the leaves are a great deal too high, my Rose Mignon is over, my Mamette has turned out bad; but the finest flower in our house & prettier looking & most singular one that I have seen this season is Papa's Aggripina. [The letter continues 'cross-written' to save paper and postage. — see below]

You are what they call a very 'cute fellow & I commend you for your sharpness in finding out my mistake. I want to know whether you think we had better go on with this instruction in our letters because at this rate we shall become wise fellows in time. I could find out a mistake in your last letter if you like. I have forgotten to tell Uncle Tom yet about Miss Bessy Grace; but I will do so.

The weather here has not been like it has in the country, we have had a great deal of rain. Adieu! Bon Soir!

Your ever affectionate Brother Thomas Hookham



19. Example of cross-writing by Thomas Hookham 4

1. Thomas Samuel Hood, served first in the Royal Navy and was appointed Consul at Montevideo in 1823, then promoted to Consul-General until his retirement in 1843.
2. Covent Garden Theatre burnt down in 1858, replaced by the Royal Opera House.
3. "Paul Clifford", a musical drama by Edward Fitzball with music by George Rodwell, was based on the novel of the same name by Edward Bulwer-Lytton, in which the main character, a highwayman, was played by John Collins. The song "Hurrah for the Road" was a favourite with the public. The novel is known for its often parodied opening line 'It was a dark and stormy night'.
4. "The Intrigue", a short farcical interlude by John Poole.
5. "Quasimodo! Or the Gypsy Girl of Notre Dame", a romance with music by Weber.
6. The Opera was at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, now Her Majesty's Theatre. Boxes were leased to the booksellers for the season, who then sold tickets for the seats.
7. Jean François Laporte (1799 – 1841), a French comic actor, was Manager of the King's Theatre 1828 – 41. He was very successful in presenting the leading singers and instrumentalists of the day, but temperamental in his day to day management.
8. The letter here names two of the great booksellers of the day. William Sams, 1, St James's Street; John Ebers, 27, Old Bond Street, and later adds John Andrews, 167, New Bond Street.
9. Edward Hookham, born 1787, brother of Thomas 3. Mrs. Nancy Gilson believes he may provide a link to Margot Fonteyn, née Margaret Hookham.
10. Calomel or Mercurous chloride was widely prescribed as a purgative and stimulant. It was potentially dangerous, as liable to break down into metallic mercury and the very poisonous mercuric oxide. In Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* (1836-7) Bob Sawyer excuses his absence from his patients by saying, 'I should have been obliged to give ... calomel all round and it would have been certain to disagree with some of them.'

5 March 1836 A note from Thomas Hookham 3 to Henry

This note has a FREE postmark supplied by John Walbanke Childers MP for Malton, Yorks from 1836 – 52, a parliamentary privilege dispensed as a favour.

My dear Harry

I wish you to give the enclosed letter for Mr. Partridge¹ to Mr. Caleb. I have received a letter from him dated Risboro' and he wishes me to forward a parcel to Kingsey Vicarage.² Mr. Caleb will, perhaps, have the goodness to let Mr. Partridge have my letter without delay. I enclose, also, a note for Baddams which Mr. Caleb will perhaps let you take to the cottage.

We are all well, and were very glad to receive a letter from you. Write as often as you please.

Your affectionate father, T Hookham

Give my kind regards to Mr. Stratton, Mr. Caleb and Miss Stratton.

1. Mr. & Mrs. Partridge appear to have been the current tenants at The Cottage.

2. The Rev. William Nelson Jackson was Vicar of Kingsey from 1833 until his death in 1876.

Sunday 13 March 1836 Thomas 4 to his brother Henry 15 Old Bond St.

My Dear Harry,

I have not time to write you a letter, but I am about to scribble a few lines to you, to tell you that I have sent you a knife as you wished me, & also a shilling for pocket money, which I thought that you would like; I was going to get some Scotch breads to send you, but Mama said she had got you a bag of biscuits with one scotch-bread inside.

I begin to long for your holidays to see you at home again, but they are far distant at present. Mary Ann has been very busy writing to Mrs Brooke this morning to thank her for a nice parcel which she very kindly sent us yesterday; M. A. has sent you some pin-cushions which she has been making, & a little basket she bought, but I fear, the pin-cushions which she has sent you are not very well made; I believe she intends you to try & sell them, as she has put prices on them.

Our hyacinths go on pretty well your Amie de Coeur is over, & my Nelson & Rose Mignon, but the half of your Violet Superbe is over & I have cut it off, & the other half is shooting up & growing very pretty; your Superbe Royale is now coming out very fine. & also my yellow Graf Solara; the Perle Brilliante is just beginning to come out.

I must here conclude, with remembrances to Mr Stratton & family & all our Risborough friends; & with our united loves to yourself.

Believe me to be, Dear Henry, Your ever affectionate Brother, Thomas Hookham.

Monday 28 March 1836 Thomas 4 to Henry 15 Old Bond St. London

Conflagration in Old Bond Street

My dear Henry,

I have taken up my pen to give you the first information of our terrible conflagration in Old Bond Street last Saturday night, but as I have nothing but bad news to tell you I will begin with something that happened to Grand-mama & Aunt Bessy a long time ago but I forgot before to acquaint you with it. They were one day perambulating as usual round the basin in the Park,¹ & had got round to the side next Piccadilly, (it was a very windy day) when they heard a creaking noise above, & all the Hackney-coachmen, &c. called out for them to get out of the way, they looked up, & beheld a mass of wood, a large branch of a tree, falling on them; they sprung out of the way & it fell partly on the ground and partly in the water breaking two iron rails; the ladies & gentlemen came on & congratulated them, & the affair ended very pleasantly.

On Saturday night last, at about 10 o'clock; I was about to take my supper with mama, (Papa being at the Opera with Uncle Tom) when we heard an alarm of "Fire" in the street, I threw up the window, then I heard a rapping at a door apparently near us but where we knew not, then the rattles were heard, and an immense crowd collected, with police, and fire engines, &c. They rapped again & again at the door, but could not gain admittance. Then I saw a flash of light reflect on the house opposite, & in about 2 or 3 minutes afterwards the whole of the upper part of a house (as we then discovered) three doors below ours was on fire, & the flames proceeded through the window to the street; it is not yet ascertained for certain how the fire originated, but it was at No. 12, three doors down the street from us, the house belonged to a Jew named Absalom, a tailor, & some persons were in the house who tried to extinguish the flames themselves, but would not open the door, until the house was in a blaze, when they rushed out.

The fire burnt the whole of that house, & spread to the Bazaar or Western Exchange,² which was close behind, & which, being composed of very combustible matter, wood &c. & pitched over at the top, soon gave way, & there was a terrible blaze; in the meantime it spread in the direction of our house, the back part of Gilbert & Goatly's³ house was burnt, & at length Carpenter's back ware-house⁴ caught fire, when Papa & Mr. Pons⁵, Mr. Finch⁶, &c. went out at the back of the house, & got pails of water, & after a great deal of exertion put out Carpenter's fire & stripped off the leads, & at the same time the roof of the Bazaar falling in effected the safety of our part of the street, but the back part of several houses farther down were burnt, & 10 houses in the Arcade were entirely consumed by the spreading of the fire, besides several other which were injured; it was not got completely under until 3 or 4 on Sunday morning, & not entirely out until long afterwards, for about 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon it broke out afresh at the back of the public house just below the Bazaar.

It was all managed extremely well, but owing to the wind blowing down the street so briskly it was not got under so soon as expected; about 200 Grenadier Guards were on the spot on Saturday night, when the crowd grew thick, the police were on the alert & did their part extremely well, the turncocks were on the spot immediately the alarm was given; there were 20 engines in Bond St. & Picca[dilly] at ½ past 12 o'clock.⁷ Mama wished me to write to-day, lest, hearing something about it from Taplin⁸ you should be in anxiety; we are all well and the property is undamaged.

I have not I believe told you about 2 of my old school-fellows running away from school this half; but I must leave it for the next letter. Hoping you & all our Risboro' friends are quite well., I remain

Dear Henry, your ever affectionate Brother,

Thomas Hookham.

1. Green Park had a pond at this period.
2. Desebrock, Jean. *The Book of Bond Street* (1978); 'in about 1820 a short-lived but splendid bazaar, the Western Exchange, was opened, consisting of one very large room, well furnished with a variety of stalls'. Described as an early experiment in luxurious shopping, the Western Exchange entrance was between Nos. 10 & 11 Old Bond Street, with another entrance into the Burlington Arcade (built 1818).
3. Gilbert & Goatly were Bootmakers at 13 Old Bond Street.
4. James Carpenter, Bookseller, was brother-in-law to Thomas Hookham 3, having married Jennet Jane Hookham, only child of the marriage of Thomas Hookham 2 and Mary Querior (see Chart 1)
5. Mr. Pons, hatter, at 16 Old Bond Street
6. Mr. Finch was an employee of the Library.
7. There is a detailed account of the fire in "The Times" 28th March 1836, ending with criticism of the Grand Junction Water Company's turncocks for 'shameful' delay in supplying water. This was sharply rebutted by the company, supported by an independent witness and, of course, by Thomas in this letter. Thomas refers to the Grenadier Guards, but "The Times" says it was the Scotch Fusilier Guards, of 'essential service in keeping back the thousands who thronged every avenue from whence they could obtain a view of the fire'.
8. Taplin was Proprietor of the Thame Safety Coach (q.v.).

Reckless driving of an Omnibus, and a Magpie unmoved by trouble at the Opera

My Dear Harry,

It is a long time since I last had the pleasure of writing to you, but as I was unable before to do so I now take up my pen determined to tell you all the news I can collect together, provided you will excuse my scrawl as I must hurry to get over the lines if I write you much.

I have first to tell you that William Carpenter has been laid up a long time with a bad leg; he has only lately been able to walk at all. He thought proper about 7 weeks ago to carry his two brothers Percy and little Edward up stairs to the top of the house on his back: but when he had arrived at the top step, his foot slipped, and he sprained one of the veins of his leg, & the muscles all down the leg were contracted, which occasioned intense pain, but he is much better now.¹

I must next inform you that the other day Aunt Harriet & her sister Miss Weigall² were coming to town & beckoned to an omnibus conductor (sic)³ to take them but when Miss Weigall had got in & Aunt Harriet was on the steps the man said "all right" & the omnibus went on, & though Aunt Harriet repeatedly told the man to call to the man in front to stop the man would not but they drove on, & they tried to force her in but she would not go, therefore the man let go of her & she fell into the road on her face; I know no farther except that she got into another "Bus" with which this appeared to be racing; & they are going to have the man punished.

I have been particularly writing this letter that I might tell you of Mr. Finch's model of the King's Theatre⁴, so I will now begin. A short time before he brought it to us, Edward⁵ got him some card-board & water colours &c. but we little thought at the time, what use would be made of them. According to Edward's expression, one morning he brought it into the firm gratis, but I cannot compare it with any-thing I had seen before or have seen since, it is so exquisitely beautiful; Mr. Sams has already offered him 3 guineas for it. The boxes are of the exact sizes & proportions as those of the reality only in miniature, it is exact even to the petty ornaments round the house, the boxes have their right numbers on them, the stalls are numbered, & even the gallery stalls have their numbers; & I cannot say more about it than that it is the prettiest thing I have seen for a long time.

I have not time or paper to say half of what I have to say, but I will tell you something else. Some four nights ago there was a kind of row at the Opera house because Calvari⁶ who is an inferior actor performed instead of Rubini⁷. Laporte has all through the season as yet behaved badly; he has turned away some of his musicians to make room for some orchestra stalls, which he has put up, in order to put a few more pounds in his pocket during the season; & this row served as a kind of stimulus to him, for I understand he was very much agitated; small bills were stuck about the house saying that Rubini being ill Calvari would take his part; whom as soon as he came on the stage the audience hissed and called out for Laporte, so all the performers departed except the Magpie*, which continued to perch about in its cage in spite of all; Laporte came forward, & said he had just left Sig. Rubini on a Sick bed, who had a violent cold & could not sing; the people did not half like it, & some called out about the orchestra stalls, but Laporte went away, & it went off very well afterwards.

*The piece they were performing was the Gazza Ladra, or the Magpie Thief.⁸

Now, my Dear Harry, I must conclude with kind remembrances from all of us to Mr. Stratton & family, Mr. & Mrs. Norris &c.

Ever your very affectionate Brother, . Hookham

1. William b. 1818, Percy b. 1820 & Edward b. 1829, were sons of William Hookham Carpenter and his wife, Sarah Margaret, née Geddes, and grandsons of James Carpenter and Jennet Jane Hookham, the daughter of Thomas Hookham 2 and his first wife, Mary Querier.
2. Miss Weigall was probably Frances Weigall. Her sister, Harriet, was married to Edward Augustus Starling
3. Shillibeer's Omnibus Services commenced in 1829.
4. Sadly, Mr. Finch's model does not seem to have survived.
5. Possibly Thomas's cousin Edward (Ned), son of Edward Thomas Hookham.
6. Calvari has not been identified
7. Giovanni Battista Rubini was an Italian tenor, 1794-1854.
8. The Thieving Magpie, by Rossini, first performed 1817.

6 June 1836

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa and Mama,

I am requested by Mr. Stratton to inform you that our Vacation commences on Saturday the 13th. of June, and terminates on Monday the 25th. of July next, and that he looks forward with renewed pleasure to that period, hoping that the improvement made by me during the last past half-year will meet with your approbation.

I will if you please, dear Papa, leave it to you to arrange about my coming home, and I should be glad if you send me word at the close of this week; Mary Ann and Miss Drage called upon me yesterday and Mary Ann desired me to ask you if you would send her a doll with a doll's bonnet. We are all anxiously waiting to hear from you when you are coming down to Risborough: would you send me word in your next letter.

I am very much obliged to you for the Musical walking stick and all the other things which you kindly sent me. Give my love to Aunt Bessy and tell her that though I am very sorry she could not find time to write to me, yet, I would not for the world interrupt her in her mental employments.

Mr. Brooke has just called upon me to say that Mary Ann would be glad if you would bring with you a peice [sic] of kerseymere¹ for her. with love to you and all at Home,

I remain, Your affectionate and dutiful son, Henry Hookham

Baily the painter² came yesterday and begged a second pound of Mr. Stratton on account, which he gave him.

Miss Stratton requests me to say that on Saturday next week she will send to Mr Ayers the Beds and Bedsteads that she now has of yours, and will carefully pack them up and see them safely deposited there, and she requests me to state her great obligations for the use of them.³

1. Kerseymere is an alternative spelling of Cassimere or Cashmere.
2. Probably John Bailey, painter at the Turnpike, Monks Risborough. Pigot's Directory 1831.
3. Perhaps this was on the retirement of John Young Stratton. His son, Caleb, married Arabella Hewes on the 20th of June and appears to have established his own school in the High Street. Mr. Ayers may be Thomas Ayres, farmer, Monks Risborough.

29 August 1836

Henry to his parents

Princes Risborough

Henry complains of wastage in the garden and Risborough Workhouse is pulled down.

Dear Papa and Mama,

I sit down to write you a few lines to say that I am quite well. I received your letter last Friday quite safe. I went to the Cottage on Saturday, and stayed there the afternoon. I find that a great many of the vegetables, viz: peas and beans are going to waste, not having been picked at the proper time. It is Oats that Mr. Partridge has sowed in the Field above the orchard, and they are now in ear and getting ripe.

You told me to see if the Wallnuts [sic] were too far gone for pickling, there is a capital lot on the Great Tree, but they have all got large kernells in them: The barbaries are quite ready for preserving.

Would you send me down the 1st. Vol. of Jacob Faithful, if not this some other Volume of Captain Maryats [sic] works, and the 3 Vol. of the Scottish Chiefs.^{1,2} Also would you send down 1 Churchleys Map of London³ and 1 of those neatly done up in boards and the prices with them as soon as convenient as a Lady wishes to bye one. Would you ask Tom to bye me a Sixpenny gut fishing line, and a 1 and 6 penny bottle of Pickles mixed but not very hot.

There are 30 Boys in the School 18 dayboys and 12 Boarders, there is a new boy come this half, and an old one went away last half. Has Mrs. Parteridge answered Papa's letter yet? When is Tom coming down. Ask him also to buy me a peashooter and some peas which with the other things I think will make up the halfcrown which I gave him.

I hope Uncle Tom is better now and has plenty of fishing. I have done since I have been here 37 lines of Homer, and 36 lines of Virgil, and 24 Verses of the Greek Testament.

Risborough Workhouse I understand is to be pulled down in a few days.⁴ We have an Oxford Coach through this place now every day the proprietor is Snoden. The name of the Coach is the Royal William.⁵ I have done 8 pages of animal drawings, but not any of the of the [sic] Houses.

Give my love to all at home and beleive (sic) me, Your ever affectionate and dutiful Son H. Hookham.

1. Jacob Faithful, a novel about life on the Thames Barges by Frederick Marryat, published 1834 in three volumes.
2. Scottish Chiefs, An historical novel by Jane Porter, first published in 1810.
3. G. F. Cruchley, (not Churchley), Map Seller & Publisher, published a number of good quality street maps of London. A collection can be seen at the Guildhall Library.
4. The Workhouse was at Church End, having been established there about 1723. It became redundant following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act which grouped parishes into Unions with a central workhouse, in this case the Wycombe Union situated at Saunderton.
5. Coaches seem to have changed frequently over this decade. In addition to the Royal William there were the New Sociable, previously mentioned, the Live and Let Live, the Thame and the Worcester, calling at either the *George* or the *Cross Keys*, together with several carriers.

11 October 1836

Henry to his Mother

Princes Risborough

Marriage of Aunt Jane Starling to Zachary Brooke and arson at Mr. Tarrant's premises

Dear Mama,

I sit down to write a few lines to you in answer to your letter. I heard that Aunt Jane was married to Mr. Z. Brooke before you wrote to me, and I was rather surprised.¹ I hope Mary Ann has quite got rid of the Scarlatena [sic], of which Tom told me she was ill.

I have seen Mr. Gunning² once or twice since he has been down here; he walked one day to Oxford with Horace Brooke, and I saw him another day get up on the Oxford Coach to go to London.

We have had a fire here on the premises of Mr. Tarrant, it did not do much damage but occasioned great alarm; it is not doubted in the least but that it was the work of an incendiary. The room in which the fire was being uninhabited, the person who had the premises having left them a day or two before; within ten yards of it was a large barn, which, if the fire had been left a little longer would have been sure to have caught. It happened on a Sunday of all days, when all good people were gone either to Chaple [sic] or to Church. We were in Church when we heard a great noise outside which was the bringing out of the engine but the fire was out before it got down.³ Two persons have been examined but neither proved the incendiary⁴.

So much for the fire, the particulars of which I must not farther enter into, as it will take up too much of my letter. In answer to your Question about the Porter I began taking it on Quarter day. Is the little Basket that you sent the things in your own? If so will you ask Papa if I may send it up again with the Books which he sent down to me? and will you send down to me the second volume of Peter Simple⁴ and those of Jacob Faithful or any other of Captain Maryatt's works.

Many thanks for the Bride Cake. Long life and happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Brooke!

Give my love to all at home and accept the same yourself from, Your affectionate and Dutiful Son, Henry Hookham.

1. Zachary Brooke, son of the Rev. Zachary and Mrs. Elizabeth Brooke, and Jane Starling were married at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, London, on 23rd September 1836.
2. Frederic Gunning, barrister, married Maria Brooke, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs Brooke, at Monks Risborough on 27th December 1830. Mrs. Gunning died in childbirth on 12th November 1836 and has a memorial in Monks Risborough churchyard, together with those of her children.
3. Vestry Minutes for November 1828 name a Fire Insurance Company, The County Fire Office, as being liable for repair of the 'engine' and Pigott's 1830 Directory gives William Dorsett of Church End as the company's agent.
4. Peter Simple, by Frederick Marryat, first published 1834.

22 October 1836

Birthday Greetings to Henry from his father.

My dear Harry

I have much pleasure in forwarding on your birthday a basket of cake and wine in order that Mr. Stratton & Miss Stratton may drink your health; I wish you many happy returns of the day, and I hope that you will, when this day again returns next year, find that you have gained in goodness and learning, and that you will continue year after year to give satisfaction to your parents & those who have the charge of your conduct and education.

Tell Mr. Stratton that I shall be obliged to him to let you take this note to Baddams.

Believe me, my dear child, Yr. affectionate father T. Hookham

27 November 1836 Sunday Evening Thomas 4 to Henry 15, Old Bond St.

My Dear Harry,

I take up my pen, as I consider myself bound to write to you again this half year, having only written once, but not that I have much to say for I cannot tell wether [sic] I have enough to compose a letter, but I will try.

Imprimis, I must thank you for the cards you sent me which I was very much pleased with, I intend to have them cut down to the proper size & then I think they will do for a species of visiting cards, for I have several friends in London now on whom I occasionally call; I did not think you could print so well & I wish I could; you have improved greatly since last holidays in that branch.

I will first tell you about the Hyacinths for I have just been writing my list, to be sent in next Tuesday; I have five, viz. Lord Nelson, Double Blue, Anna Maria, Double White, Penelope, Double White, Princess Elizabeth, Single Red, & the Groot Worst, Double Red. Besides these five of mine, we have ten more in the house, five of Papa's, & five of Mama's; the former are, Prince de Gallitzin, Single White, Porcelain Sceptre, Single Blue, Duc de Normandie, Double Blue, L'amie de Coeur, Single Blue, & Triumph Blandina, Single White. Mama's are Arondaks, Double Blue, Triumph Blandina, Single White, Paix d'Amiens, Single White,, Pure d'Or, Double Yellow & Aigle Noir, Single Blue.

Out of these Papa says you are to have three at any rate for your chance of the prize; viz. Prince Gallitzin, Triumph Blandina, &

Aigle Noir. The first is very good & the second very tolerable, I cannot say concerning the third yet. Mary Ann is to have two, viz. Arondack & Pure d'Or; Rosa is to have the second Triumph Blandina. Papa keeps for himself, Duc de Normandie, Porcelaine Sceptre, & L'amie de Coeur but if you ask me I dare say he will give you L'amie de Coeur as he only cares about the two first. Mama keeps only one of her choice, viz. Paix d'Amiens.¹

Horace Brooke is now a member, instead of Mr. Gunning who has retired, he has [10] roots, Uncle Tom has 12, Aunt Bessy 5, Grand Mama 2, Aunt Jane 6, Mr. Brooke 16, Miss Carpenter 4, Miss Low[e]s 7, Miss Mills 5, Miss Stokes, 6.

Now, I think I have said enough on Hyacinths, so I will turn to something else. You will see that this letter is dated Sunday, & I fully intended to have finished & sent it on Monday, but I found that I was unable to do so that day or Tuesday either, & there was no chance of my doing so Wednesday or Thursday, they being the last and first days of the month, at which time we are so busy in the Library with fetching the new magazines in & taking them out to different people that we have not the least portion of time to spare, (indeed I was out & in all day long on that wet day Thursday & was twice wet through) so that I was obliged to delay it until today (Friday) & I hope now that you will get it by Sunday.

We should like to hear from you soon, indeed I suppose you will soon be writing us your holiday letter; tell us all the Risboro' news, particularly concerning poor Mrs. Brooke² & our friends at the Rectory. I suppose you have heard that Mr. Tarrant³ is very ill, & his daughter has come up to see him. We are all quite well at home, & the Scarlatena [sic]⁴ has left us entirely. Grandmama & Aunt Bessy have been lodging at Chelsea the last two or three weeks & have not given up the house just yet; I believe they are going afterwards to Hampstead for a week or two; I suppose to favour their literary pursuits, for it cannot do their health much good at this time of the year.

Perhaps you have not heard of our celebrated song called "Jim Crow" sung with such rapturous applause by Mr. Rice, the American, at the Adelphi; it is astonishing what a vast sum of money he has gained by merely singing that one song, first in America & afterwards at several theatres in London, it is very amusing but I believe rather vulgar; it runs thus: (he is a negro)⁵

"Turn about, wheel about, jump just so"

"Every time you turn about, jump Jim Crow."

I think I shall learn it for Christmas instead of all round my hat⁶, which I have dropped!!!

[At this point the letter continues at right angles across the previously written page]

I am obliged to cross this letter although as I have written it so black I do not think you can read it, but I think you have not heard that Mr. Mitchell⁷, who lives opposite, has become Lessee & Manager in partnership with Signor Puzzi⁸ of the English Opera House or Lyceum, Wellington Street, Strand, for the performance of Opera Buffe, that is Comic Italian Operas; it opens next Saturday (tomorrow week), & will close about the time the other Italian Opera opens!!! Most people think it will not succeed.

Adieu! Remember me to Mr. & Mrs. Stratton & all friends at Risboro', Miss Maria Hester included if she is at home!!

I am, ever your affectionate Brother, Thomas Hookham

Papa's love to Harry. Mama's love also & hopes you are quite well. Has the hurricane⁹ done any damage to fences or trees at Cadsden?

1. Although the Hyacinth Society mentioned in the letters has not been identified, and was possibly no more than a group of friends, it is one of the earliest recorded. A full list of the Hyacinths mentioned in the letters, with additional descriptions, is given as Note¹⁰
2. Perhaps a reference to the death of Maria Gunning, née Brooke, previously mentioned.
3. Mr. Tarrant was presumably at his Dean Street, Soho, address.
4. Scarlatina was at the time a very serious disease of childhood, with potentially life-threatening consequences. Today, naturally decreased virulence, antibiotics and improved hygiene, have rendered it much less dangerous.
5. Thomas Dartmouth, aka 'Daddy Rice', born in New York, was one of the first blackface impersonators, performing his song-and-dance skit 'Jim Crow' several times in Britain to great acclaim.
6. Michael Kilgariff, *Sing us One of the Old Songs Popular Songs 1860-1920* OUP 1998. 'All round my hat', with words by I. Hansett and music by J. Valentine, 1834, was a parody of an old Gloucester Folk Ballad 'All around my hat I wears a Green Willer'.
7. John Mitchell, (1806-1874) introduced comic operas at the Lyceum Theatre, Strand, beginning with "L'Elisir d'Amore" by Donizetti, in 1836. Later he produced French Comic Operas at the St. James's Theatre, King's Street, St. James.
8. Giovanni Puzzi (d. 1876) came to England in 1818 as a gifted horn player. He became a booking agent for operatic singers and in 1836 Director of the Lyceum Theatre under John Mitchell.
9. The "Aylesbury News" of 3rd December 1836 reported that stormy weather had caused damage in villages north of Aylesbury and High Wycombe.
10. List of the Hyacinths mentioned in Hookham letters 1835 – 6: References given in square brackets are by Alan K. Shipp, holder of the National Hyacinth Collection, who believes that Grande Blanche Imperiale is the only one in the list still in cultivation today.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Aigle Noir, single blue | 16. Penelope, double white |
| 2. Aggripina | 17. Porcelain Sceptre, single blue |
| 3. Alamode (sic) [A la Mode, AKS] | 18. Prince de Gallitzin, single white |
| 4. Anna Maria, double white | 19. Princess Elizabeth, single red |
| 5. Arondaks, double blue | 20. Pure d'Or, double yellow |
| 6. Duc de Normandie, double blue | 21. Radamanthus |
| 7. Grand Vainqueur | 22. Rose Mignon [Double red, AKS] |
| 8. Grande Blanche Imperiale, white single and double | 23. Staten General |
| 9. Groot Worst, double red | 24. Superbe Royale [Double red, AKS] |
| 10. L'amie de Coeur, single blue, [also single red or violet, AKS] | 25. Temple of Apollo [Single or double red AKS] |
| 11. Lord Byron | 26. Triumph Blandina, single white |
| 12. Lord Nelson, double blue [also single red, AKS] | 27. Violet Superbe, [double white with purple eye, AKS] |
| 13. Marquis de la Coste | 28. Graf Solora, Yellow |
| 14. Nan(n)ette | 29. Perle Brillante |
| 15. Paix d'Amiens, single white | |

27 February 1837 Henry to his father

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa,

I take the opportunity of writing a word or two to you as Mr. C. Stratton is sending. The first thing I will say is that I am quite well; secondly that (which I suppose you have before) Harcourt is elected for Bucks, ¹ poor Dashwood I should think is rather dispirited. However I suppose you know more about that than we do. Could you send me down a Flag, and, an iron stick for my Hoop. I thought perhaps you was (sic) going to Aylesbury, I also thought that you would come to see the Cottage. Tell Tom that I am much obliged to him for his attention to my Hyacinths, also tell him that I will answer his letter, but dont think it will be just now. Hoping you are quite well,

I remain, your affectionate, and Dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

Mr. C. Stratton will be obliged to you for the following articles at your convenience,

Best Foolscap ½ a ream.

Ruled Bill paper .. do

Gilt Edgedo..... letter paper.

Black Edge and Border ¼ of a Ream ... letter paper.

Best Bath1 Ream..... Do

1. A bye-election for one of the two Bucks county seats.

27 February 1837 Caleb Stratton to Thomas Hookham 3 Princes Risbro.

Tree felling at The Cottage

Dear Sir,

I beg to inform you that I have measured up the Timber and that it contains 12 Load and a half which at £1. 12. 0 per 40 feet, as it is sold in our neighbourhood, comes to £20. 0. 0 exactly but the expense of cutting down and falling Do. amounts to 1.£ which I got Mr. Gilbert¹ to pay so that there is a balance of £19. 0. 0 due by Mr. James Gilbert, which he promises to pay within two months should you feel disposed to credit him till then, otherwise he will endeavour to settle for it earlier.

We fully expected that you would have come to Risbro' if you had journey'd to Aylesbury at the Election. We heard but little of it at Risbro' excepting with our Boys who were playing at Election during the week.

With my respectful regards to yourself, Mrs. H & family I remain Dear Sir, Your obliged Ser^{vt}. Caleb Stratton

I trust when you see your Cottage you will not much miss the view of the trees or regret your cutting them down. I consider the place much improved.

1. James Gilbert was Innkeeper at the *George & Dragon*, and also a millwright. As recounted in the Introductory chapter on The Cottage £20. 0s. 0d. was a considerable sum, in the region of £1,000 at present day values.

20 March 1837 Henry to his Parents

Princes Risborough

In which Henry gently mocks his Papa, and takes a fancy to ballooning

Dear Papa and Mama,

I sit down to write a few lines as Mr. C. Stratton is making up a parcel to send to you. I went to the Cottage last Thursday and saw Mrs. Baddams, and she says that she can do nothing in the way of cleaning until Biggs¹ has done plastering the upper Rooms.

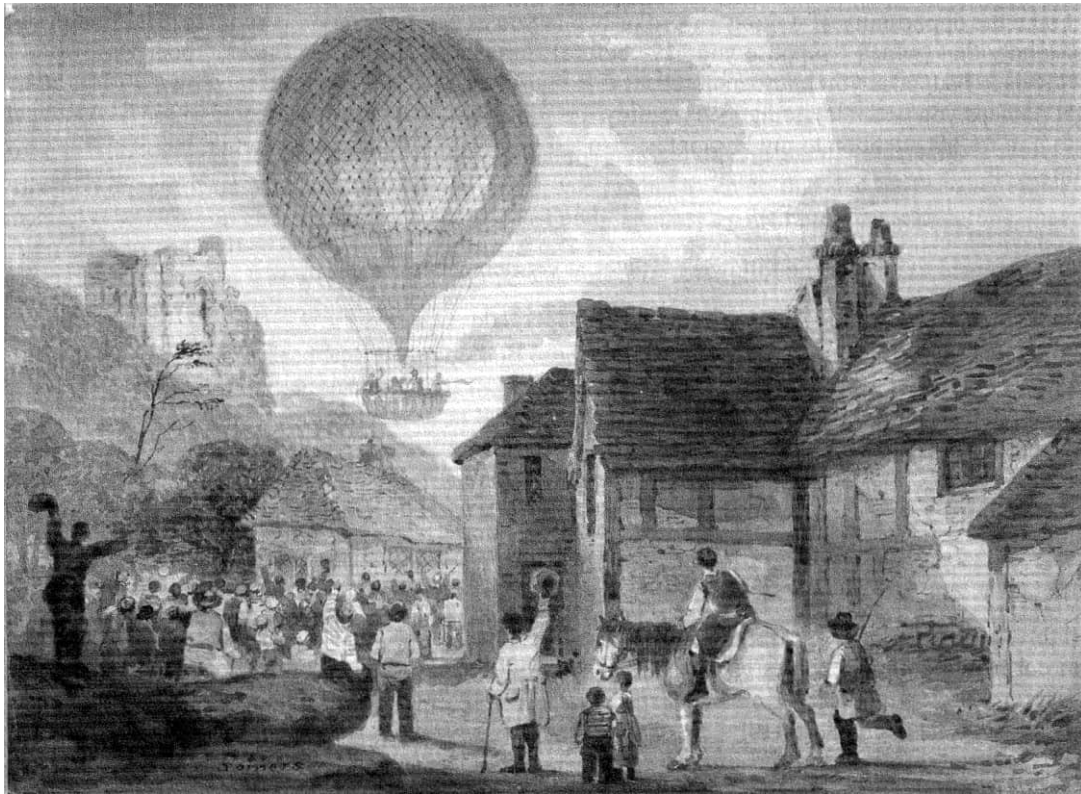
You all seem to be going on pretty well, and I am not a little afraid that you will get a cut above me by the time I come home: its a thing that I ought to consider of (your getting so very intimate with the higher orders) I mean. I fancy I must run like the Steam Carriage on Deptford Railway² to bear you on an equality; Your Latin! why really I thought that you had long ago resigned all such studies! But I see Fashion takes its turn no uncommon thing in the Annals of England or France.

You asked me if I had found out what I wanted about Balloons, but I find I must take a lesson of Mr. Green³ himself for nothing else will do, but to converse with one who has himself floated in the aerial Sphere!

Many thanks for the Hoop Stick Flags and Shilling, and now I m(ust) say good bye and believe me ever,
Your affectionate and Dutiful Henry Hookham.

[Postscript] I have finished the 1st. Aeneid of Virgil and am reading the Eclogues; I am reading the 4th. Chapter of John in the Greek Testament and can do it very well I am now going to read the 3rd. Iliad of Homer. I draw every day.

1. William and Henry Biggs of Monks Risborough were bricklayers.
2. The London & Greenwich Railway was opened between Bermondsey and Deptford on 12th February 1836, taking four minutes to cover two miles. It had already been in the news; "The Times" of 19th January 1836 reported that on Sunday 17th, at about 7.10pm, two of the newly constructed arches that were to carry the line to London Bridge collapsed at the point where it was to cross the Spa Road. The report went on to say there was no loss of life 'which might have been the case ...at a later hour as poor boys and others often seek shelter at night under the arches'.
3. Charles Green was the most famous balloonist of his day, pioneering the use of coal gas rather than pure hydrogen. In 1836 he set a world distance record that lasted until 1907, by an overnight flight of 480 miles from London to Weilburg in the Duchy of Nassau in his *Great Vauxhall Balloon*, renamed the *Nassau* in honour of the event. The painting below is of a flight in South East England in 1835. Signed 'Somers', the artist has not been identified. The painting is reproduced by courtesy of Julian Nott, himself a renowned balloonist, see www.nott.com



20. Charles Green lands his *Great Vauxhall Balloon*, 1835

15 April 1837

Henry to his Parents

Princes Risborough

Henry tries his hand at punning, and looks forward to a Lunar Eclipse

Dear Papa and Mama

I am very glad to hear that you are all quite well; I received your parcel quite safe last night by Taplin. I thank you very much for the Cake and Wine Biscuits, and Oranges and the jar of Honey, all of which relished extremely this being in the midst of the half. About the Cake not being light, I beg to say it was very light and soon will be lighter; however be that as it may my heart was very light over it!

M^r Stratton's Watch came quite safe it was going when I opened the box. I am very sorry to say that I have not time to answer Tom's kind Note. We have had some exceedingly cold weather lately, and the snow lies on the tops of the houses now. How does Tom get on with his bugle? Tell Mary Ann that I think she improves in Writing: Was her birthday on the 16^{teenth} or the 6th of April. Tom's and Mary Ann's letters as I said before I will answer the next opportunity.

With love to all, I Remain Your affectionate and Dutiful Son. Henry Hookham.

We are expecting to have the pleasure of seeing the Visible Lunar Eclipse next Thursday.¹

1. "The Times" of 21st April 1837 reported that 'Owing to the hazy state of the atmosphere last night the eclipse of the moon was scarcely visible to the naked eye.' However, William Tayler, in Marylebone, writes 'Saw the total eclips of the moon, a circumstance that very seldom happen [sic]' *Diary of William Tayler, Footman, 1837*, ed. Dorothy Wise, The Marylebone Society, 1998.

18 April 1837

Caleb Stratton to Thomas Hookham 3

Princes Risbro'

D. Sir,

I avail myself of this opportunity of saying in answer to your kind inquiries, that both my Wife and Boy are doing well, and that my Wife gets up now much as usual; the Boy grows very nicely:¹

I am sorry that you had so much trouble with my watch, but beg to thank you for the manner in which it is returned to me; it goes well;

I regret that East² the plasterer has started an attack of the Gout which has prevented him coming to put on the Cement. I am now expecting him every day: when the Casks are emptied Hammon³ shall take them back and receive the allow^{ce} for them. I will see Mr. Ayres this week and pay the Rates. I have not received any money from Mr. Gilbert, for the Timber but I expect to do so very soon. In answer to your inquiry I beg to state that I did not send my key with my Watch.

Since writing the above I have been informed that East is just come to Risbro'. I will see him this evening and give him your further instructions.

I trust Henry is going on to your satisfaction; he is very attentive and industrious. I have now 13 boarders, making in all 18 in family.

I beg to thank you for your kind congratulations on the event of my becoming a parent and particularly for the manner in which you do so.

With my respectful regards, I remain, Your obliged Servant, Caleb Stratton.

1. John, son of Caleb and Arabella Stratton, was born on 1st April 1837.
2. East the plasterer has not been identified.
3. Levi Hammon, carrier. His Waggon left for London from the *Wheatsheaf* in the Market Square (now Lloyds TSB Bank), every Wednesday & Friday morning.

29 May 1837

Henry to his Parents

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa and Mama,

I am requested by Mr Stratton to inform you that our Vacation commences on Friday the 16th of June and terminates on Monday the 17th of July; and that I have been employed during the past half year in construing and parsing the 3rd. Iliad of Homer, in reading the 1st. Aeneid of Virgil, and the first three Eclogues, in learning the rudiments of Drawing, the use of the Globes, and Printing, and that he hopes the improvement made by me, will meet with your approbation.

I now thank you for the parcel, which I received quite safe, as also all the things which it contained. You asked me where I should like to go as to the sea side, I think Margate or Ramsgate is as pretty a place as any. No one has yet called for me to accompany them to the Cottage, but whenever they do come I shall be very happy to attend on them.

I was very much obliged to you for the Newspaper, which I have perused all through, twice or three times. Mr. Stratton begs me to say in answer to your Letter, which he received on Saturday, that he shall be most happy to see any persons inquiring for information respecting the Cottage and he would like to know if he should pay East's Bill amounting to £5: 15: and Bigg's amounting to £3: 8: 3, or whether he should take the first opportunity of sending them to you, for you to examine them first, He has told Baker¹ to call for the hampers:

I am coming home on Friday the 16th. of June by Taplin, should this be agreeable to you. Hoping soon to have the pleasure of seeing you,

I remain, Your affectionate and Dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

1. Baker has not been identified.

Tuesday [25 July] 1837 Henry to his Mother

London

Dear Mama,

We received your letter this morning and as I thought you would like to hear from us I sit down to write a few lines to you before I leave.¹

Today is the London election² which I have just returned from seeing; tomorrow Marylebone, and Wednesday Westminster. Papa intends sending me down to Risboro' on Thursday Morning. He is going down to Brighton with Aunt Bessy and Grandmama next Friday I believe. The Square People³ all had a jaunt to Acton yesterday and staid (sic) there all day. I went to the London Bridge Warf (sic) to day, yesterday and the day before to see the Steamers start off.

Horsley Palmer the Conservative Candidate for the City is returned by a majority of 14: this is only a Report though.⁴

Barfoot⁵ has taken my measure, the Waiscott is [washed?], and I shall soon buy me a Stock.

My achings are all gone and I am quite well. I suppose you have heard that James is gone, and that he is going down to Brighton tomorrow. And now I must say Good Bye

I remain, Your affc^{ate} and Dutiful Son H. Hookham

1. There is no indication in this letter of where Mrs. Hookham was staying and the comment 'Papa is going down to Brighton' suggests that she was not there. However, the letter which follows, from Henry's brother Thomas makes clear that she was spending some months there.
2. All that is decipherable of the date is Tuesday 1837 but Henry says he is writing on the day of the London election and that was actually held on Monday 24th July.
3. Presumably, as mentioned earlier, the Starling family in Leicester Square.
4. The election results were given out at a noisy public meeting on Tuesday 25th when four Reform candidates were returned. Henry was wise to have been cautious about the 'Report' for Mr. Palmer, the Tory, proved to have been defeated by a handful of votes.
5. Barfoot has not been identified, but presumably a tailor.

26 September 1837 Thomas 4 to Henry

15 Old Bond Street, London

In which there is much of Politics, including 'the impertinence of little Radicals'

My dear Harry,

Having at last an opportunity of sending a letter to you, as Mr. Brooke is going down to Bucks most likely tomorrow, I can no longer delay that which ought to have been done long ago; but I am afraid that this will not be so long a letter as I could wish, as I must write to Horace also today, besides which I have got a swelled face that gives me a great deal of pain; but however, I will proceed at once without further excuses, hoping that if this is but a short epistle you will take the will for the deed, on my promising a longer one next time.

I shall first answer your letter and then tell you any news I may have. Jos. Hume Esq. was elected for Kilkenny (town) in Ireland by a good majority, but it is not so honourable to him to come in as one of "O'Connell's tail", as it would have been had he been returned for some place not influenced by "great Daniel"; however I hope he will come in next time by his own power for some free and independent town.¹

If you have no objection I will buy your chessmen at 2/6; they are quite worth that, I am sure, as only one is lost; I will put 2/6 in this letter, besides 6d. for the two letters to my friend at Thame, which I am much obliged to you for forwarding.

With respect to Uncle Tom's politics, I told him what you said & he was quite indignant at the "impertinence of the little Radicals, 2 feet high"!! those were his words. He thinks that as he is 20 years of age next December it is time for him to choose some side in Politics, and therefore, as the Tories do most good to the Law, and, as he consults nobody's welfare but his own, he has at length cut his father's Radical principles, & joined the Toryism that his brothers uphold.

So I understand Horace has very bad sport and has not had one bird for his licence!! Poor fellow! how I pity him!!²

The cloth matching your striped trowsers is not in your old hat box, nor can we find it anywhere. I send you three little bits of cloth to match a waistcoat I gave you last holidays, in case you should require them, for I think I shall not.

The "square" people have returned from Brighton sometime now, and Mama comes up about Friday week next, Aunt Bessy goes down next Monday or Tuesday for a few days, on purpose to receive the Queen! Mama will have made a very long stay of it, between 3 & 4 months. She sent a letter up for you some time ago, and after a time Papa got it franked; Honb^{le} R. Smith³ wrote on it, "Mr. Hookham" although Papa had put "Master" on the back; you have of course received it some time ago. Next Sunday is Papa's birthday⁴, & Saturday is Uncle Edward's (Hookham, I mean) so they have agreed to keep them both on Friday, & Uncle will dine here. I am beginning to think of your birthday; we shall not forget the cake, &c. Lord Nelson, our glorious naval commander was shot at the victorious battle of Trafalgar on 22nd October, 1805, 19 years before your birth.

Mr. & Mrs. Carpenter have been spending a few days at Brighton, Mr. Carpenter came up yesterday, bringing a letter from Mama, and Mrs. C. comes up today. I sent your letter to me down to Mama to read, and she was much pleased with it. When you next write, be so good as to tell me what is yours & the Risboro' people's opinion respecting Lord Nugent's vote for Chandos.⁵

I think I had better “pull up” here & write whatever else I have to say in the postscript. Therefore, hoping you will excuse this odd fashion of writing a letter, as well as the blots & bad writing all thro’ it for I shall never write so well as you, Bedford spoiled my writing;⁶ I shall conclude,

Your ever affectionate Brother, Thomas Hookham Junr.

P.S Papa sends his love, & hopes you are well. He has not at present heard anything further of Mr. Papineau⁷, but he believes he has not returned from France, as he has not yet received a book which Mr. P. was to get for him at Paris. We have not yet heard from the Matthews⁸ but they must by this time have arrived at their destination, near Nantes, in France. Ned Hookham went down to Eye, in Suffolk, shortly after you left, I wrote to him the other day, but have not yet received an answer.

John Sabin⁹ called & spent the evening with me yesterday, his father & mother have lately been down the Birmingham railway several times.¹⁰ Mr. Hall¹¹ went down one day, & Mr. Finch went down by it to Boxmoor on Sunday, went to Hemel Hempstead Church, took dinner, & came back by it in the evening. Uncle Tom went last Saturday week to Reading, where he stopped a day or two, then on to Salisbury, stopped 2 or 3 days there, and has now got to Weymouth, where he stops a week or two, & will perhaps go across to Jersey & Guernsey, & then he returns, making a complete tour. Very pleasant, is it not? He has got his gun with him, too.

I believe you do not know that Aunt Julia has been staying in the Square a few days, she returned to Bishop’s Stortford the day Uncle Tom started on his tour; Uncle George is quite well & will most likely come up to town at Xmas. I must now say Good Bye.

1. Joseph Hume (1777-1855) was MP for Middlesex from 1830 – 37. Afterwards MP for Kilkenny 1837–41, for which seat he was selected by Daniel O’Connor, leader of the Irish Party. Hume was leader of the Radicals in Parliament for 30 years.
2. Horace Brooke probably holding a one year Game Licence.
3. The Hon. Robert John Smith (1796–1868), MP for Wycombe, Bucks from 1831 until succeeding his father in 1838 as the 2nd Lord Carrington. As has previously been mentioned, friends and acquaintances of MPs took advantage of the MPs privilege of free postal service.
4. Papa’s birthday was 26th September, when he would have been 51.
5. At the July 1837 election for the County of Bucks, there being no Reform candidate standing, Lord Nugent cast one of his votes for his brother, the Marquis of Chandos. Voting was still open and recorded at this period. It provoked a great outcry of indignation by Reformers in letters to the “Aylesbury News” which supported the Radicals.
6. It is this reference that suggests that Thomas 4 may have completed his education in Bedford.
7. Mr. Papineau was probably a relative. See Part One, Chapter 3, ‘The Huguenot Connection’.
8. The Matthews have not been identified
9. John Sabin (1820-91) was the son of the Rev. John Edward and Mrs. Mary Ann Sabin. At the date of his birth his parents lived at Terrick House, near Aylesbury, Bucks. His father was Curate at Stoke Mandeville and later at Aston Sandford, near Thame, Oxon.
10. A train service from Euston as far as Boxmoor, Hertfordshire, began on 20th July 1837. It was extended to Birmingham the following year.
11. Mr. Hall has not been identified. A Richard Hall, Bookseller’s Clerk, is mentioned in a much later letter as an old friend, but would have only been 17 at this time.

20 October 1837

Mrs. Hookham to Henry

15 Old Bond Street

My dear Henry

I sit down to write you a few lines, first, to wish you very many happy returns of your birthday, and a joyful day on the 22nd. next when I hope you will be in good health & spirits having added much to your stock of information in the various branches of your education; next I wish to tell you that we have all safely returned from Brighton much improved in health and strength. Your sisters have got rid of their old enemies, the lumps and bumps, and are happy and comfortable and Rosa gets so much like you that I am quite entertained with her; she talks away all day, and makes her remarks upon whatever is going forward - looking out of the window in my room just now she exclaimed “No cats there now”! No one had spoken to her about it; she must have remembered it said.

Tom has written you a very long letter I believe, therefore I guess he has spoilt mine, by telling all the news beforehand: however, I hope I shall have something to say.

I should have liked you to have been at Brighton when the Queen arrived, there was so much to be seen - Mary Ann went to see Mr. Milner¹ who lodged on the Grand Parade (opposite the palace) on the day the Queen arrived and she had a good view of her Majesty, and also saw the amphitheatre after. She saw the queen (sic) again afterwards, but I was not so fortunate - I did not see her at all. We went to the park one day and she arrived just before us and the gates were closed until she left when she went by an upper gate.

I never saw so many beautiful Dahlias as at this time, and it was quite curious to see the ingenuity displayed in the use of them, they were made with crowns and stars and various other things and at night lighted with the gas.

I wished for you at Brighton several times before I left, we got acquainted with a family of the name of Blake where there were two boys about your age who with their sister were very polite to Mary Ann - she went to see them several times. M.A. also visited at the Whittemores, on the Cliff. I must tell you that Mary Ann intended to have written you a nice letter, but she could not accomplish it today, for it turned out so very fine that we were induced to go to Sloane Street to pay a little visit to Mr. & Mrs. Sabin and then we staid longer than we intended doing - since we came home we have been high busy making you a cake (which I hope will be good) and also making damson preserves for Christmas: indeed I have been so long from home that I find a great deal to do - so you must not wonder if I do not write often.

I have sent you a little book as a present on your birthday - also some tea cakes for Mr. Stratton & the cake & wine for you & your schoolfellows. I hope Mr. & Mrs. Stratton are quite well: remember us very kindly to them both & also to all friends at the two Risboro's.

I have just put in your flannel waistcoat & socks as I suppose you may want them when the weather changes. Write to me soon and tell me how you are &c. &c. and how you get on with books &c. &c. and be a very good boy and very obedient - and now praying the Lord may give you his blessing,

I am, my dear Henry, your affect. Mother M. A. Hookham

Uncle Tom came home last night: he is quite well, he left Uncle Edward, Aunt Harriet and Hatty at Portsmouth, not being able to get places by the coach. Aunts Bessy & Jane & Mr. Brooke come back from Stortford tonight. Good bye

Leah can give you the latest news of Rosa!

P.S. The Queen invites all of the Whig party to the palace, amongst the visitors is mentioned Peschell², but Dalrymple is not admitted³.

1. Of the persons mentioned in this letter neither Mr. Milner, The Blake family, the Whittemores or Leah have been identified.
2. This is most likely George Richard Brooke Pechell (1789 – 1860), one of the two MPs for Brighton at this date.
3. Sir Adolphus John Dalrymple, 2nd. Bart. (1784 – 1866), MP for Brighton 1837 – 41.

31 October 1837

Henry to his Mother

Princes Risborough

Dear Mama,

I ought to have written to you before, but I thought by Papa's letter, he would have been down before the end of last week, but as he has not come I now sit down to write a few lines to you. In the first place I must thank you for the Cake and Wine Biscuits,&c.. Will you thank Mary Ann for me for the present of the sixpence she made me, also Tom for the book "Joachim Marat"¹. I am very much obliged to you for the present of the Boy's Week day book, which Mr. Stratton highly approves of.

Last Saturday week I was invited by Mr. Fletcher², the father of one of my schoolfellows, to spend a day or two at his farm near Bradenham on the London road & went: on the Sunday I walked to West Wycombe Church: it is a very beautiful place inside: the people being seated not in the common way of Churches but in rows opposite one another, the gentlemen on one side & the Ladies on the other, it was quite a new thing to me³.

I am quite well & am getting on with my Drawing. As this letter was to be but short I must now conclude. Give my love to all at home.

I remain, Your affectionate and dutiful Son,
Henry Hookham

1. This was possibly *Interesting Facts relating to the Fall and Death of Joachim Murat, King of Naples* by Francis Maceroni, London 3rd Edition 1817
2. A James Fletcher, aged 11, was at the school at the time of the 1841 Census.
3. A mediaeval church was demolished in 1763 by Sir Francis Dashwood and replaced by one in the Italian style. It contains the original baroque furnishings.

3 December 1837 Sunday Evening Thomas 4 to Henry

15, Old Bond Street

Thomas meets his match at Chess and Uncle George makes some curious discoveries

My dear Harry,

I yesterday went to your favourite toyshop in Piccadilly¹, and purchased an iron hoop and stick for you, according to the directions you gave Papa, & as we are about to send it by Taplin tomorrow I have determined upon writing you a few lines to go with it. It is a long time since I last wrote to you, but it certainly would not have been so long, if I had not been taking a fortnight's holiday with Uncle George at Stortford, I hope you will therefore excuse it, and I will try how long I can make this letter.

I left Uncle George, Aunt Julia & the three little "pippins"² quite well; Uncle George takes as much snuff as ever, and what is still worse, he is becoming a regular smoker besides, he cracks his jokes and whenever he is not more importantly employed he is continually making riddles, at which he is a good hand; I played three games at chess & one at draughts with him and Aunt Julia, at draughts he of course beat me, at chess I was beating Aunt fast when he said he would finish the game for her, and he managed to get a stale-mate, I then played the other two games with him, both were long & many pieces were taken, in the first I had got much the best of it, & made sure of winning, when I found I had again given him a stale-mate, in the latter game he check-mated me, so that you see I had had quite enough of it, & did not again play chess with them.

I went out with them in their carriage several times; but did not once go fishing, oweing (sic) to the weather being bad & my not having a particular "penchant" for it. Uncle George had a brace of pistols cleaned up for us to pop at a mark in the garden, but the weather & his business prevented us. In the evenings Aunt Julia, he, & I took it by turns to read novels. We first had Cooper's "Heidenmauer"³, 3 vols., which is a horridly dry book, & we had great difficulty in managing the 3 volumes; Uncle then read us the "Bravo of Venice", a capital little book in one volume by Lewis⁴, I would advise you to try it. After that I recommended them to have Marryats "Jacob Faithful", which I read to them, & they were quite delighted with it, & liked it exceedingly.

Uncle George has been making several discoveries in Arithmetic, chiefly (sic) in Circulating Decimals, but he has got materials for a new Arithmetic, & when he has ascertained that what he has discovered is not generally known, he means to compile them and get them published; but he wants to gain a good deal of information first, & amongst other things he wants to know how he is to make a number of circles outside one another, the first to contain 8 figures, the second, 18, third, 28, & so on, each wider circle containing 10 figures more than the other, allowing the same space for each figure throughout. He has been trying in all manner of ways how to manage it, but cannot succeed; I forget precisely what it is for, but if Mr. C. Stratton happens to hit upon any method of doing it exact, I am sure Uncle George would be exceedingly glad to know & would be very much obliged to him for any information; but do not ask him to do it as I should be very sorry to trouble him, if you were to just state the fact that Uncle is trying to find out, &c. perhaps he might be able to tell you something about it without trouble.

He has made some discoveries concerning the figure 7, which, tho' not of much use, are very curious; hoping you will not show them, except to Mr. Stratton & perhaps a few intimate friends at Risboro' if you like; I will write down two or three that I happen to recollect: A sum of 7 figures, placing a 7 in the middle, a multiple of 7 for the ends, & any two figures added to the half of the multiple at each end for the intervening figures, will be divisible by 7. For instance:

4807859/7 = 686837. again 7597520/7 = 1085360. or 2687748/7 = 383964, do you understand it?

[there are then two crossed out lines]

I am writing too fast, I have made a mistake, you must not read what is crossed. Again, any two numbers whatever placed on each side of 7, will divide by 7:

99799/7 = 14257. 58758/7 = 8394. 18718/7 = 2674. 7 into 72772/7 = 10396

Any one figure repeated six times is divisible by 7. Example:

111111/7 = 15873. 222222/7 = 31746. 666666/7 = 95238. 999999/7 = 142857

Again, any 2 numbers 3 times repeated will do ditto. ---

525252/7 = 75036. 414141/7 = 59163. 898989/7 = 128427

Any three numbers twice repeated, as 536536/7 = 76648

Six figures 7 times repeated, &c. &c. &c.

Thus, he has found out that any number of figures so many times repeated will divide by 7. But I must return to other subjects & leave of these figures, or I shall not have room to say what I want, I can explain them and others that I have not mentioned better when I see you, & that time is not far distant now.

It is about 6 weeks since I began to leave off snuff, by taking none before a certain hour in the day, making it one hour later every week, and I now take none from the time I go to bed until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, so that I am doing it by degrees, & I calculate to finish the Herculean task about the middle or end of January!!⁵

I am much obliged to you, my dear fellow, for the "Aylesbury News" of Oct. 12th. which you sent me; I was wondering for a long time who could have sent it, although I rather thought it was your writing; in return I shall send you by tomorrow's post the "Bell's Weekly Messenger"⁶ of today, and we will always send the "Aylesbury News" also when we can spare it; there are several very clever articles in today's paper about the Ministers, the Pension List, &c. &c. that I recommend you to read; Lower Canada is in a state of Insurrection now, & we have been sending troops over there;⁷ but I have not time or paper to enter into Politics now.

You have not seen Uncle George's youngest child, George Augustus, I believe. Uncle Tom stood godfather, he is about a year old, has red hair, but one cannot say much of him as yet, being so young, and as he can only say two words. Little John is about 4 ½ now, and he is so very much like Grandpapa, you would be astonished at the likeness. But, as for the second, 3 years old, the Edward Augustus Harry Hookham Starling, as they call him, he is such a noisy, outrageous, runaway chap; if you put him out about anything, he says "I will kick you", but however I think you know him pretty well; and therefore, as this is Monday morning, I have no time to write more. You must excuse my saying Adieu! until the joyful time comes, when we shall meet, & when "The drum shall beat & the fife shall play, And you will merrily ride away," on Taplin's coach from Risboro'. Papa, Mama, & Mary Ann send their best love, & remembrances to all at Risboro'. I suppose we shall soon have your holiday letter. Do you come up on the 14th. or 21st.

Your ever affectionate Brother, Thomas Hookham Junr.

1. The toyshop was possibly Richard Ordway, toy dealer, 150 Piccadilly (1841 Directory)
2. John Starling, aged 4, Edward 3 and George, born 1837 (see the end of this letter).
3. *The Heidenmauer*, 1832 by James Fenimore Cooper (1789 – 1851)
4. *Bravo of Venice*, translated from the German by Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775 – 1818)
5. Thomas is only 16 as he struggles with his addiction to snuff. He was not alone in such problems; his Uncle Tom (Thomas Starling) was clearly a heavy smoker, as shown by a memorandum dated 9 March 1842 and reproduced as the last letter in this section.
6. 'Bell's Weekly Messenger' was published from 1832 to 1855 when it was incorporated with the 'News of the World', founded in 1843.
7. In August 1837 a small number of agitators held an armed demonstration at Montreal. Although led by one L. J. Papineau there is no evidence of any family connection.

27 February 1838 Henry to his Father

Princes Risborough

Dear Papa,

I received your parcel on Saturday by Mr. Brooke's Box quite safe, I have used my skates twice since you sent them, We went to the Moat¹ belonging to Mr. Philps. The first time I could not get on at all, but the second I managed to shuffle along like Tom did at first, & by the time I came away I could lift up one leg, while the other was striking out, which I thought was improving:

I am much obliged to you for the Drawings, I am at present going on with some studies of Trees, which Mr. Caleb has picked out for me. I went to the Cottage yesterday, but did not see anything particular except that the hedge was broken down in one or two places, which I told Mrs. Baddams of.

My iron Hoop by Mrs. Norris's Box came to me on the Thursday after I went, by the Coach. And now for the News of Risboro' for this time. I suppose you know Mr. G. Stevens of the Row, The Queen has been pleased to Knight him and he now bears the title of Sir George Stevens². Mrs. Beamish has had a great Ball here lately³, to which I believe the Miss Brooks⁴ and Graces⁵ and also Grubbs⁶ went.

There is a rumour about, that Mr. Scott the Grocer⁷ is informed against for selling Patent Medicines without a License and that he is gone up to London to Settle it.

I must now conclude, as I have two more letters or rather notes to write, with best love to you, I remain,

Your affectionate & dutiful son,

Henry Hookham.

1. There are still sections of an old moat near the Manor House.
2. Sir George Stephen (1794 – 1879), solicitor and author, had a country home at Collins Farm, Loosley Row, in the Upper Hamlets of Princes Risborough. He was active in the anti-slavery movement and was the first person to be knighted by Queen Victoria.
3. Mrs. Beamish has not been identified but the Ball is probably that which took place at The Grove House, Brill, near Aylesbury, on 24th January 1838. The Bucks Herald of 27th January 1838 reported 'the pride of each village around, to the number of nearly 200 Enjoyed the good old English pastime of country dancing'.
4. The daughters of the Rev. Zachary and Mrs. Elizabeth Brooks
5. Probably the daughters of Thomas Grace of Culverton, yeoman.
6. The daughters of John Grubb of Horsenden House, Lord of the Manors of Horsenden and Princes Risborough. He sold the Manor of Princes Risborough to the Duke of Buckingham in 1841; it was eventually conveyed to a James Cuddon in 1858, after whom there is no clear title to the Lordship.
7. No other details are yet known of the case against Harry Scott, described in Pigot's 1842 Directory as a Grocer and Dealer in Sundries, Market Place, Princes Risborough. In the 1850 Directory his name is replaced by that of Samuel Adcock, whose business continued until 1979, first in the hands of his son, also Samuel, and ultimately of his great-nephew, Harold Percival.

27 February 1838 Henry to his Mother

Princes Risborough

Henry shows a preference for Porter, declining an offer of wine.

Dear Mama,

I sit down to write a few lines to you as Mr. Drage is going to Town. I have not yet finished the second bottle of Sarsparilla, and I think I shall not want any more when I have. I take half a pint of Porter as I used to do, every day with my dinner, which agrees with me very well, and I do not think I should like to leave it off yet:

When you write to me tell me what Mary Ann's 8 O'clock Prize is to be, I suppose the members of the Hyacinth Society have altered the day as it was to have been the 20th. of February, Today Papa says is fixed upon. Please to give me a full account of the proceedings of the Society and who the Prize is awarded to.

I do not think I shall want any wine. I am sorry I cannot think of anything worth saying to you but you must remember that I have already written to Papa and must now say something to Tom; So Good bye

I remain Your affectionate and dutiful Son Henry Hookham

23 April 1838

Thomas 4 to Henry

15, Old Bond St.

Royal Chess Club¹
Move of the Londonians, No. 7.
Queen's Knight to Queen's Bishop's 3rd. Square
(Signed) Thomas Hookham Junr.

My Dear Harry,

As we are about to send a parcel to Risboro' by tomorrow's coach, I take this opportunity of writing a few lines to you. To your first query, about the "Private Satirist" I answer, "No, by no means," do not double the half sheet.²

We are all looking forward with eagerness to the time when you will return; 9 Weeks will soon flit away! "Tempus fugit cito pede", aye, and it's (sic) foot goes sometimes a great deal too fast for me.

But to proceed, The Coronation takes place on the 26th, I believe, but I have forgotten the exact day,³ it will be a rare day for London, I expect about that time to have some fun; you will of course return in time enough to have a "finger in the pie", I suppose you return on the 21st., but I should be glad to know, if it is yet settled; I hope you will be here time enough for the Grand Review on the Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, which is the 18th. June.⁴

I send you the 8^d for the "Bond St. Messenger"; send me your move soon. Bye the bye, I had almost forgotten to tell you that you have a got a new cousin, nomine "Zachary" or at least it will be so called, I beg his pardon, I mean to say he; the long & short of it is that Mrs. Brooke has got a little boy, born 20 minutes past 5 o'clock, yesterday, the 22nd. of April, 1838, such a fine, chubby, little fellow!

Aunt Jane is going on very well. Mary Anne's love, & she will write soon. Really there is no news for you, my dear fellow, & now I must conclude with our united kind remembrances to Mr. & Mrs. C. Stratton, & Mr. & Miss Stratton.

Your ever affectionate Brother, Thomas Hookham Junr.

I have just sent the "Aylesbury News"⁵ to the post for you; in 2 or 3 weeks more I shall send you the "Sunday Times" again.⁶

1. The Royal Chess Club appears to be the brothers' personal rivalry.
2. Perhaps a parody of 'The Satirist, or the Censor of the Times', published from 1831 – 49.
3. The Coronation of Queen Victoria took place on Thursday 28th June 1838. The Poor of Princes Risborough were provided with a Dinner in the Market Place, when 500 dined.
4. The Grand Review was held on Monday 9th July 1838. The Annual Register of 1838 reported 'The Park was crowded to excess, by persons in carriages, on horseback, and on foot ... the Queen looked remarkably well, and was much cheered'.
5. The 'Aylesbury News' commenced on 3rd December 1836 as a Liberal newspaper.
6. The 'Sunday Times' commenced in 1822.

*A glorious reign to our noble Queen,-
And a happy one may it be.
Such the Queen I love best that ever I've seen,
And that ever I shall see.
Henry Hookham.*

21. An Ode to Queen Victoria by Henry Hookham

Dear Papa and Mama,

As you wished me to write my holiday letter soon, I have fixed on today. Our Vacation commences on Friday the 21st. December, and terminates on Monday the 21st. January. I received your parcel quite safe, and thank you very much for the contents, the Cakes, wine biscuits &c. We drank Uncle Tom's health.

I went to the Cottage on Saturday and saw "Reefer" who looks very well, and wanted to follow me when I came away. Mr. Baddams says "Jack"¹ was very ill when he came home and that he was obliged to nurse him up, but that he is getting better now. If you remember you borrowed 1^s/6^d of me to buy Mary Ann a pair of Gloves, and did not pay me, could you send it me the first opportunity as I shall particularly want it before I go. With love to you all,

I remain, Your affectionate and dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

P. S. I purpose coming home on Friday the 21st. by Taplin's Coach. Will you meet me at "The Green Man" about ½ past 2 in the afternoon?

1. 'Reefer' is the house dog and 'Jack' the pony.

[December 1838] Undated letter from Thomas 4 to Henry

Royal Chess Club Move of Londonians No. 12 Queen's Rook to Queen's Knight's 1st. Square (Signed,) Thomas Hookham Junr.

My dear Harry,

I am very busy, but will make time to answer your quest although I really cannot say anything more this time, more especially as I shall see you so soon. I will be at the Office to meet you on Friday: "but, in case anything should happen to prevent me, Mr. C. Stratton, who is used to these things, had better pin a direction inside your jacket, specifying where the bundle is to be sent to, as he did with me many years ago, and you need feel no uneasiness whatever about your delivery, as the porter will, immediately upon your arrival at the Office, place you upon his truck, and wheel you with safety to your destination. N.B. Mr. Stratton had better put "With care - livestock", for fear you should get crushed by being placed under any very weighty matter; if he likes he can add "Glass" on your back to make assurance doubly sure, but we leave that to his discretion. When you arrive in the passage, you will be laid "on the shelf" by the servants, where I dare say you will not have to wait long before you will behold

Your ever affectionate Brother

Thomas Hookham Junr.

P.S. To be serious, so Mr. Caleb is quite a moderate politician I should guess by his taking the "Observer"¹ but I trust he does not abide by the present government in everything. I know not exactly when Ned will be at home, as I have not heard from him a long time, in consequence of my neglecting to answer his letter, but I suppose he will arrive in the course of the week. In the "Aylesbury News" this week you will see a notice to "T. H."² Come, I think I have made you a pretty good letter considering all things. Adieu!

1. The 'Observer' commenced in 1791.
2. This undated letter seems logically to follow the preceding one from Henry. Further support is given by a notice in the Aylesbury News of 15th December 1838 to 'T.H.C.'

16 May 1839

Henry to his Parents

Prince's Risborough

In which Henry abandons his childhood Papa and Mama and acquires a Father and Mother

Dear Father and Mother,

I received your letter yesterday with the £5 note, which I exchanged. I went on to Cottage and found Baddams; who is not very well, inquired about the trees, he says the blossom is coming out on the apple, cherry and plum, and promise very well, That he cannot tell much about the wall nuts (sic) yet as they are not forward enough: The leaves are coming out on all the trees, they begin to look quite green.

I went up to Solinger paid the bill to Mr Redrup¹ which was 3s. a week for 13 weeks, which comes to £1. 19. 0 - I gave Baddams £3 on account and have returned the remaining 1s. with the receipts; Baddams' receipt you will see is signed by me, as he said you always signed it for him. I took Reefer up to Solinger with me, and as I was coming back he pounced upon a young rabbit, he seems quite well. Baddams is to fetch Jack from Solinger today.

We levelled with Mr Stratton from the level of Risborough, to the top of the Cross², which is 400ft - the highest, Pulpit Wood Hill is about 50 feet and Bledlow Hill 20 feet higher than the Cross; the height of Green Hailey plain we have not yet ascertained but it is considerably higher than the Cross.

I should be much obliged to you, if you could send me a Newspaper for the next week, as I am very anxious to hear about the Revolution in Paris³, and the new Ministry⁴. It is about 4 weeks to the Holidays. With best love to you all

I remain, Your affectionate and dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

Miss Stratton would be obliged to you for some coffee.

1. Abel Redrup, farmer, Solinger Farm, near Cadsden, presumably looking after 'Jack'.
2. Whiteleaf Cross, a chalk monument on the Chiltern escarpment above Risborough.
3. An uprising by armed gangs on Sunday 12th May 1839. It was soon put down but over 120 people were killed.
4. Lord Melbourne's Whig government was defeated in Parliament. An attempt by the Tory leader, Sir Robert Peel, to form a Ministry failed and Lord Melbourne continued in office until 1841.

June 8 1839

Henry to his Parents

Prince's Risborough

Dear Father and Mother,

I write to tell you, that as our Vacation commences on Friday the 14th. of this month, I intend coming up on that day, by Taplin's coach, with your consent: I think I should ask Taplin the fare, as he charged me 9^s last time¹: -

Baddams has been very ill for the last 3 weeks²: Reefer and Jack are quite well; Baddams has clipt the latter.

Hoping soon to have the pleasure of seeing you all, I remain, Your affectionate and dutiful Son, Henry Hookham

1. It will be recalled that in 1835 Caleb Stratton quoted a fare of 6s. to Mary Ann.
2. Henry Baddams died four months later and was buried on 8 September 1839.

10 June 1839

Caleb Stratton to Thomas Hookham 3 Princes Risboro'

Henry's last known school report, and excuses to the Tax Assessor

Dear Sir,

Henry yesterday received & delivered the Letters to Mrs. Norris & to Mrs. Brooke as directed, he purposes returning home on Friday next; I feel much pleasure in pointing out to your Notice, 3 Specimens of Flower painting in a Portfolio, viz. Canterbury Bell, Geranium and a Wreath of Roses, these establish his skill in this art, and he is now enabled to mix his Colors (sic) himself, and that with judgment. I trust he will go on cultivating his abilities, which are of a high order and will with perseverance lead him to distinction.¹ He has made a very considerable progress in Stenography, and with a year's further attention, would make an excellent Reporter²; further than this I have not much to speak of, as in attention to these, his other Studies have been limited, tho' not neglected: I hope you will be pleased not only with his improvement, but also with the general routine of duty during the past half year.

I have now to acknowledge your letter containing your duplicate of assessed Taxes which I have filed & delivered to Mr. [Groom?]³ the [Head?] Assessor of this district, with a letter stating that you have filled up the paper as soon as it came to hand, it having been left at the Cottage in mistake & further I hoped that this explanation would be sufficient: I have entered - 1 Poney for which you will have to pay £1. 1. 0 p^r annum & 1 House dog 8/- p^r ann:

Mr. Balderson⁴ I think is quite mistaken. Every person who rides a horse above 13 hands, must pay [£]1. 8. [0?] p^r ann. under 13 hands 1. 1. 0 per ann. Ponies not exceeding 12 hands in height, which are used solely in drawing of Carriages with wheels, each of less diameter than 30 inches, and not at any time, used for Riding, are exempt from duty; the reason I parted with my Poney was, that Riding him, I was liable to the 1. 1. 0 Tax, and my Poney would not go in harness.⁵

With our united respectful remembrances I remain, Dear Sir, Your obliged Servant, Caleb Stratton

1. Given the numerous compliments paid to Henry's ability as an artist it is regrettable that none of his paintings seem to have survived.
2. A schoolmaster's cautious assessment of his pupil's ability. As has been mentioned in the Introduction, Henry had a distinguished career as a teacher in New Zealand
3. Mr. Groom: not identified.
4. Mr. Balderson: not identified.
5. Although taxation of such things as windows, male servants, horses and dogs chiefly fell on the well-to-do, the inclusion of a wide range of general commodities meant that the larger burden fell on the poorer members of the community. A more equitable system of Income Tax, which had been briefly introduced during the Napoleonic Wars, had been rescinded in 1815 and was not re-instated until 1842.

29 September 1840 Henry to his Mother

15 Old Bond Street

The last surviving letter of Henry's childhood, having left Mr. Stratton's school, aged 16.

My Dear Mother,

Though it is now near 10 o'clock and I hear Papa on the stairs coming up to supper, yet I am determined to write a line or two just in answer to your note which I received last Monday Evening, since which time until now I have not had a minute to spare.

I go in the mornings to Leicester Square at 9, come back at 1, go back again at 2, come home to tea at 6 and return again at 8 o'clock. I like it as yet very much indeed and am as Papa would say "very partial to it".¹

There is a great bustle in the City just now in consequence of the opposition to the electing of Alderman Harmer for Lord Mayor – which I think a very unjust thing the opposition being only on account of the Harmers having something to do with the Dispatch Newspaper.²

Uncle Tom seems to me to be getting rapidly well, he takes care of himself, never goes out after dark, and takes warm wine and water sarsaparilla and flannel juice³ in abundance.

Papa is very well, Tom half and half, and Mr. Percy Carpenter⁴ Friday last quit his drawing and took to "tumbling", making his entry in Westminster Abbey – but of that no doubt you have already heard.

Lord and Lady Nugent⁵ have departed to Yorkshire (yesterday) to see a freind (sic). Mr. Z. Brooke's wedding day (Monday last)⁶ was revived by a dinner being given to which Papa was invited but could not go, his Lordship wanting him.

I suppose you have heard of the fire in Plymouth Dock Yard, one Man of War and a frigate destroyed.⁷ As it is getting late & I know you would sooner I go to bed than even sit up to write to you & as I shall not have time tomorrow, I must say, with love to Rose [sic]& yourself,

Good Bye, Your af [fectionate son], H. Hookham.

1. Henry is presumably going to the Starling home, perhaps for a course of further study.
2. James Harmer (1777 – 1853) of the City of London, was senior Alderman below the chair in 1840 but was not elected Lord Mayor as being chief proprietor of the "Weekly Dispatch" which then advocated advanced religious and political views.
3. No doubt 'fennel' juice. Like Sarsaparilla, fennel was, and is, a popular herbal remedy as well as a culinary seasoning. See also the final 'memorandum' relating to 'Uncle Tom', below.
4. Percy Carpenter, born 1820, son of William Hookham Carpenter and his wife Margaret. Described in *Victorian Painters* (Christopher Wood 1995) as a painter of church interiors.
5. George Nugent Grenville, Lord Nugent (1788 – 1850). According to the *Dictionary of National Biography* he 'delighted in the society of literary men, and had a considerable fund of anecdote derived both from books and from a knowledge of the world.'
6. 'Monday last' presumably refers to the dinner date; Zachary and Jane Brooke's anniversary was on 23 September, which in 1840 was actually a Wednesday.
7. The "Bucks Herald" reported this fire, which began in the early morning of 27 September 1840 at the Devonport Dockyard. The battleship "Talavera" and Frigate "Imogen" were destroyed, together with much other destruction in the dockyard itself. The cause was unknown and the damage amounted to half a million pounds.

9 March 1842

An unsigned memorandum in Thomas 4's handwriting

Uncle Tom made agreement with me on Wednesday evening the 9th March 1842 as follows, i.e.

He would smoke but 4 Cigars (& no pipes) each day on the 10th, 11th, 12th, & 13th of March 1842 & on the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, he would smoke but 2 Cigars each day, every day after that (the 20th March) he to smoke none –

Every day he smoking more than his allowance, to pay £1 fine to me –

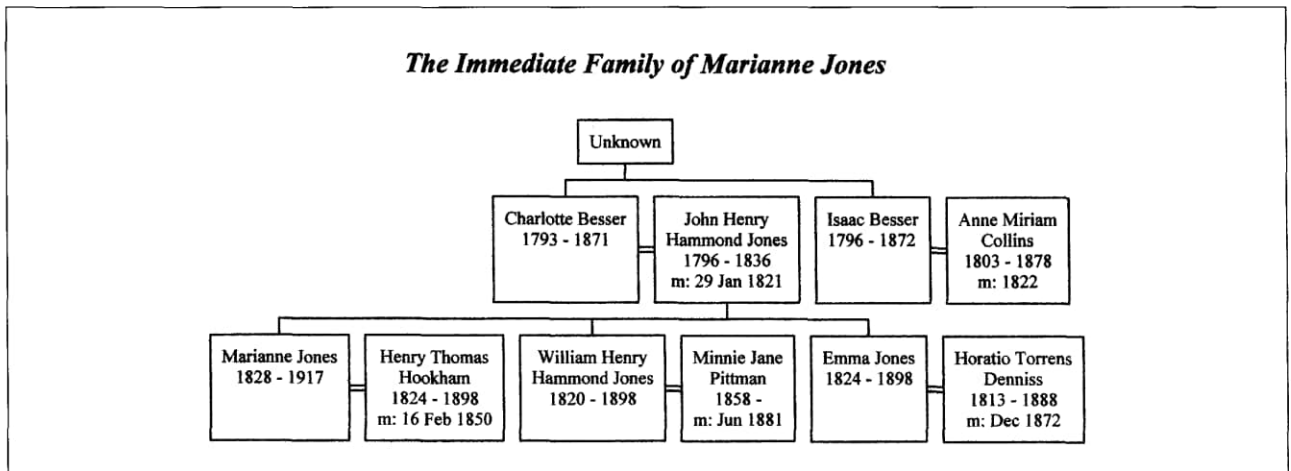
Also he agreed on same terms not to go to Hart's Rooms - £1 fine each time breaking rule –

Both these agreements to last for one year & to be continuing if necessary.¹

1. The agreement came too late; Thomas Starling died on 25 November that same year, just before his 25th birthday. The cause of death was given as 'consumption'.

Chapter Seven : 1847 – 1849 Courtship

The Three Years preceding the marriage of Henry to Marian[ne] Jones



22. Henry Thomas Hookham



23. Marianne Hookham, née Jones

Henry & Marianne were married on 16 February 1850 at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, and their five children, Marian Ada, Charlotte Matilda, Jane, Annie Emma and Henry Thomas, junr. were born in the course of the next eight years. These photographs were taken prior to the family's departure for New Zealand in 1865.

4 July 1847 Sunday evening Henry to Marian 15 Old Bond Street

Henry pours oil on troubled waters

My dear Marian¹,

Your note, (which I received late last evening), was a cruel one, for it deprived me of the anticipated pleasure of my usual Sunday visit – You cannot indeed tell what a cheerless day this has been to me. I, myself, did not dream that I ever could wish for the society of any one as I have this day wished for yours – And yet I dare say you think me dull enough when we do meet - As company for you assuredly I am so, but you do not know the pleasure I feel in being near you.

I fear I have lately been the unintentional cause of much trouble to you – Unintentional, most certainly, for since I have known you it has always been my most ardent wish to promote your happiness. Circumstances, however, will sometimes arise to frustrate our best wishes, and many such have arisen to me within the last few days. Believe me, my dear friend, if you have suffered annoyance at these matters, it has not been my lot to escape it either – I have passed a week such as I never passed before and hope never to again – But I hope that this week will set it all finally to rest – With regard to the purport of your letter, I told you on Friday evening that I thought nothing at all of the affair, neither do I now – I therefore may venture to pay you another visit, which I shall certainly do on Tuesday evening next between 7 & 8 O’Clock.

Allow me to subscribe myself, as I am in truth, my dear Marian,
Always your sincere and faithful
Henry Hookham

Since Friday evening I have been strengthened in the belief as to the originator of the report I mentioned to you on our return from the Opera² – I do think in time³ (for as yet I have not any names) I shall be able to trace it to the “gentleman” you spoke of – Of this more when we meet. Mr. Rigg³ has nothing to do with it. HH

1. Henry uses this spelling ‘Marian’, throughout this early correspondence, the last of which was written six months before their marriage, perhaps only then discovering that it should be ‘Marianne’ as it appears on their Marriage Certificate of 16 February 1850 and in the 1851 and 1861 Censuses.
2. The Opera on that Friday night was the first act of ‘La Sonnambula’ and the whole of ‘Norma’, both by Vincenzo Bellini (1801–35) with an all-star cast, according to an advertisement in ‘The Times’ of 2 July 1847.
3. Mr. Rigg has not been identified.

27 July 1847 12 O’Clock Henry to Marian

15 Old Bond Street

Dear Marian,

I always endeavour to keep promises & although it is midnight I must write a few instances to you or I could not in conscience expect to have a good night’s rest, after saying that you should have a letter by the afternoon post tomorrow.

I have been to Brompton¹ this evening & have given out a good report of you viz. that you were dull when I arrived in [Maderline St.]² but especially “jolly” when you saw the last of me at the Railway Station – No – seriously, I said you were looking better than when you left town.

Your Mother and Miss Besser³ made numerous enquiries after your kind friends – How they looked & what I thought of them, & if you were at home there &c &c, all of which enquiries I answered very satisfactorily.

I met Alfred⁴ in Bond St. this evening, he having but just returned from Bologne [sic] – I had not time to ask questions as to how he fared there – they are deferred until Friday evening when we shall meet again.

Your Brother⁵ made a holiday excursion today up the river – Quite a large party too! Twenty in all, 10 ladies and an equal number of gentlemen – The Reids, Smiths &c were of the number⁶.

How progresses the election? ⁷ Any more symptoms of activity in the town? I hope you will take care & not get “mobbed” on Thursday or Friday – but “dear Carry”⁸ will doubtless take care of that.

I tell your Brother he should pay you a visit, & bring you back on Monday – He talks of doing so but of course cannot promise.

I heartily wish you back again – the wish is a very selfish one – but really during my two jolly days I had so much of your society that I now miss it more than ever. I trust to your kindness to change the dull moments to bright ones by your fairy pen as often as in your mercy you please, and your merciful kindness I have now considerable faith in.

With affecte regards

Relived [sic]⁹ to remain, my dearest Marian,

Always yours sincerely Henry Hookham

1. Marian lived at 44, Brompton Row (now part of Brompton Road) Kensington, with her widowed mother, Charlotte. Her father, John Hammond Jones, had died in November 1836.
2. Henry may mean Magdalene Street. A subsequent letter shows that Marian was staying for a time in Cambridge.
3. Probably Ann Besser, who was at 44, Brompton Row at the time of the 1841 Census, aged 50.
4. Alfred Hardy, mentioned more than once in this series, may be Alfred Arundell Hardy (1824 – 89), who lived in Brompton Place, adjacent to Brompton Row. Artistry probably brought them together; Alfred himself was a Music Teacher but his father, William Wells Hardy, Marian’s father and brother and Henry’s half cousin William Carpenter and the latter’s wife, Margaret, were all frequent exhibitors at the Royal Academy.
5. Marian’s brother, William Henry Hammond Jones, born c. 1820. The letters show that his relationship with Marian, his sister, Emma, and not least with Henry seems always to have been strained.
6. The Reids, Smiths, etc have not been identified.
7. There was a General Election in July 1847.
8. Not identified.
9. If, as seems most likely, Henry means ‘relieved’, it would seem that he and Marian have resolved whatever discord there was between them.

30 July 1847 Henry to Marian 15 Old Bond Street

Henry is denied access to 44 Brompton Row by Marian's brother, and pleads his cause.

My Dear Marian,

Your little enclosure I have forwarded per post – I could not deliver it myself, not being permitted now to call in Brompton Row. With it I have sent a little note to enquire of your mother if your brother intends going to Cambridge tomorrow evening or Sunday as if he does not, I shall. So you may rely on it, if I receive an answer to the effect that he is not going, you will see me on Sunday morning. But if he goes, of course I cannot, after what has taken place, & I have requested your mother not to inform him that I make the inquiry as to his going, on that account.¹

You really must not be surprized (sic) at my staying for so short a time. The Season is not yet quite over & I must not neglect business entirely – That is my only reason for running away from you so soon, be assured. I never felt so much regret at parting with anyone (not even with you before) than with you on that very evening when you thought I appeared so glad to get away. You appear to me to suspect my sincerity – Is it so? I know not any reason why you should, save that I do not presume that you think so much of me (as I could wish to be assured you do) in consequence of my unhandsome appearance.

If I could fancy myself good-looking I should be more of a lover than I am at present – but I could scarcely believe that you could tolerate me until lately and even latterly you would never say in words you thought anything of me although in deeds you give me more encouragement than I had hoped for. There – A long story I have been relating to you and all about myself! But you seemed to require the infliction by the way you write in your letter today – If I do not come soon pray write me a long letter & be equally explicit with me as I have been to you – I do not require flattery & do not expect you would condescend to it if I did – But I do expect you to be candid with me at all times.

Your letter was very kind in some respects, but it brings bad news of yourself which has occasioned me considerable uneasiness – I fear you are very ill and therefore I am determined that either your brother or myself shall see you on Sunday. You must not however object (if I come) to my staying at the Inn². I do not think it right to take advantage of (or more properly speaking to impose upon) the kindness of those to whom I am almost an entire stranger.

I was much disappointed in not hearing from you at all yesterday & so wrote revealing a spleen a note which I rather regret having written – you must mercifully pardon me for it.

I have asked your mother in the note I have written her today about your coming back – You must please her and yourself in what you do – I shall always endeavour to be pleased in anything you may resolve upon –

At the same time if you wish to know my (selfish) wish, it is that you come back on Monday as I should then have you nearer, although perhaps I should not see more of you for some little time than if you remained at Cambridge.

I am always,

Your affectionately and truly

Henry Hookham

1. No explanation is forthcoming for the disagreement between Marian's brother and Henry. Perhaps he resented Henry asking him to visit Marian in Cambridge.
2. Marian's hosts in Cambridge have not been identified. There was an Inn in Magdalene Street.

[16 May 1849] A note from Henry to Marian

(Only dated Wednesday Morning, but probably preceding the next letter of Sunday 19 May 1849)

My dear Marian,

I cannot let the day pass without writing (as you say, I may not see you) just a line or two to say that all here send their kind regards to you and wish you a pleasant journey and hope you will enjoy yourself when in the Country – For myself I must add that the past contains for me little to regret save that the many pleasant hours with you cannot be passed again – but the future has many more in store for us yet, believe me.

Your constant kindness to me merits more than I can ever give in return & trust me whatever may occur I shall not forget this, and that I am always

Yours affectionately,

Henry Hookham.

19 May 1849

Henry to Marian

15 Old Bond Street

My dear Marian,

I was quite glad to receive your note this morning, although it was so short a one – and I begin to fear that **something** or other prevents you writing. I believe there are two posts a day from Trowbridge, are there not? Answer me this point in **your** next.¹

I have not called in Brompton Row since I last saw you – but intend doing so this Evening.² I appear to have so much time on my **hands** now that you are gone and find it quite difficult I assure you to prevent myself walking Brompton way from old associations – **But** I have not been there purposely.

You will be able, I hope, in your next to give me an account of your new residence & the country surrounding it together with full particulars of all sorts and some family likenesses.

We are all well – The Opera at Covent Garden³ was very great on Thursday night last, a crowd almost as immense as on a Jenny Lind night⁴ – We expect however a greater night still on Thursday next when the Huguenots⁵ will be given for the 1st time this Season. I enclose you a Bill of it – I am sorry you are not here to go.

Today is the Queen's Birthday & Her Majesty holds a levée⁶. Tonight an Illumination of course - We do not shine, as you are aware.⁷

I cannot think of anything worth telling you - & the little trivialities I have dwelt on I have dwelt on because you would otherwise think (perhaps) I could not find time to write to you, of the mistake of which idea I wish to convince you, my dear friend.

Hoping you will be so kind as to let me hear from you often, & with kindest love,

Believe me my dear Marian,

Yours very affectionately,

Henry Hookham

1. Marian was probably visiting Isaac Besser, her uncle, and his wife Ann Miriam, née Collins.
2. Marian's brother may no longer have been living at Brompton Row. In the 1851 Census he is lodging at 3 Judd Place East, St Pancras.
3. The Opera was 'Don Giovanni' by Mozart, a farewell appearance by Fanny Persiani (1812 – 67). "The Times" of Friday 18 May 1849 gave a detailed and glowing account of the performance.
4. Jenny Lind (1820 – 87), the "Swedish Nightingale". See p.16, note 14.
5. 'The Huguenots', by Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791 – 1864). First produced in Paris, 1836.
6. The Queen's Birthday was actually 24 May, but celebrated on Saturday 19, when the Queen held a 'Drawing Room' at St. James's Palace. It was a formal occasion with many Peers attending, all in ceremonial attire.
7. An 'Illumination' was the practice of placing a lighted candle in the window during the evening of a day of rejoicing. No doubt it was the Hookham family's radical inclinations that prevented them from 'shining'.

14 June Thursday [1849] Henry's sister, Mary Anne, to Marian

(No year is given but it must be 1849 in the timespan of Henry and Marian's acquaintance.)

Dear Miss Jones,¹

I am affraid (sic) you will think me negligent in replying but I must inform you that I have not been lazy in that respect & I think you will agree with me when I tell you that I have since I came here penned half a dozen & more.

I was pleased to receive so detailed an account of yourself. Just the letter I like, so nice and free. I think a letter ought never to be studied. I like all my friends in writing to me to feel that I participate in their joys and sorrows and if such be the case there is little need for thought.

I can quite enter into the annoyance you experience in constantly having to jump up and say pretty things to the "no notion people". There are too many such places in this country.

The object of my visit here is on account of my health. Previously to coming down I had a slight attack of toothache again and I felt getting rather weak I suppose from my long continuance in London. I must tell you that I have had two teeth stopped. The performance was accomplished without occasioning me any pain but my kind Father paid rather dearly for it – a guinea for each tooth.²

Saturday next I shall have been here three weeks. My Father accompanied me down but returned again the day following. I find myself tolerably comfortable although I am quite alone in my lodging. I have friends here with whom I spend a few hours occasionally. The sea air took little effect on me the first ten days but since that time I have become very hungry, ready for meals long before they are prepared for me & I feel also a great inclination for sleep nearly the whole day which is not at all agreeable when one wishes to make progress in any pursuit. Bathing and Riding are the principle enjoyments here. I have been in the sea several times but today I do not care for it all without a friend to join me although it is made exceedingly inviting to ladies, the charge being very moderate.

I suppose Henry has told you that my Mother & Rosa are going shortly to our cottage. They will have a fine time of it do you not think, the whole summer before them. I shall be very glad to hear how you get on with Mr. Linton's³ young lady &c. &c. After this day week please to direct to me in London. Good bye

I remain, My dear Miss Jones,

Your affectionate friend, Mary Ann Hookham

P.S. My direction here is 39 Grenville Place, Brighton.⁴ I hope you are well. Excuse this scrawl. Is Mr Hardy, I mean Alfred Hardy, going to be or already married?

This is a dry epistle but I hope the next may be better. You have had a fine time of it, not one fault found with you. I am sorry to receive such bad news of Miss Love's Sister.⁵

1. This mode of address would be quite proper between young ladies until actually related by marriage.
2. It will be recalled that in 1835 Henry had been charged two guineas for four extractions, filing, cleaning and the provision of a toothbrush and powder.
3. Mr. Linton has not been identified.
4. This is the only address given out of all the family's visits to Brighton – perhaps a lodging house.
5. Miss Love has not been identified.

24 June 1849

Henry to Marian

Cadsden Cottage

'Bogie', at Cadsden, pines for Marian, and sends her a 'forget-me-not'

Dear Marian,

I am very much pleased that you request me to write a line to you from this place. Nothing could give me greater pleasure – For it is the place I most wish of all places to have your company in, yes, and intend to some day, my dearest. We arrived here last night at 9 O'Clock, having walked across from a place called Boxmoor¹ about 19 miles off. Mr. Hardy was very poorly when we got here & would not eat any supper & I was obliged to administer a pill to him to bring him round – He is not married by the way. What could seriously make you think so?²

We have been rambling about the hills for 4 hours this morning & if I could have had you with me instead of Mr. Hardy I should have said that a more delightful ramble I could not have had.

I regret much that you should think it better to stay where you are for ever – As to my wishes, I am sure your own ought indeed to be consulted, as you must know best your situation relatively to home and your uncles. [illegible] I only wish you to do what is for the best, bearing in mind that if I am not more to you now, I hope to be some day more to you than any-one else.³ I only wish I had you here in Mr. Hardy's place – not but that I think him a good soul and none the less so that he always has spoken well of you – But with you just now here it would be delightful & often I have thought that the hope of such happiness is sufficient reward for all this work, hard though it be.

The future may contain much of disappointment for us but if we remain true to each other, as I doubt not we shall, all will be well for us & I trust that you will never have cause to say (as sometimes so unkindly you have said) that you wish the day had never been that you had seen "Bogie". I enclose a "forget me not" gathered in "lover's walk" this morning, where I wish I had had you with me – I hope it will not fade ere it reach you. We have gathered so many delightful flowers today. I only wish I could send them all to you.

With best love for all the kind things you say & you feel for me

I remain, Dearest, Your affectionate Henry Hookham

Excuse bad pen⁴

1. Boxmoor, Hertfordshire; a station on the London to Birmingham line.
2. Marian was presumably simply passing on Mary Ann's question from the previous letter.
3. Marian's mother had probably only a limited income and it may be that her uncle and aunt, Mr. & Mrs. Besser, who were childless, wished for her to stay with them.. Mr. Besser, a Solicitor's Clerk, was moderately wealthy.
4. Bad pen aside, of all Henry's letters those to Marian are the most difficult to decipher.

15 July 1849 Sunday

Henry to Marian

Cadsden Cottage

Henry has an encounter with country bumpkins and looks forward to 'Paradise on Earth'

My dear Marian,

I fear you are thinking naughty things of me for not having written before – You will see by the commencement of this that I have changed my address. This will account to you partly for the delay – I did not acquaint you of my intention to take this holiday as I really did not know of it myself until the night before I started – Tuesday past. I have been moreover somewhat expecting to have had another from you since my last, not that I deserved one or that anything remained to be answered after your kind note received on Wednesday last.

The day but one after I came here I had to walk to Chilton¹ about 14 miles off to pay some bills from whence I returned only yesterday. What with that & visitors here on Thursday last the only day I have spent here I have been quite unable to get time to write before – which has annoyed me very much indeed.

My reason for taking a holiday at this busy time with us was that I really was not well & wanted a change very much. I am however glad to say that I am now quite well again – indeed I think I never was better.

Mr. A. A. is down here but is in lodgings at a village near and is quite independent of us but of course he is often here.² He & I went yesterday to Hampden House³ the residence of the Earl of Buckinghamshire's family – I have also taken him up most of the hills- He goes up them better than down & some country bumpkins took into their wise heads to ridicule him as he was trying slowly to descend Pulpit Wood Hill the day after we came here.⁴

We return to town on Thursday next so do not post any letter directed here (Cadsden) to me later than Monday night as I believe a letter will take 2 days to travel between this house & yours.

When do you think of returning home? I only wish to know that I may know when to calculate on having you again by me to talk over our future. This cannot be done by letter. There are so many things that cannot be said or cannot be properly said by letter. I did think of the pleasure I should have in detailing to you what passed between your mother and myself at our last meeting on Monday evening last – But perhaps you would not be pleased at all so I will say nothing more here save that although we discussed many plans we settled nothing - I said that when you return to town we will make some positive arrangements but what I do not intend to decide without you by me.

I am conscious that you are my very best friend and adviser & I must have your candid opinion & judgment after I have submitted everything to you, as the best course to proceed. You have given me so many proofs of your affection, my dearest kindest friend, that

I am determined that I will do nothing that you do not quite approve of & if I differ from you on any point I will give you my reasons for that difference when we meet - But I am sure that a letter is not the proper medium of communication on such matters for many reasons.

I have only one wish since I have been here & that has been in my thoughts always viz. that we were fairly married & all the ceremonious trouble over & that you were down here with me – What with the beauty of the weather, the beauty of the scenery & the termination of all our anxieties I am sure our pleasures would be something near what people dream of when they dream of heaven. When people talk so much of a heaven they hope to reach hereafter they little think of the one they certainly lose here by the death-like slumber (of their intellect, so sublime in its capacity & their feelings so warm in their nature) in which almost all the inhabitants of this world are still plunged & which if roused from would be the means most sure of realising a Paradise on Earth. For us to some extent I think this will be. Let us at all events endeavour to make it so – My dearest Marian,

I remain

Always yours affectionately and truly, Henry Hookham

1. Chilton, a village on the north edge of the Vale of Aylesbury.
2. The original seems to say 'Mr. A. A.' quite clearly, but is perhaps a more intimate term for Alfred Arundell Hardy, who had accompanied Henry on his previous visit to Cadsden.
3. Hampden House, in nearby Great Hampden, home of the Hampden family (extinct in the male line since 1754). It was not uncommon for respectable visitors to be shown round an historical house by a senior servant, for an appropriate recompense. The Rev. Augustus Edward Hobart-Hampden, MA, Rector of Wolverhampton, succeeded his brother in 1849 as 6th Earl of Buckinghamshire, but did not reside at Hampden House.
4. While at school in 1839, Henry had accurately estimated the height of Pulpit Hill as 450 feet above Risborough. The descent from the Wood, with its Iron Age encampment, to Cadsden, is for the most part very steep and slippery.

4 August 1849

Henry to Marian

15 Old Bond St

Henry is confident at the start of London's second great cholera epidemic.

My dearest Marian,

According to your desire the evening of the receipt of your last viz. Wednesday I called on your Mother, but she being from home & I not knowing how long she would be before her return did not wait - I was unable to call on Thursday being Opera Evening¹, but went last night when I found all quite well - They appeared I thought rather alarmed about the progress of the Cholera² but that will go off in a day or two when they become accustomed to hear it often spoken of.

Your Mother agrees with me that you had better come home at once and will positively expect you on Friday. She has written to your Uncle and will mention this to him. Your Uncle and Aunt have been so kind to you during this visit that I really feel myself personally indebted to them on your account for the many happy hours you have there spent & the many uneasy ones you have avoided through being absent from home which I fear (on my account) you would have incurred had you been there.³

I am delighted with your last letter which I have read over & over again. I have quite made up my mind as to our trying our fortunes together the earliest possible period, certainly not later than the date I mentioned in a former letter, perhaps sooner – I do not desire either any assistance now that you are willing to share my Income with me such as it is. I long to talk over all these matters with you and must have you back on Friday next – Pray write & say your Uncle agrees to let you come up that day. Also say the time you will arrive by train in Town & I will be at the Gt. West Ry. Station⁴ to meet you – I have told your Mother I shall be there & so you need not trouble your Brother who is very busy.

I have commenced this letter so late that I have now before post only time to say good bye for the present and believe me to remain

My dearest Marian,

Always your most affectionate friend, Henry Hookham

Excuse haste. I am quite well & take great care of myself & can assure you all here are also well. HH

1. The Opera on Thursday 2 August 1849 was "Le Prophète" by Meyerbeer.
2. Henry's equanimity about Cholera was misplaced. Within three months of writing this letter it had claimed the lives of some 14,000 people in London alone, and around 33,000 in England as a whole.
3. This seems to confirm that Marian's mother and brother had maintained opposition to her relationship with Henry but that her mother had come to accept the eventual marriage.
4. Paddington Station.

8 Aug 1849 Wednesday

Henry to Marian

15 Old Bond Street

My Dear Marian,

I am much disappointed at not receiving a letter from you this morning. I hope that you are quite well & that nothing has happened – But I suppose I must attribute your silence to not being yet able to say positively what day you return - I hope however you will not allow that to prevent you writing p[er] post on receipt of this, for if I do not hear from you I shall get very anxious - I am happy to say that I am quite well & delighted at the prospect of your speedy return.

The Cholera, although much about in Town, is principally confined to the other side of the river – the cases of Death in our Parish St. George's are only about 10 during the whole of last week - Brompton also has escaped comparatively free as yet.¹

You must not suppose that I am insensible to your Uncle's and Aunt's kindness to you and the good feeling also which, from what your letters convey, they also have shown towards me – I am fully sensible of it and would be pleased were I able to make any return for it.

By the way, please to mention that if your Uncle wishes to see an Opera this year before the close of the season it must be either this week or next as next Saturday week will be the last night.

I hope you will come up on Friday & that I shall receive notice from you tomorrow to that effect. When you arrive at London please to stand still on the platform until the rest of the passengers have gone off – by which means we shall ensure not missing each other.

My father & Fletcher went to Clifden House nr. Maidenhead² on Sunday last to see Dodd³. I think I told you that his employer Sir G. Warrender⁴ is dead and that the property was afterwards sold to the Duke of Sutherland⁵. Dodd in consequence quits it shortly. I did not go with them because I did not somehow care to go – I had no reason for staying at home that I know of excepting perhaps a feeling of dullness or laziness. But I had more time and quiet to think of you than if I had gone and was very contented I can assure you.

Expecting on Sunday next to have your dear self by me,

I remain, Dearest Marian, Always faithfully & affectionately yours, Henry Hookham

1. Brompton was, however, dangerously close to where, in the epidemic of 1854, the association with contaminated water was shown in Snow's classic study of the Broad Street Pump, Soho. Snow, John. *On the Mode of Communication of Cholera*, Churchill, New Burlington Street, London 1855.
2. Clifden, now Cliveden House, overlooks the Thames at Taplow. Fletcher is not identified.
3. Probably the Steward. An Inventory of the contents in March 1849 lists 'Mr. Dodd's bedroom' following the 'Steward's Room' Sir George Warrender (1782 – 49) "An amateur musician of considerable celebrity and a bon vivant – known as 'Sir George Provender'". (Alumni Cantab).
4. George Granville Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, KG (1786 – 1861).

11 August 1849

Henry to Marian

15 Old Bond Street

Henry, in anguish, reprimands Marian for her prolonged absence

My Dear Marian,

I called last night in Brompton Row. Your Mother says that she fully expected you yesterday & is much inconvenienced by your not coming as she had quite fully intended to have taken a holiday at once. She hopes that you will not disappoint her again. I have said that you would not perhaps have sufficient time to prepare if we said any day earlier than Wednesday next - but on that day or Thursday we shall certainly expect you. Pray explain that your Mother wanted a little fresh country air and waits only your return & now that you have had so long a holiday, longer much than your sister's, it really is quite time you returned. Your Mother says she cannot possibly go until you come back & if she were to do so she must shut up 44 entirely.

Apart from the above considerations and of very much more importance as a reason for your return is the fact that your chest is so bad – I thought you must be deceiving me or yourself when you said you were so much better. I am now quite sure that you will get worse if you do not change your residence shortly. I am indeed almost angry with you for not managing to get your Uncle's permission ere this.¹ But that I know you better I should suppose that the Chapel admirer had something to do with your prolonged visit.² I certainly should have thought so had it occurred at a much earlier date in our acquaintance.

Your sister³ also last evening desired me to say with her love that she hopes to see you on Wednesday.

So that now every side is expecting you I trust you will not disappoint.

My sister Mary Ann last night returned from Stortford⁴ – she is quite well & desires her love to you.

Pray write by post this Tuesday night at latest saying what hour and day you attend in Town. I am getting so anxious you should come back and annoyed at your delays I cannot write of anything else – but I have little to communicate. We are all quite well & fear not the Cholera.

Believe me always, Dear Marianne,

Yours most affectionately,

Henry Hookham

1. Mary Ann had evidently been visiting her uncle, George Augustus Starling, who practised as a physician in Bishop's Stortford.
2. Perhaps Marian was under some obligation rather than just a visitor to her Uncle and Aunt, if she required his permission to return.
3. There were several Nonconformist chapels in Trowbridge. Marian probably attended one with her uncle and by some unwitting remark planted the seeds of jealousy in Henry's mind.
4. Emma, whose seemingly disastrous marriage to Horatio Denniss will figure alongside difficulties with her brother among the last letters of this collection

Chapter Eight : 1868 – 1878, Partings

The Era of Henry's emigration and the Death of his Mother (with one letter of 1862 from Thomas Hookham 3 to Marianne)

30 December 1862 Thomas Hookham 3 to Marianne 8 Euston Grove, Euston Square

An isolated letter about the welfare of Sarah Brown, a family servant for many years..

My dear Marianne,

The address which I gave you is quite correct – No. 17, Saymour (sic) Crescent, Saymour St., Euston Square.¹ You had, perhaps, better inform Mr. Searle² that a Brompton & Islington Omnibus which he can get by waiting a few minutes at any time at the corner of Vigo Lane and Regent St. will take him to Euston Square.

I have just left Sarah and informed her that Mr. Searle will pay her a visit.

I enclose a copy of the letter which I addressed to Sir Arthur³ knowing his attention to poor Sarah's state of health.

Affectionately Yrs.

T. Hookham.

"I would beg, Sir Arthur, to express a hope that you will pardon a liberty which I am about to take.

Poor old Sarah who has during so many years done for you what her humble abilities would admit of, but who has latterly become so feeble and unwell as to be unequal to work, is retiring from Old Bond St.⁴

My daughter will this day remove her to a lodging where such attention will be paid to her as will become necessary from her total inability to work even for herself.

Yet in this state something may be done to alleviate her bodily and mental sufferings, and I am led to hope and to believe that you will kindly and considerately assist in realising a means to obtain those few wants that will "smooth the downward path" to that sleep that knows no waking: nor will a deeply seated sense of gratitude on her part be wanting.

Your own feeling that you have been considerate, kind and generous will be pleasurable to you after poor Sarah is in her grave."⁵

1. Seymour Crescent was demolished c. 1870 for the extension of Euston Station.
2. Mr. Searle has not been identified.
3. Probably the same Sir Arthur Clifton who had rooms at 15 Old Bond Street and was mentioned in an earlier letter of 18 March 1835 as an admirer of the infant Rosa.
4. The 1861 Census shows Sarah Brown, general servant, aged 70, looking after Henry Hookham and his family at 15 Old Bond Street. Born at Manuden, near Bishop's Stortford, she might have been introduced to the family by Uncle George Starling.
5. The death of possibly the same Sarah Brown is registered in St. Pancras District in the first quarter of 1876.

22 November 1868 Mrs. Hookham to Henry 6 North Crescent, Bedford Square

Following Henry's emigration in 1865 and the death of Thomas Hookham 3 in 1867 a cloud hangs over the family in London and Rosa encounters a fortune hunter.

My dear Henry,

I hope you do not think I love you less, because I do not write to you, and yours, as I would like to do very often. I have always very much to say, for I think of you continually, and pray for your welfare. But I should find it very difficult to tell you all at this distance of time, since we parted, of events and feelings - which indeed I might have more fully detailed had I been a good correspondent and written to you often. Our good intentions are often [the remainder of this sentence is indecipherable].

I have been intending to write to you from month to month and now another year has nearly elapsed and I am only for the 4th or 5th time trying to dispatch these few lines, that you may not misinterpret [sic] my silence, or think I forget you. The troubles I have experienced have depressed my spirits. I find it an effort to express my feelings, and I have often taken up my pen only to lay it down again. I hope, however, to overcome all this, and write to you freely in future. Your first letter to me which I received in the Spring of 1866 so delighted me that I shed tears of joy! To be assured that you had not forgotten your Mother gave me a kind of rush of happiness and I purposed to reply to you immediately - but this was impossible. I was daily at that time so anxious about Rosa who was so ill, that I could scarcely expect her to recover, and she had frequent fainting fits in which she seemed to be dying.

It was during this period of anxiety that I first discovered the gradual diminution of our annual income, which now began to be felt so much, that we at last resolved to let the cottage, which at first your father was reluctant to do, and could I have foreseen the future, viz. his short remaining days, had better not have done.¹ But when he was told by Mr. Warren² that Rosa's health required the change to London, or the seaside, for he did not think she could live through another winter at Cadsdean, then your Father agreed to leave his beloved home. Then the cottage was let for 12 months to a lady, who proved no lady, who had a family of 5 children who might be called "destructives" so much mischief was done by them in one year! I tried, in vain, to recover damages but altho' I thought it a juster cause if possible than that of Bonython³ I would not go into court - and have heard nothing from her since -

When we came to town we passed some months at your Aunt's house, I must say very uncomfortably - and at the last I think your father felt it much and by an effort at last I got him away to No. 9 where he experienced great kindness - This was his last abode with us, and he expressed his satisfaction as soon as he arrived there, and indeed would not have staid so long at your Aunt's, but that he paid no rent, and our funds were so low then, that every penny saved, was like a penny gained. Then your Father's illness came on [...] the careful watching &c. But his decay and loss of strength was so gradual that I did not for an instant expect I should lose him till it came like a sudden shock upon me. I cannot tell you how much I have dwelt on those last moments - when I did not believe he was going - and he gave me no parting word, or look - but spoke of his pain - and seemed absorbed in his cares for us about some money to be paid to Mitchel⁴ (which in his last words he asked him to excuse). After watching him by day & nights to the last, for we had no nurse, I was for some time overcome, having no spirits to write or talk.

I must here tell you I was quite pleased with the last letter you addressed to your Father and I was especially thankful for the assurance from you, that you had paid all due to Mitchel and that we owed him nothing - This your Father would have been glad to know in his last moments. But your letter reached me soon after he was gone - and it helped to relieve my mind of a load of anxiety. For of course I had much to do; and bills to settle; but I am happy to say that all your Father's bills are paid - even the 3 doctors & 3 lawyers - I feel much content in the reflection that all those debts which he was so troubled about, are now discharged. I had much trouble at first to get our affairs settled and the dilatory lawyers quite disgusted me -

Then the cottage - my only source of income. It was just 12 months before I could let it, and I have as yet, received but the 1st. Quarter's rent. My tenant pays £60 ann, and taxes. I brought away all the furniture - some of which is still left at Monks Risboro' - Finding no place to deposit it at first I was obliged to take for 3 months a small cottage - you may [be?] remember it as the dwelling formerly of Dickey Darville who now lives at Prestwood. I passed four months of 1867 at the cottage & this year only one week, but moved to M. Risboro' and staid two months there - charming views, so like our former house, and the continued fine hot weather, made me prolong my stay.⁵

At last we came back to London, somewhat reluctantly on my part, but in duty bound to meet the Italian suitor of my Rosa. Alas for men of this age! Such a money getting race are they in this Century!! Mons. Agostino was a bright example. He advertised us of his coming, making known all the sources of his own income, then, by means of his friend, a lady named Madame Manfredi he, in various ways, sought to know the fair one's fortune, and then after many "contretemps" he comes forward, and pays us visits, 1,2,3, and no more! At last after 9 weeks more of delay we were informed that "a bank in Pisa has stopped" and Monsieur has lost a very large sum of money "so that his prospects are entirely changed" - Thus the affair ended - and it was a relief to me - and to Rosa also, who never desired to marry a foreigner & especially a Roman Catholic. For my part I was not much pleased to have my broken imperfect French in so much demand!! and altho' I understood all he said, I did not feel quite at ease on the visits. They were too formal to be sincere.⁶

I must now tell you that I do not always see your letters to Tom; only at times - when convenient - therefore if you write to me do not omit any news on this account. How truly glad I have been to hear of your good health and the same [of] all of you - That Marianne is better and Ada too - I felt for them quite anxiously. Dear child! No! I must say so no more, she is a young woman now; and has made a grand entree into life - I am glad she has been so useful and that her pupils like her so well.⁷ I will write to her soon but my next to Marianne-

Believe me, My dear Henry, Always your affectionate Mother Mary Ann Hookham

1. Thomas Hookham 3 died on 18 May 1867, at 9 North Crescent, Bedford Square. Henry's Aunt Elizabeth, now Mrs. Matthew Hall, lived at 7, North Crescent.
2. Thomas Abbotts Warren (1816 – 1868), surgeon of Princes Risborough.
3. 'Bonython' has nor been identified.
4. In his Will, Thomas Hookham 3 mentions that John Mitchell, referred to in Thomas 4's letter of 27 November 1836 and who had lived opposite the family at 33 Old Bond Street, had a mortgage and claim on Cadsden Cottage for £280.
5. 'My tenant' was Captain Mortimer Kelson, and Dickey Darvill was probably Richard, brother of Mary Ann Hookham's friend, Mary Darvill. For a fuller account of these events see Part 1, Chapter 4, 'The Cottage'.
6. Rosa remained a spinster until her death at the age of 42, in 1876. Neither M. Agostino nor Mme. Manfredi have been identified.
7. Marian Ada was the eldest daughter of Henry and Marianne, born like all their children before their emigration. Her teaching career has been referred to in Part 1, chapter 1.

29 November 1868 Mrs Hookham to Henry

North Crescent

Mary Ann struggles to cope with adversity, and Mr. Stratton's old school burns down.

My dear Henry

I fully intended that my next sheet should be addressed to your wife and it was to keep the first sheet company, but it has just occurred to me that I have quite omitted something I should say to you most important - First of all I have been long intending to write expressly to thank you for all your kind wishes and offers to help me should I be in such need and required them. This I ought to have achieved many months ago but be sure however negligent in writing to you I am never remiss in responding to such a kindly feeling, and so kindly expressed as it was. I had been, then, for some time, dwelling upon your peculiar difficulties and deprivations, and I was suddenly and agreeably surprised to find you were thinking of mine. This was very kind of you and very good - but I may truly say I have not needed such help - I have been much cared for on all sides and am truly thankful - and I desire to thank you also - tho' so late in doing so - and I am sure you could ill have spared anything - I can but rejoice when I have any good news of you all and that there is even a small chance of prosperity in future.

I have read with interest all the news I could get of you - and am now returning - that is to say, I shall tomorrow return to Tom your letter to him, in which you speak of the sea waves &c. I am looking to the next arrivals with the account of your new residence and other things. You also enquire about the cottage, if it is let? I believe both Tom and Rosa have already told you, but you may not have had their letters, that it is let on a lease of 7, 14, or 21 years, leaving us the option of taking it again, if we desire it, at any one of those periods - My tenant Captain Kelson of the Naval & Military Club Cambridge House Piccadilly - He has been married 6 years, has a wife and one child - He is to pay me £60 a year and all the taxes - which are about £8, or 9 per annum. The delay in his coming was owing to your Uncle Edward Starling charging him too much for the agreement - At last he (Uncle) took off £6 and then the deed was signed and the Captain came down to Cadsdean a week after Midsummer day - I left the cottage the day before, Midsummer Day.

I stopped here and laid down my pen for I found I was repeating what I had said in my first sheet - however you will excuse that, it is the old woman foible from which I cannot of course be exempt - especially as I find my memory fails me much.

I must next tell you that Tom has been extremely useful and kind to me in every possible way - He has found employment for Rosa; he has helped me in business and pecuniary matters - selling books for me, and advising me in many matters, and in spite of his load of business at OBS¹, he sometimes comes to see me. It is wonderful how he gets through so much - but his health is pretty good. His wife² is often very ill with billious attacks - She has also been very kind to me, sending me little presents & even money, if she can.

Rosa has been my right hand and help in everything and manages all so that I have really little to do now but write - and be content - Indeed I am thankful! I have not yet spoken of Mary Ann - I have a great care for her - She is so ill, at times, and although she has been seeking a position of some kind she has found nothing - she seems to have tried in every way for a situation, but has utterly failed. She has advertized (sic) and answers advertis^{nts} but to no purpose. Disappointments sink her spirits and her maladies are increasing - She complains that "I do more for my other children than for her"! and when I ask her what she would have me do? she says I can write letters but how to help her thus I know not. She blames Veyhl - and with reason - for his unfeeling conduct but her tone of complaint of him and of every body else does not help her - Veyhl has written to her from time to time, and lately, but never sends her anything for herself or even asks how she is supported.³ It is time I changed the subject, as I am sure it will not be agreeable to you -

The changes at Risboro' are quite amazing - so many new people there, and alterations. Mr. Winslow's house has been occupied of late by Mrs. Rumsey and her two aged sisters - with a number of pupils, young ones.⁴

Mr. Stratton's old house and schoolroom have just now been burnt to the ground! The occupier, Busby (called commonly "Gentleman Busby") it is supposed, set it on fire. It blazed from midnight till 4 o'clock in spite of every effort of the people of Risboro' to extinguish it, with many pails of water!! There was no fire engine. Even ladies assisted, climbing ladders and hauling buckets as well as they could. One young woman, Miss Clark by name, a dressy person, appeared on a ladder in a loose garment with curl papers round her head beneath her nightcap and above all her hat!! It is difficult to describe the scene - the fire having caught the houses on each side. Mrs. Rumsey and her two aged sisters exerted themselves energetically to prevent the fire from spreading further. They sent off a person on horseback to Thame and Aylesbury for a fire engine which only arrived just as the fire was extinguished.⁵

I suppose you have heard of Mr. Warren's death. His eldest son is getting on, trying to supply his father's place - and has taken for his future house of business the old parsonage, once Mr. Meade's.⁶

Mr. Parsons was trying to improve his buildings by a new cellar when the whole of the upper part fell in and spoilt two buildings. The Parsons are grand folks now, & live at Whiteleaf.⁷

Mr. Evetts Rector at Monks Risboro' has gone to Folkstone with one of his daughters, who is threatened with the same illness as her brother - I hope she may be spared: Consumption is a sad complaint.⁸

I must conclude this as it is near the post time and with love to dear Marianne, Charlotte, Jane, Anne and Henry to each one last not least to Ada when she is with you, and believe me, my dear Henry

Your affectionate Mother Mary Ann Hookham

P.S. What do you think of our elections at Risboro' - something new is it not?⁹ William Baddams & his wife have gone to live at Putney with Mr. De Castro & his wife.¹⁰

1. Old Bond Street

2. Inexplicably as yet, although the marriage of Thomas Hookham 4 to Elizabeth Bide took place at St. Dunstan's, Stepney, on 22 August 1853, the 1851 Census gives them living as man and wife at 11 Douro Cottages, Wellington Road, Marylebone.
3. As mentioned in Part 1, chapter 1, Mary Ann Hookham married August Theodor Veyhl, a merchant of German extraction, on 20 June 1857. What followed is unclear, but they do not appear together in subsequent Censuses and the tone of this and subsequent letters suggest that they lived apart but remained married.
4. Mr. Winslow's house is shown in the Mountfort painting of 1802, to the left of Mr. Stratton's school and, in 2005, is almost unchanged as Barclay's Bank.
5. See newspaper account of the fire in Part 1, chapter 5. The local fire engine was, perhaps, unserviceable, for on 7 January 1869 the Vestry resolved 'that the [new] Fire Engine on trial [from Merryweather & Sons, London] be purchased'.
6. The Rev. Richard Meade, Perpetual Curate of St. Mary's parish, had been instrumental in the acquisition by the church, in 1824, of the house in the Market Square in which the Rev. Mountfort had earlier lodged and painted the Square.
7. Thomas Parsons has been mentioned as an investor in the Cadsden Cottage Healtheries. Founder of the Lion Brewery in Risborough Market Square, and a respected philanthropist, he had moved to the nearby Whiteleaf House.
8. The Rev. Thomas Evetts (1820-98). A son, George William Evetts, died 23 May 1868, aged 18.
9. An Act of 1867/68 allowed more men to qualify as electors and in the Aylesbury Borough & Hundreds Constituency, which included Princes Risborough, the number of qualified voters doubled to 4,000. In the General Election of November 1868 Sir Nathan Rothschild and G.W.E. Russell, both Liberals, were elected.
10. William Baddams succeeded his father as gardener at Cadsden Cottage. It may be that Henry de Castro and his wife Janet, who lived in Putney, were known to the Hookhams as Tea Dealers, at 65 Piccadilly.

27 July 1871 Aunt Elizabeth Hall¹ to Henry & Marianne 7 North Crescent

My very dear Henry & Marianne

I hear of a chance of sending a line to you by hand – I am writing it in bed, having been interrupted by a slight attack of biliousness today, when in St. Paul's Library², to which I now have daily access – I am resolved to say at least this that you and all yours are ever most lovingly remembered not only by Aunt Bessy but Mr. Hall – I am sure my little Daisy³ will see you some day – but meanwhile accept from each and all love and the best wishes for your welfare severally and collectively – I will send the photographs as soon as possible – meanwhile the little waistbands must try and recall us humbly to your notice!

Rosa will have a budget⁴ in her next & I will write again soon. Love to Charlotte and tell Sarah's boy⁵ the knife is for him from Aunt! God bless you all my dear Henry & Marianne & all your family Ever your loving Aunt Elizabeth Hall Daisy sends a bunch of kisses. Your letters are a great treat to us.

Morning July 28

Rosa was here last night – she has been at Huntingdon⁶ for a few days & looks much better for it – She will probably like to tell you all about that herself but she is to spend six weeks there again very shortly – Your dear Mother (my sister) has not been very well, but is better – she is very uniform in her tastes and habits. I saw her the day before yesterday.

Tom and Mrs. Veyl (sic) are also well – My little Daisy grows very fast & is so tall for her age – She doesn't take much to books but likes to dress up & play different characters between (sic) very good at imitation. We have had seven weeks of painters doing up the house 7 North Crescent & been in the midst of it all the time. I am still busy working away at the Lord Mayors of London & get on but not as fast as I wish⁷ – You will I hope excuse this scribble of a note, I am much better this morning.

I should have liked to know Henry's views of the late French & German war.⁸

I miss you all very much though when here we seldom met – Sarah often talks with pride and regret of her dear boy and indeed of you all.

I made a visit on one occasion to your old locality & saw your sister & chatted about an hour with her.⁹ It is a subject of regret with me to be unable oftener to get to see my friends – Mr. James Ward has been ill with paralysis and sold the school & is leaving with his family to reside in Cumberland (I think at Keswick) where his daughter has married and his eldest son is also settled. Mrs. Jane Rolls of Weymouth died a little while ago at Maidstone¹⁰ – I have no more news, Goodbye, God bless you all.

1. Henry's Aunt Bessy had married Matthew Hall in 1851.
2. The Library is in St. Paul's Cathedral at the triforium level, accessed by a circular staircase in the south-west tower, and is part of Wren's original design.
3. The 1871 Census lists Daisy, aged six, as daughter of Matthew and Elizabeth Hall, but as Elizabeth would have been about 53 when Daisy was born it is likely that she was adopted. The 1881 Census seems to confirm this since, on the death of both of her adoptive parents, Daisy went to live with Matthew Hall's brother and is there described as 'adopted niece'.
4. 'a budget' in this sense means a collection of news.
5. This refers to Sarah Brown and Henry's son, Henry junior, born in 1858.
6. Subsequent letters suggest that Rosa worked as Housekeeper or Matron at a hospital in Huntingdon.
7. Mention has already been made of Aunt Elizabeth's work *Noble Deeds of Woman*. The *Lord Mayors of London* appears never to have been completed.
8. The Franco-Prussian War of July-September 1870.
9. This remark must be directed to Marianne, referring to her sister, Emma Jones.
10. Neither Mr. James Ward nor Mrs. Jane Rolls have been identified.



24. Sarah Brown and 'her boy', Henry Hookham junior, b. 1858.

20 March 1873 Thomas 4 to Henry

Hookham's Foreign Library, 1, Charles Street, Grosvenor Square, London, W.

The deaths of Aunt Bessy Hall, née Starling, and Uncle George Starling.

Dear Harry,

It is my melancholy task to inform you of a real calamity which has befallen us in the death suddenly of two near and very dear members of the family circle within one week – first Aunt Bessy and then Uncle George. Poor Aunt, who for long past has been occupied in doing good for her relatives and neglecting herself, caught a bad cold in the course of the late and severe winter we have been experiencing since the 1st of February, but as Matthew and the child Daisy had colds also nothing particular was thought of it. She kept her bed one day and was up again the next, and so on. However, all the last week of February she did not stir out of the house, and as it happens that Mother had also a very bad cold and cough she did not go to see her.

There was much stupid neglect on Mr. Matthew's part, who must have been a constant witness of the increasing symptoms, that nobody knew there was danger until the morning of the fatal day the 3rd of March, when he sent for John Starling¹ from Kensington who found her lungs in a terribly congested state and insufficient vital powers to give effect to the remedies which he at once adopted.

He then telegraphed to Uncle who came up from Stortford in the afternoon, and remained doing all he could till about 9 p.m. when he left to call another Doctor. He had only been absent about 10 minutes however, when Aunt quietly breathed her last as if going to sleep. She could hardly have felt and known that she was going to die, or she would have had so much to say about her books and different people on which she had said nothing.

I personally knew nothing of her illness until the day after she was gone, and when I called on the 5th, saw her in her coffin. Her funeral took place the following Saturday the 8th when Mr. Matthew & the child, Uncle Edward, Rosa who had come up from Huntingdon on purpose, Sarah Jane Brooke, myself and four of Mr. Brooke's sons, Zach, George, Frederick, and William,² followed her remains in two mourning carriages up to the old spot at Highgate, and saw her buried over poor Grandmother's coffin, the plate of which after 16 years Zach Brooke said he could distinctly read as he leant over the grave.³

A telegram had come in the morning to say that poor dear Uncle George, who had returned home on the day after aunt died, was so much worse that neither he nor John who was in attendance on him would be able to be at Aunt's funeral. He had in fact received a shock and a chill, which if I understand right was acting most perniciously upon his old complaint rheumatism of the heart.⁴ We soon learnt that he could not take nourishment and was sinking, and then that he had died about 1 in the morning of Tuesday the 11th Inst, surrounded by Aunt and all his remaining family, John and his six daughters⁵, and besides, Uncle Edward Starling and Sarah Jane and William Brooke from town. He was buried at Stortford on the following Saturday the 15th.

We dreaded the effects of this double blow upon my Mother, who was very ill herself at the time, but she is better and bears up better than could have been expected. But in a material cause I fear it will tell upon her much, for my dear generous Aunt used to pay for and send her in marketings habitually, besides giving her money. She used in short to look after her welfare, and would traverse the street back and forwards to her in all weathers to do what Mary Ann does not and Rosa and I cannot do.

They are changing all the establishment at Huntingdon, and Rosa received a notification that she had better send in her resignation, which she has accordingly done. She will therefore be in London again in a month or two, but without a new situation at present.

This is the last day of the Suez mail, so I must conclude in haste.⁶

With much love from all of us to you all Your affectionate brother, Thomas Hookham

1. John Starling, physician and surgeon, son of George Augustus Starling MD
2. The four sons of Zachary and the late Jane Brooke (née Starling)
3. Jane Starling, née Hall, who died in July 1857.
4. Rheumatism of the heart, or Rheumatic Endocarditis; one of the more serious complications of Scarlatina.
5. i.e. the six daughters of George Augustus Starling.
6. The mail was despatched about three times a month to Australasia.

22 September 1873 Mrs. Hookham to Henry 4 Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy Square

Henry's mother is in even greater financial straits, compounded by problems at The Cottage, while, in New Zealand, Henry turns from farming to teaching.

My very dear Son Henry

I cannot tell how to express my thankfulness and gratitude to you, Marianne & Ada for your affectionate remembrance of me in sending your remittance of £5. 0. 0,¹ which was duly presented to me by Tom. Also the £1 for Sarah Brown which I took to her myself and for which she is herself today trying to write her acknowledgment.

You will judge how welcome your present was to me when I tell you I had but half a crown in my pocket when it arrived – indeed I had no one to borrow of except Tom, or Mary Ann, who each could but lend 2/0 – I have been trying to get the needful by selling some of my furniture. Rosa kindly gave me the [pi--a--?]² which brought me £5. 00 and two tables 30/0 – I hoped by these to get on until the Quarter/Michaelmas, when I expected as usual my rent but alas! Captain Kelson suddenly left the cottage about 5 or 6 weeks ago and removed his family and furniture to another dwelling situated between Rugby and Northampton.

Since he left I have had a kind letter from Mrs. White³ (who often asks about you) and she tells me the rain has been pouring in from the roof into the great sitting room and the kitchen. The roof has been quite neglected – and I even fear that I shall not get my rent as usual – Kelson has intimated through his lawyer, Somerville, that he wishes to be released from his Lease and asked our terms – Uncle Edward said a year's rent but this he would not give – so the matter stands.

I know not how I shall get on in the future but I trust in the Lord who has helped me wonderfully.

It is indeed a very long time since I received your long and beautiful letter of 12 months ago which so much affected me that I could not, although I wished it, answer immediately – I took up my pen many times but only beginning one – you have kindly said a few lines would satisfy you but you see I can hardly so content myself – and think of the distance the few lines have to travel and that would not be at all satisfactory. I feel ashamed and I hope dear Ada will not exert herself too much in her duties so as to weaken her chest as this is often the forerunner of other maladies.

I hope in the next account to hear that Henry J^{unn} has recovered from the same disorder and that Jane is quite well, your Father called her “the rebel” a name she still retains with us here.

I suppose that Nancy⁴ must be a great help and comfort to you – Give my love to her and her brother – and to each one – for as the mail is nearly about to start I shall not be able to write all I would say, but I shall try to make amends for the past by writing very often and my next to your wife who has been sharing with you the “burden of the day”. I must thank you now for her Photograph – which was an agreeable surprise to me but it made my tears come – she looks so melancholy!!

I am pleased to hear you like your change from the farmer's life, to that of a schoolmaster.⁵ It is certainly more suitable to you if not so healthy as the former – it is a useful occupation, peaceful if sufficiently remunerative to let the mind rest. You say truly that I must feel the most of the loss of your dear Aunt and Uncle. They were my best friends in this world and it is now so strange I cannot dwell upon it – but I will write more in my next. Be sure however I may be silent, I always think of you and yours by day & night.

Believe me Your affectionate Mother M A Hookham

1. Op. cit. *Comparing the Purchasing Power of Money*: <http://eh.net>. Henry's gift would approximate to £270 in 2005.
2. This word, with apparently seven or eight letter of which those given seem definite, remains undeciphered. The implication is of something readily recognisable to Henry.
3. Mrs. Mary White, the servant at Cadsden Cottage in the 1851 Census. In the 1861 Census she is with her husband, Richard White, publican at *The Plough*, Cadsden.
4. ‘Nancy’ is Henry's daughter Annie Emma, then aged 17.
5. Henry, it may be recalled, first settled at Highfield Farm, Kaiapoi, before becoming schoolmaster at Kaiapoi and later at Yaldhurst.



25. Annie Emma (Nancy) Hookham, aged nine years

18 October [1875]¹ Rosa to Henry **10, East Mount Terrace, Mile End**
 Many Happy Returns of the 22nd and we wish you all a pleasant Christmas and a "Happy New Year"

Dear Henry,

Mama and I were agreeably surprised yesterday morning (Sunday) by a visitor to breakfast! Tom had walked from Charing Cross to have the pleasure of delivering your letter to me which had reached him the day previous. Do please let me thank you heartily for the remittance enclosed (£5) which comes to hand so opportunely as dear Mother's resources are very, very low, and we were thinking we could not so soon again trouble the Brookes, who kindly tell us to ask them whenever Mother is in need of cash.

I hope my last letter to you (via Brindisi) arrived safely.² I therein acknowledged the receipt of the previous remittance £5.10, and I will not fail always to write to you as quickly as I can after receipt of letters from you, which I need hardly say we are always delighted to receive. Thank you much for this last, dated Augst 9th, which was however too short to give entire satisfaction!! Still I know your duties and studies must engross your whole time and attention, and I know by experience that letter writing in such cases is irksome. But you will pardon our anxiety about you all, and let us know in your next how dear Marianne is, and whether Jane is at home with her, and also whether my nephew has yet set out to seek his fortune in the world?!³

As for our prospects here in England, they are dark & gloomy indeed! I have made nine unsuccessful efforts to obtain an appointment as a Matron, and have even been "Selected Candidate" in five instances, but have each time failed. I have been twice to Yorkshire, - first to Huddersfield where I was one of two "Selected" and secondly to Halifax where I was one of three "selected" out of 49 applications! In this last case an elderly lady was appointed! On each occasion my expenses were paid, so I had a trip free, but it was sadly disheartening to go twice, a distance of 200 miles, to no purpose! Lately there have been no vacancies in the hospital line, and I have been seriously thinking of beginning my career anew, and entering a hospital as a Probationer, which I think I named in my last letter to you. However, I see, in "the Times" today an advertisement for a Housekeeper at the Infirmary, Newcastle on Tyne. I believe it is a good position (£60 per annum) and similar to my late post at the London. I fancy I may get it for I am fully qualified, but alas! It is so far from London! No less than 272 miles! Poor Mama is horrified, but really it is so difficult to get lucrative employment in London or anywhere, and as you know, I am entirely dependant on my own exertions for a livelihood.⁴

I have been worrying Cousin Ned⁵ lately for some money, as he has a trifling sum belonging to me in hand, but I had hoped to have reserved the whole of this for a more distant "Rainy Day". I must however meet current expenses if possible, and have long since expended my last quarter's salary!

It seems as if all the family were "under a cloud", so to speak. Poor Tom is sadly off - worse than I ever yet knew, for his temporary employment at Tinsley's⁶ has ceased for the present, and he has only 3 days per week to depend on, at Day's, in Mount St.⁷ I hope Tinsley will require his services again soon, but he does not employ Tom until his own work gets in arrears! Tom has lately removed to 16, Chandos St., Strand. Which is of course nearer Tinsley's, and Bess gets the assistance she requires there which she could not obtain in the last lodging where she had to sweep and clean her rooms herself. She is better in health, but quite unequal for active service as the varicose veins are always painful.

Mary Ann has gone to Brighton for her health's sake. She is not strong, but has been able frequently to come & see us of late, not however to be of much help to me as concerns Mama, for she is as eccentric as ever, and says she cannot help anyone. Of course, you know she is now able to help herself and indeed is the only member of our family who has a moderate income without earning it!⁸ How I can arrange for poor Mama in London, when I obtain the post in Newcastle, I cannot think, but I am sure M.A. will not do so for me!

The Brookes are making great efforts to get Mama an annuity from the National Benevolent Institution⁹ at the coming Election on Nov^{br} 25th, but as it is the "first application" we must not be too sanguine. Lady Gabriel¹⁰ has promised her interest and £5 for votes, also she hopes to get 100 votes for Mama from the Goldsmiths Company. If not overweight I shall enclose to you a card sent to subscribers. Willie Brooke¹¹ is most energetic in "working" the affair, which is elaborate and requires an immense amount of patience and perseverance, 500 or 600 votes at least will be required. If successful Mama will gain £30 per annum for the rest of her life, but as everything is dear it will be impossible to give her the comforts of life on that sum, so that I am the more anxious to gain lucrative employment that I may be able to join you in assisting her in her declining years.

October 19th Poor Tom! I have been to see him this afternoon. He is anxiously going round the trade (as you would call it) seeking employment. Yesterday he went to 4 who formerly came to buy of us! Also he tells me he is helping Day in collecting and carrying out an order for books (£40) just received from Kaiapoi Institute! (How gladly would he have himself received that order but alas! He is not now in a position to execute it! The Secretary at Kaiapoi requests the books shall be sent bound in half calf, which will increase the cost greatly, - A telegram to enquire would have been sent but alas it is impossible and by Melbourne too expensive!¹² To write will be too long a delay (4 months) so perhaps it will be as well for you not to mention this at Kaiapoi. However only part of the number of books thus ordered can be sent.

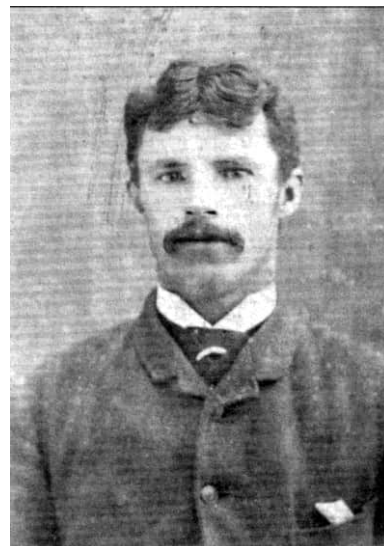
Excuse haste with love from Mama and self to Marianne and all the family
Your affectionate sister, Rosa.

1. Rosa does not give the year, but the opening reference to 'yesterday Sunday' points to the 18th October being a Monday. This was the case in 1869 and 1875; remarks about Henry's children make the latter year the more likely for this letter. East Mount Road is next to the Royal London Hospital, a teaching hospital that moved to this site in 1751, where Rosa has evidently been employed.
2. Letters were a little more expensive via Brindisi, but the Suez Canal, constructed in 1869 and purchased by Great Britain in 1875, had shortened the transit time.
3. Jane would be 25 and Henry Thomas junior would be 17 in 1875.
4. Rosa says she is qualified as a 'Housekeeper', but now, aged 41, is considering training as a nurse. The reforms of Florence Nightingale had raised the standards required.
5. 'Cousin Ned' is possibly Edward Hookham, born 1818, son of Edward Thomas, brother of Thomas Hookham 3.
6. Tinsley Brothers, 18 Catherine Street, Strand, booksellers and publishers.
7. Day's Library, Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, Mayfair.
8. Perhaps Theodor Veyhl had died, leaving Mary Ann a small annuity.
9. The Institution was founded in 1812 to provide Annuities to 'distressed members of the Upper and Middle Classes of Society' aged 60 and upwards. Subscribers were entitled to one vote for every 5/- per annum subscribed. The Institution still exists, but the conditions relating to grants have been modernised and the source is now invested income.
10. Mary Dutton Pearson (1821-93) married Thomas Gabriel (1811-91), Lord Mayor of London (1886-7), Warden of the Goldsmiths Company (1872-76) and created Baronet in 1876.
11. William, youngest son of Zachary and the late Jane Brooke, born 1849, a Solicitor's Clerk.
12. Telegrams overseas were sent, not by the Post Office, but by private companies, at rates varying from 2d. a word to Belgium, to 27s. 5d. a word to South Africa. Kaiapoi Institute has been referred to in Part 1, chapter 3.

26. Jane Hookham (1855-97)

&

Henry Thomas Hookham jnr.
(1858-1943)



13 October 1878 12 University Street, Gower Street Thomas 4 to Henry

Partings; Henry's sister, Rosa, had died in August 1876, shortly before their mother's death in September the same year.

Marianne's mother, Charlotte Jones, née Besser, had died in November 1871, her uncle Isaac Besser in 1872 and

Thomas now reports the death of her aunt, Ann Miriam Besser.

Dear Harry,

I write in haste a few lines only to inform Marianne and yourself that Mr. W.H.H. Jones¹ wrote me three days since the sudden and melancholy intelligence of the death of Mrs. Besser. She died on Monday last the 7th Inst. At 3 a.m. after a week's illness only of bronchitis. Mr. Jones and Mr. J. Seargeant² went down to Trowbridge on the 11th to be present at the funeral yesterday, where the former says he is likely to remain for a week or two. He adds that Mr. Seargeant's Sister was with Mrs. Besser during her illness but can give no further information at present.

Now, with reference to this eventuality I must remind you that a year or two back, on referring the matter to Zac. Brooke as you had wished, it was his opinion that the joint Power of Attorney which I held for Marianne and yourself was expressed too distinctly with reference to the late Mrs. Jones³ and her property and was not general enough to afford me the authority to act in any other emergency. He suggested the need of a fresh instrument as soon as possible, either empowering me or himself, or any one else whom you would both prefer; and to this you replied at that time that one would be sent to me by next mail or without delay, but somehow I suppose other events have intervened to divert you from your purpose. I have not received any fresh "Power". I shall be happy to act for you in this as in the former matter if you think fit, and the whole of your share of the inheritance (less some legal expense, I suppose – but I hope much less of that than in the former case) can be transferred by a cheque on the Bank of New Zealand being paid straight in here as soon as you have appointed your Agent. But as Zac Brooke has already been consulted, I have thought it only right and best to advise him by letter of the event, because he can probably meantime get copies of both wills or ascertain from Mr. Seargeant in due legal form all that is coming to Marianne, so as to lose no time when your authority does arrive.

This letter is necessarily a little, but only a very little in advance of the one I was about to write you to announce at last the dispatch of the Case⁴. It was indeed shipped so long ago as the 23rd September, but it was not until Friday last, the 11th October that she sailed and I have received a note of the charges from Shaw, Savill, & Co., which I must disburse, you know, before I can receive the Bill of Lading to send out to you. I hope, however, that it will be a certain satisfaction to you to learn that the various articles in a zinc-lined case are at last on their passage per 'Bebington'⁵ for Canterbury addressed to yourself, School House, Yaldhurst.

The contents are various and numerous, I think about 30 different odd packagings at least – but the greater portion by far is from Mary Ann, and the least I am sorry to say is naturally from me, as I have at intervals had to sell away almost all I possessed. M. A. has gone down to Brighton for some weeks for a holiday, and intends presently to write you an inventory of all she has sent. There is besides a Dress that came through her from Henrietta Carpenter⁶, who has one each of the two Photos.

From me there is enclosed only Father's portrait by Etty⁷, and the 4 Photos of our dear Mother and Sister packed face to face inside the old frame of Father's portrait – and besides, two copies of Aunt Bessy's 'Princesses'⁸, one having been Mother's and the other Rosa's with their names written by the author inside – and a copy of Marmontel's works in French⁹, 4v. which were Mother's before her marriage and her present to Rosa as dated many years ago – and lastly, Le Nouveau Testament, a birthday present of mine to dear Rose, which she seems to have preserved as good as new ever since. I fear there was nothing else of any consequence from me, but am not quite sure. As to their apportionment you will do as you please, but I should like your dear Annie to have one of the Hall's 'Princesses' and 'Le Nouveau Testament', and probably the Marmontel, which had been her Grandmother's in 1817, might be best adapted as a keepsake to Ada.

I mentioned in a recent letter to Annie something about the other contents which I had received from Mr. Jones and the Dennisses¹⁰, but the latter at the last added two playthings (I suppose for Charlotte's children)¹¹, the one a Nigger playing cymbals and the other Lord Dundreary raising his hat off and on by machinery¹². I hope you will find the movement of them alright when they arrive, but to get them into an old box (which M. A. supplied) his Lordship has to keep his hat inclined forward for the whole 16,000 miles.

The value for insurance I have put at £25. If lost they can never be made good to you, but such an amount might be some satisfaction, though I did not think it necessary to pay for a higher one. The total Freight Insurance & Shipping Expenses when paid will be £1. 14. 4, the carriage to the Docks about 7/-, the zinc-lined Case 13/- and the Photos, (when I have paid William Carpenter¹³), £3 = altogether 5. 14. 4. You sent me months ago ample to cover all, £6. 10.

Time goes on relentlessly, month after month passes by, and what I am to ask you to say to dear Annie for not having yet posted her books to her I know not. I will do so very soon now I trust, but I have felt I must get the Case off first. I feel under a ban of disgrace, and she will never trust me again. My business is so precarious to keep together, so hard to make a return some shillings less than £2 a week. Though this is no reason, and I do not wish to advance it as such, and have it constantly on my mind to make all straight to her.

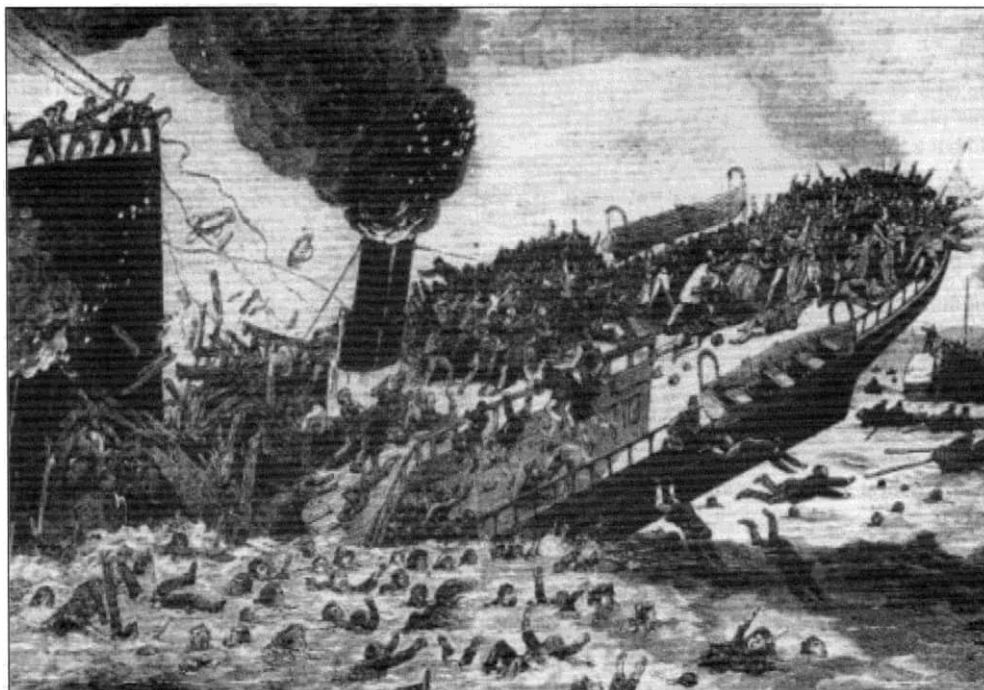
I sent you recently two "Dispatch" newspapers, giving details of the most extraordinary fatality of the kind that has occurred here since the going down of the "Royal George" with a thousand lives.¹⁴ Here were 786 people returning home from a holiday excursion, up the river (like we have so often been) all shelved into the water off Woolwich and drowned in 3 or 4 minutes, through a collision. There never in our times has been such a calamity on the Thames.¹⁵ We did not happen to know any of the sufferers.

I shall have to write again very soon with the B.L., so with sincerest love to you all from both of us,
I remain, as ever, dear Harry, Your affectionate brother, Thomas Hookham

P.S. Oct. 16th – I receive this morning before closing my letter some further lines from Mr. Henry Jones, which I quote as follows –

The single fact connected with my Uncle's will is that he has left to Mrs. Hookham £500, which you knew before¹⁶ – Mrs. Besser has left everything [the remainder of the letter is missing].¹⁷

1. William Henry Hammond Jones, Marianne's brother.
2. John Sergeant, born 1815, a nephew of the late Mrs. Besser, and executor of her Will.
3. Charlotte Jones, mother of William Henry, Emma and Marianne. She died on 17 November 1871.
4. See the following letter from Mary Ann, for a fuller account of this case of family remembrances.
5. The 'Bebington' was built in 1859 and bought by Shaw Savill & Co in 1875. Her first voyage to New Zealand, in 1876, had been a disaster. A collision in the Channel was followed by an outbreak of typhoid; food and water ran out and she eventually arrived in Auckland after a voyage of 160 days. She made three voyages to Lyttelton, of which the one with the 'case' was the first, leaving on 12 October 1878 and this time arriving only 100 days later, on 20 January 1879.
6. Henrietta, daughter of William Hookham and Sarah Margaret Carpenter.
7. See portrait of Thomas Hookham 3 in Part 1, chapter 3.
8. Elizabeth Hall *Royal Princesses of England*.
9. Jean François Marmontel (1723-99), Secretary of the Academie Française 1783.
10. Marianne's sister, Emma, had married Horation Torrens Denniss in 1872.
11. Charlotte Matilda (1853-1931), second daughter of Henry and Marianne Hookham, married David Ebenezer Amesbury in 1871. They lived near Feilding, North Island, and had five children.
12. Lord Dundreary, a good-natured but brainless character in a successful play 'Our American cousin' (1858) by Tom Taylor (1817-80).
13. Presumably brother of the above Henrietta Carpenter. Another artist, he exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1840-66, including subjects related to journeying with the Punjab Irregular Force to Afghanistan in 1855.
14. On 29 August 1782 the 'Royal George' was at anchor at Spithead, Portsmouth, refitting urgently for the relief of Gibraltar. A slight heeling of the ship was needed to reach parts below water and the guns were moved to one side. The ship's timbers gave way and it sank with all hands, including Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt. A number of tradespeople and families were also on board, and although the exact number of fatalities was never known it could not have been less than 800.
15. On 4 September 1878 the paddle steamer 'Princess Alice', returning up the River Thames from an excursion to Gravesend, was struck by a screw-propelled ship, the 'Bywell Castle'. Industrial waste and sewage, in what was then the most polluted river in Europe, aggravated the calamity and there were few survivors among the 600 or more passengers aboard the 'Princess Alice', many of them women and children. It remains the worst ever disaster on English inland waterways, far outweighing the more recent collision of the 'Marchioness' and 'Bowbelle' on 20 August 1989, in which 51 people lost their lives.
16. In his Will, proved 21 February 1872, Isaac Besser made three bequests in trust, to follow the death of his widow, Ann Miriam Besser.
 - i. To his nephew, William Henry Hammond Jones, he left his home and two other houses; William Henry was also to receive the eventual residue of the estate.
 - ii. to his niece Emma Jones (later Denniss), £1000 free from control of any husband and able to be left to anyone she wished in her own Will.
 - iii. to Mary Anne (sic) Hookham, wife of Henry Hookham, £500.
17. Ann Miriam Besser bequeathed the bulk of her estate to her own family, but left £100 to the same nephew, William Henry Hammond Jones, in a Codicil.



27. The Sinking of the 'Princess Alice'

October 24th 1878 Mary Ann to Henry

Brighton

My Dear Brother,

You will see from the above that I am partaking of a few sea breezes, my health of late has been flag[g]ing and so I thought a little change of this sort would enable me to go thro' the Winter all the better. I have been here nearly 3 weeks and purpose remaining a little longer before returning to London.

Tom has started the Case to you now about a month, and so it is high time for me to write to you as I should like that this letter reached you before the Case, which I believe will be the case, & I hope so.

I hope you will like the selection of the various things I have made of our dear departed ones, there was however not room for much choice for I have first sent you the things I had left, with a few exceptions, and I herein enclose a list of them.

I have not specified any particular things of our Sister's for my nieces and nephew, as I thought you would be better able than myself to know what will be best suited to each one, and so I have left that to you to do if you please.

Our dear Father's old desk tho' worn I thought you would yourself like to make use of, as our Mother used it to her last. The silk dress is from Miss Carpenter (Henrietta) who happened to hear from me that we were about to send you a Case. She sends it with her love and hopes it will be useful.

As you are fond of games I have thought that the game of Bezique which was our Sister's would be acceptable, and I think you will value it doubly when I tell you that it was given to her by an admirer of hers Mr. Wallace who was Resident Medical Man at Huntingdon Hospital when our Sister was Matron.¹

I have sent you a piece of music composed by our Cousin Miss Julia Brooke who is now about twenty one years of age. The baby when our dear Aunt Jane died.² This is her first composition and it is considered very good for a first attempt. Our Mother's Maps I thought might perhaps be of use in teaching, and being in her handwriting was another reason for sending them.

I thought Marian would like something of our Mother's, and I have therefore sent her a lilac & white dress of hers, her pincushion she used to the last, and her cookery book. Buchan's Medicine is a useful book, so should you not have it, it will I trust be of service.³

I thought you would like to again to try over Moore's Irish Melodies and have therefore sent the 2 vols.⁴ And some of our Sister's music.

I found our Mother & Sister's wardrobes very poor, and as I had to give to two or three who wished to have a little remembrance of them, I have but little to send in this way, add to which little Miss Jaynes⁵ came and asked our Mother to let her have some of Rosa's clothes; for our Mother told me this herself, and said she let her have some but I was not present and so do not know what things she had. I have therefore sent you as far as possible of our Sister's little jewelry & other little articles. The blue body is all of the dress which was no doubt once a complete dress.

A cheerful habitation goes a great way towards comfort to my mind and I have therefore sent you of my own two prints of the late Mr. Paul Gauci's of Windsor Castle, and Eaton⁶; and also two bouquets of flowers painted by Hannah Goddard's father⁷; which I think will improve yr. Sitting room, at least add in a measure to its cheerfulness, if you will accept them, and do as I say, if you fancy to try the experiment.

I have sent you one table and two teaspoons of the old plate of our Father & Mother's from Old Bond Street. There was formerly a nice quantity of this plate but I believe our Mother when in trouble disposed of a little from time to time and that is how it has diminished down to but a few spoons which I have left.

On account of Tom's sad circumstances I handed over to him our dear Father's watch, which belonged to our Sister of late years, as I thought it would be a comfort to him to have by him something of value.⁸ This I fancy I have in a previous letter told you.

The visiting plates I put in thinking they might be of use in the teaching line, having the name Hookham on them.⁹

My nieces must not mind that the little trifles that I have sent them are not new, the fact is that I popped them in just at the last for I had no time to do anything else, for I must tell you that it has been a work of time for me to get out the things I have sent out of boxes in a loft at the top of the house where I live in London. Rent has become so dear in London that I am obliged to get my things that I don't use every day, put away any where to save extra rent; so that I have but one room to use myself and so that is how I have had to shift for years, indeed, I suppose it will always be so for me as long as I live, as I see no chance of doing otherwise.

There are one or two of your remarks and inquiries that I have still to answer, but I think I will close this and write to you later on those subjects so with my best love to you all and hoping to hear again from you on the arrival of the Case which I trust will reach you all right.

I remain, Yr. Affectionate Sister,
Mary Ann Veyhl

I have a bad pen so please excuse the writing and any blunders there may be.

P.S. Through a blunder of my woman not bringing a message to me she ought from Tom the Case was closed when I arrived with the last little enclosure I had to send, which was our Sister's headdress, composed principally of her own hair, which I thought you would like perhaps to have. I dare say I could send it by post, if you write let me know if you wish to have it. Marian's Aunt Mrs. Besser died on the 7th. Inst, but Tom has written to you the particulars he tells me in a letter I have just got from him £500 for Marian from her Uncle Mr. Besser. Let me Know if you find among the things the Surprise Locket which I intended to go to you.

1. Mr. Wallace has not been traced in Medical Directories or Medical Register in connection with Huntingdon Hospital or the Poor Law Institution, nor any reference to Rosa Hookham.
2. Julia would have been 25. Aunt Jane, née Starling, wife of Zachary Brooke, had died in, or soon after childbirth, in September 1853.
3. Probably the popular 'Domestic Medicine' by William Buchan, MD (1729-1805). First published in 1802, it went into many editions and revisions.
4. Thomas Moore (1779-1852) wrote a number of Irish songs, including 'The Last Rose of Summer'; also poetry and satires. James Carpenter of 14 Old Bond Street published some of his early works.
5. Miss Jaynes has not been identified.
6. Paul Joseph Gauci (1807-76) exhibited at the Royal Academy, including scenes in Windsor Great Park. Son of Massimo Gauci who had been Miniature Painter Extraordinary to Napoleon and one of the first to introduce lithography to England. It was in his house, 9 North Crescent, Bedford Square, that Thomas Hookham spent his last days.
7. Possibly James Goddard (flourished 1800-50), a London flower painter who exhibited at the Royal Academy.
8. In his Will, Rosa's father had made her specific bequests of his gold watch and the portrait by Etty.
9. Possibly plates or salvers left in the hall for people leaving visiting cards.



28. Marian Ada Hookham (1851 – 1940)



29. Charlotte Hookham (1853 – 1931)



30. Annie Emma Hookham (1856 -1932)

Chapter Nine: 1893– 1899, The Final Years

Of the 20 letters in this Section the first 18 are from Henry to Thomas, with comment on family and social matters in both New Zealand and England. The collection ends with two letters from Thomas, one to Henry, unaware that Henry had died, and one subsequently to Henry's daughter, Annie Emma.

7 November 1893 Christchurch N.Z.

Henry to Thomas

New Zealand gives women the vote, in time for a General Election.

My Dear Brother,

I duly received yours of August acknowledging receipt of P.O. Order, which came to hand about a week ago. It was very welcome for I was beginning to get uneasy, fearing that you were still ill. Happily, however, my forebodings were not justified, as I am very gratified to learn from your letter – The latter is like all your letters, full of interest, and I thank you for taking so much trouble to gather up all sorts of items of news you think I should like to hear.

But particularly I must thank you for so kindly taking the great trouble you have taken to endeavour to find a purchaser for Jane's manuscript. At the same time I am extremely sorry that I have been the innocent occasion of so much labour and anxiety to you in the matter. I had not, nor had Jane I feel sure, the remotest idea of inflicting such a task, or the manuscript would not have been sent. Pray do not take the least further trouble about it. The tale is evidently unsuited to the market, and is not worth any further trouble whatever.

I sent your letter home, together with the enclosure, on to Jane. I have not heard from her since, but I am sure she feels deeply indebted to you for all you have done, and have endeavoured to do for her literary bantling.

This will be a very poor return for the splendid letter you have just sent me – But I am tied for time, and cannot possibly send you a fitting reply in the point of length – I discovered only this morning that the mail leaves today, arriving in London Dec^r 20 – If P.O.O. for £4 which I herewith enclose is not sent by this mail I find it cannot reach you until after Xmas – So I determined that I must go to Christchurch at once to take out the order, and write as much as I could to accompany it.

We are all quite well I am glad to say, and going on much as usual – It is now our springtime and our garden occupies a great deal of our time. But it is healthy exercise, is this garden work! – and perhaps repays me as well or better than most other descriptions of work.

We are now in N.Z. undergoing great political excitement. Our parliament has extended the suffrage to women! Everybody of the age of 21 and over is now entitled to vote and this country's Parliament is up by effluxion of time, its three years duration having expired and in three weeks time we have a general election, – the women for the first time taking part. Every seat is being contested, there being in general three or four candidates for one seat. There are about 18 candidates for Christchurch, which returns three members but half of them will, I fancy, retire before polling day because each candidate has to deposit £10, which is not returned to him unless he polls a proportion equal to a fifth, I think, of the number polled by the top scorer. There are 14,000 voters in the Christchurch electorate, and nearly 4,000 in the Riccarton electorate, a suburban one, in which we live.

I received a letter from London at same time as yours which surprised me not a little – It was from John Hookham¹, a son of Ned's. He lives at Tooting, and got my address from William², whom he knows. He asks for information about New Zealand. I have not yet had time to reply to him but intend soon to do so, and also to W. Carpenter, with regard to whom I am a sad defaulter in correspondence. The gods bless him and also Ted and Percy³, for their oft-repeated kindness to you. William I presume is well, from the fact that he kindly continues to send me papers, for which please thank him when you see him.

Love to Mary Ann and self from your affectionate brother, H^y Hookham

1. John, son of Edward (Ned) and Eliza Hookham.
2. William appears to be the name by which a George Blandford is known, (see letter of 29 October 1896). In a later letter (9 May 1897) Henry writes "William". The use of only a forename suggests that William was much younger than Thomas or Henry, and perhaps a former employee. He is not to be confused with William Carpenter, whose surname is always given when any reference is made to him.
3. William, Percy and Edward, sons of William Hookham Carpenter and Margaret Carpenter.

1 September 1895 Henry to Thomas

Fendalton, nr Christchurch

Henry has undergone surgery, snow falls heavily, and Christchurch hosts an International Exhibition.

Superscript: This Mail leaves Sep 5 & is due in London on Oct 18. (Thomas notes: received Oct 10/95 Just 5 weeks)

My dear Brother,

I duly received yours of June 23rd on August 8.

I am very pleased indeed at the excellent report you give of your health up to the date of that letter, and only hope that your steady progress has since continued and that now you have completely recovered your customary health and strength. I note that you attribute your restoration to the "no stimulant" system you have adopted. Annie is the only one here who takes no alcoholic beverage

– Not that she is a teetotaler on principle, but because, like yourself, she finds it suits her health. Marianne, Ada and I all indulge in a glass of beer at supper time, – but I ought to except Marianne who for some weeks past has taken milk instead of beer at supper.

I don't remember whether I told you in my last that Marianne has been for some months troubled with a pain at the back of her neck – She has tried all sorts of things without receiving any permanent relief. Has also tried what two doctors could do for her, but without good result. The first doctor said it was rheumatic gout, but the last – the one who operated on me – pronounced it to be an affection of the nerves. When doctors differ who shall decide? Fortunately it is not at present very painful and frequently pain is altogether absent, but invariably returns after a short time – After giving up her beer she took whiskey at supper time, just for a trial, – a very mild dose of whiskey you will say, when I tell you it was two teaspoons full in a tumbler of water! – But she did not find it of any service so just now drinks milk or milk-and-water.

My operation was not under chloroform or any anaesthetic¹. Dr. Prins asked my age, and thought it better, if I was willing, to operate without administering anything of the anaesthetic kind – He told me he would freeze the flesh, and before using his knife he sprayed something liquid and very cold on and about the place for a minute or two – It dulled the pain of the cutting near the surface; but I think it made no difference below. But the affair was not so painful as I had anticipated it would be and Dr. Prins is a very clever surgeon, at all events clever for these parts! In London, I suppose, he would not be thought much of! I am glad to say no symptoms have appeared of any other “malignant growth”, as they call it. Yours was a much more serious operation, and chloroform was absolutely required. It is gratifying to learn that you have surmounted it so well.

About a fortnight after I last wrote to you Annie wrote asking you to forward for us 3 doz copies of “Merrie England”² published at 1^d – We have since heard that it is not now procurable for a penny, but that the shilling edition only is to be got. If this is so please do not send it. We only wanted it to give away or lend, which is sometimes much the same thing! And we cannot afford to give it away at a shilling.

I enclose herewith a P.O.Order for £2-10-0, £2 of which please accept for yourself and apply the 10/- in discharge of what I may owe in case you have been able to forward the “Merrie England”, and if any balance remains I should like you to send me by post “How it can be done, or Constructive Socialism” by Richardson, published by “Schwann Sonne” something- I forget exactly what the last syllable of the name is – of Paternoster Row³. The price is I should think about 2/6 or 3/- but if dearer I should like it sent. If you meet with any difficulty in finding it, I suppose the publishers of the “Clarion” would be able to give information as to the name of the publishers. It bears the date 1895. We got a copy from our Christchurch Public Library but had to return it in a week. It is a fine work, setting forth a practical scheme for the introduction and successful carrying out of national co-operation.

“Merrie England” has been selling in Christchurch price 4^d per copy, but is now quite sold out, and we were told that the penny edition will not be for some time procurable, as it is contingent on profits being made on a further sale of the shilling edition, which profits will be devoted by Blatchford the author for a further issue of the cheap edition.

So you have once more got a Tory government! And a strong one too, if one may judge by its numerical majority⁴ – What it can do – except promote reform – to retain office, I can hardly see. I daresay we shall have a change of government here about next election time i.e. in twelve months or so. Our rulers are not sufficiently Socialist for us – They promise a great deal more before election than they perform when elected – the old game!

If and when you again see Mr. Tate⁵ please give him my kind regards – I am glad to hear that he is well, and doing well.

I had a long and very interesting letter from our good cousin John Hookham in March last – He is quite Socialist in his views, and gave me much information as to the progress of the Socialist and Democratic movement in England.

We have had this winter more severe weather than any I remember since coming to this country. Snow was to be seen on the ground for ten days consecutively, a thing that certainly has not happened before in the memory of the oldest Canterbury resident. Frosts too were keen and frequent, and in the vicinity of Christchurch skating was actually indulged in! But though severe the winter was short, and we are having lovely summer weather now. The winter two months, however, was so unusually sharp, that semi-tropical trees that heretofore have managed to live and even to flourish have been this year completely cut off. We have to mourn the loss of several fine flowering trees and shrubs of this description.

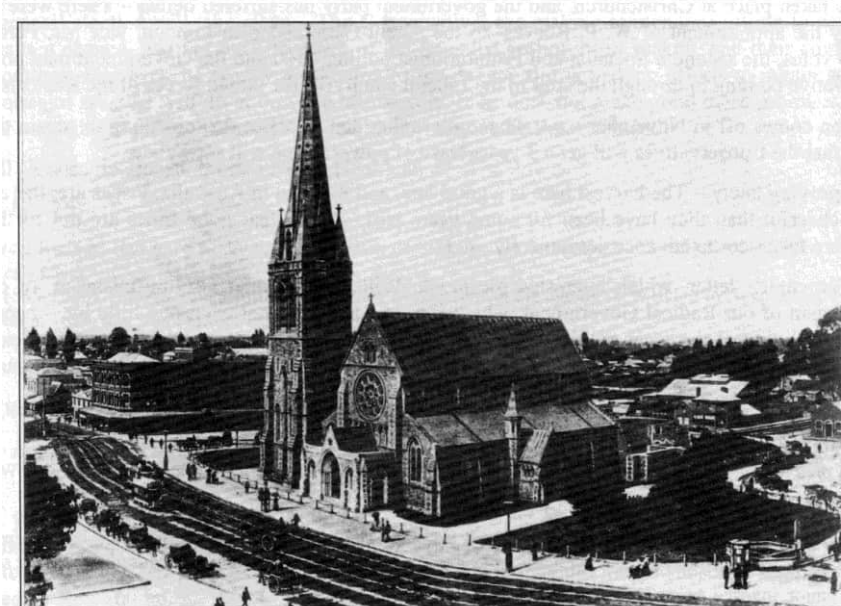
Christchurch is just now running an Exhibition⁶ – It was opened on Thursday last, Augst 29 and will last a month. Seven thousand persons were present at the opening, – a big number with us but nothing with you with your millions in London!

I shall have the pleasure of sending you a P.O.Order for £4 in time for you to get it by Dec 25 or thereabouts. If you are able to post me the book “How it can be done” I shall know you have duly received the £2-10 now sent. With kindest regards to the Carpenters whenever you see them, and best love to yourself and Mary Ann in which all here join.

I remain, Dear Tom,
Your affectionate Brother
H^y Hookham

1. A later letter, dated 31 August 1897, seems to suggest that this operation took place in late 1894, for ‘a tumour or cancer’. Chloroform, introduced as an anaesthetic in 1847 by the Edinburgh obstetrician John Young Simpson, had dangerous side effects, particularly towards the heart. Despite his mistrust of doctors, Henry was well advised on this occasion.
2. Robert Blatchford (1851-1943) founded ‘The Clarion’ in 1891 as a socialist weekly (which continued to 1932). His first articles in this paper were reprinted as ‘Merrie England’ in 1893.
3. Richardson, John. ‘How it can be done, or Constitutional Socialism’ 1895. London. Schwann (later Swan) Sonnenschein.

4. At the General Election of July 1895 the Conservatives were returned with 340 seats and their allies, the Liberal Unionists 71, against the Liberals with 177 and the Irish Nationalists 82, a majority of 152. The 3rd Marquess of Salisbury was again Prime Minister.
5. Mr. Tate is not identified.
6. The New Zealand International Exhibition of 1895, to encourage trade and tourism, was held on 14 acres of ground in North Hagley Park, Christchurch.



31. Snow in Christchurch 1895

16 February 1896 Fendalton, nr. Christchurch Henry to Thomas

The death of Percy Carpenter and forthcoming marriage of Henry's son.

Superscript: Kindest regards to William & Ted Carpenter – HH

My dear Brother,

Your kind letter of Dec 8 has come duly to hand – The news you send is of very grave import – Poor Percy Carpenter's death is very much to be regretted in all accounts, particularly as he was, it seems, your best friend – What a pity he left no Will! He was so kind and thoughtful that he might have remembered you in it.¹

It was fortunate that the little sum I sent was in time to be of service. I herewith enclose a Post Office Order for £4 which I hope will also aid you, though I sincerely hope that, when it reaches you, (which should be on March 25) you will not be in such serious straits as in December – If I were able I would send much more for I know you need it, but I am sorry that my income becomes less annually from the fall in the value of money here, which, of course, affects the rate of interest – However, I hope to send another sum in aid in May next, which will reach you before the end of June.

Although my sight is failing I am still able, I am glad to say, to manage my Chess column for the "Canterbury Times", which brings me £27 per annum – more than a fourth part of my income. I don't think my sight is any weaker, or if so very little weaker, than it was a year ago.

You will be glad to hear that Marianne is decidedly better – The rheumatism in the neck which troubled her for many months appears to have disappeared, at least I have not heard her complain of it for the past three weeks or so. She has been taking a good tonic, composed of a fine description of wine and quinine, or something of that kind, mixed with it. This mixture has done her much good.

I think you know that we have a New Zealand Championship Chess Tourney which comes off annually.² I enter the lists on each occasion, - blending business and pleasure, as I report and afterwards publish and annotate the games played. This year, i.e. Dec^r/95 – Jan^y/96, it (the 8th annual tourney) was held at Wanganui, an old established town in the North Island, distant about 250 miles from Christchurch. Of course at the age of 71 one does not play Chess as well as when younger. Therefore I cannot expect to come out first now a days (sic) – But I managed to get 3rd prize (£5) – (14 competitors) – The heat was great, the North Island is hotter at Midsummer than the South – One evening I sat in a draught while playing, and caught a bad cold, which clung to me five weeks. I have only recently got rid of it. Next December the Championship Tournament will be held in Christchurch – It will be my last tournament, as I intend then to retire from public match play.

Jane (Mrs. Akers)³ came back with us (Ada went with me to Wanganui) from the North, and Mr. Akers followed – They are both here on a visit at present, and will continue with us for a week or ten days more. Akers is a very agreeable, generous, kind-hearted fellow, and very fond of Jane. They have no family. He is our Accountant, Clerk, Agent, &c. and has been doing pretty well of late.

Henry, my son, is going to get married! The affair is to come off I believe in a fortnight – He is a saddle and harness maker, as you know, of Papanui, a suburb of Christchurch. She lives at same place and is a dressmaker, - and has the reputation of being one of the most industrious young women in Papanui. We have only seen her two or three times, but like her.⁴

A bye-election has taken place at Christchurch, and the government party has suffered defeat – There were 3 candidates for the seat rendered vacant by the appointment of W. P. Reeves⁵ to the Agent-Generalship in London, vice Mr. Percival.⁶ The Conservative came in with 4700 votes, the second a Socialist and Prohibitionist polling 4300 and the Government man polling only 3150. The old story! The Conservative coming in through the split in the Liberal camp – as the united forces of the Radicals equal 7450!

Our general election comes off in November next, when unless the men in office do something to regain the confidence they have lost, it is probable that the Conservatives will get a 3 years lease of power. Time will soon show.

Trade has been improving lately – The harvest here is a good one, and it is bad in Australia. Prices are, therefore, advancing, and the farmers are more cheerful than they have been for some years past – But I fear good times are not for long. There is too much produced everywhere for prices to advance permanently.

Thanks for Ted Carpenter's letter, which interested me much. William Carpenter is quite mistaken, of course, about my taking offence at any criticism of our Radical Government, which indeed I love not, not even one little bit, - because it has done little or nothing towards the solution of the great problem of poverty. This government has greatly disappointed expectations – It has been colonising on the old lines, - the lines which have brought about more pauperism in proportion to the population in New York and Chicago than is in London.

With best love to Mary Ann and yourself, Your affectionate brother, Henry Hookham

1. Percy Carpenter died 5 October 1895 aged 75. Administration of his estate (£480-2-10) was granted to his brother William Carpenter.
2. Henry had become New Zealand's first National Chess Champion in 1879.
3. Henry's third daughter, Jane, married Henry Taylor Akers in 1886. They lived in North Palmerston, not far from Jane's sister, Charlotte Amesbury, in Feilding. See G.R.Macdonald: *Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Canterbury Museum, N.Z. for similar family references.
4. Henry Thomas, junior, married Annie Harris (1865-1940)
5. William Pember Reeves (1857-1932), MP from 1887 until appointment as Agent-General in London 1896. Director of London School of Economics 1908-19. Chairman of the National Bank of New Zealand 1917-31.
6. Westby Brook Percival (1854-1906) was born in Tasmania, but moved to New Zealand in the early 1860s. A Barrister, he was MP in 1890, then Agent-General in London 1891-96.

9 June 1896

Henry to Thomas

Fendalton, Christchurch, N.Z.

Henry fears for the future of Socialism in New Zealand with a General Election approaching, and ponders the effect of smoking on handwriting..

My dear Brother,

I have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letters dated Jan^y 19 and March 29 - I am very much obliged for the trouble you have taken in procuring for me the answers to the questions re Stock Exchange matters. They give all the information I desired. And please give my kind remembrances to Mr. Richard Hall¹ and say I am glad to hear tidings of him again after the lapse of so many years, and to learn that he is in such good health, and that he still remains a Socialist!

I thank you kindly for sending me a "Sunday Times" and two numbers of the "Clarion" which arrived by the last mail. There are good things in all of them – The "Clarion" must have a very wide circulation as even in Christchurch it has many subscribers.

I was extremely anxious about you when I sent the last remittance, and am much gratified to learn from yourself that you are, as you put it, "not quite yet hors de combat" – Money is not quite so easy with me just now as it has been, and I therefore, under the circumstances, do not forward a further sum as I had intended. Still I know that if you are laid up by illness you will be wanting assistance – Please let me have a line or two saying how you are progressing, as I can send something in September should you need it. If not of course I shall remit in November to arrive in December as usual.

I had a very nice letter from William Carpenter about a couple of months back. He says a great deal regarding his brother Percy's death and of the illness which led to it – He also speaks of you in terms of much kindness and sympathy – I was quite pleased with his letter, and at once replied to it, and made it (my epistle) as interesting as I could, who correspond so badly, have little to say, and nothing well – He, on the other hand, is full of description, and writes at all times a capital letter – One thing astonishes me and that is his excellent handwriting – quite phenomenal I should say in a man of his age. I asked him if he smokes now as of yore – I think that round pretty hand would be impossible from a smoker. I was surprised to hear from him that Percy had left no property. After enjoying a good fixed income for so many years how was that? I always thought the Carpenters so frugal and thrifty.

I am trying to sell my house and acre in Fendalton, - or I ought rather to say 'our', as Marianne owns half – and if successful intend to get nearer to Christchurch – We are two miles now from the centre of it; we wish to be one only. Business and pleasure take all four of us so continually there, that we suffer greatly from distance at present, especially at night times – Fancy Marianne at 68 having to walk both ways when she visits the Theatre or other place of evening amusement! And that frequently happens, for although we have drags (or omnibuses) running often during the day, they are seldom put on at night-time, and when they are it is at

double fares. As regards the address of letters you send it matters not, they are sure to come to hand wherever we go, as we are so well known.

Politics are enjoying much attention here and throughout N.Z. just now – The radical government, headed by Seddon², who is a democrat but without much leaning to Socialism, has been in power now six years, and their second three years of office expires in December next, when a general election will take place – The Conservatives are making tremendous efforts to get into power but I don't think they would have a chance, had not the allegiance of the Socialist section been shaken, and their confidence in Seddon much tried by his shortcomings. However, he is now awakening to the danger and is making efforts to regain support from these dissatisfied ones, by promises of what he will do in this, the last session. If he does not make good these promises there is no doubt that he will go, and in will come the friends of the capitalist and landowner, which heaven forbid!

With kindest love from all Your affectionate brother Henry Hookham

This should reach you on July 15

1. The 1881 Census shows a Richard Hall aged 61 living in the parish of St. Luke's, Clerkenwell. His birthplace is given as Piccadilly, and his occupation as Bookseller's Clerk.
2. Richard John Seddon (1845-1906). Born in Lancashire, he emigrated to Australia at the age of 18. Moving to New Zealand three years later, he was elected to Parliament in 1879, and was Premier from 1893 to 1906.

4 August 1896 (rec'd Sept 9) Henry to Thomas Fendalton, nr Christchurch

Henry thirsts for socialist literature, and fears the Conservatives may oust the Radicals.

My dear Brother,

I thank you very much for the kind present you have made me of "Clarions" and "Times & Echos"¹ – Of both I have received quite a number; how many I cannot say, for I cannot refer to see, having sent several on to Jane in the North Island. Both papers have interested us greatly, but particularly the "Clarion" for which I should like to subscribe regularly. I thank you also for a Labour Journal edited by Keir Hardie.²

I enclose a P.O. Order for £3.0.0, being £2, which please kindly accept for yourself, and £1 for a few books if you will kindly purchase them for me, and forward by post & pay the Subscription at the Clarion Office, to commence from date of payment. I don't know the title of the book on Chess Notation which stands first on the list, but probably it could be ascertained and also the publisher's name and address by application at the depot of the British Chess Company 118 Southampton Row, High Holborn, or from Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane, where the "Chess Monthly"³ is published – The others on the list, with the exception of the New Moral World volume, can all be got I suppose at the office of the "Clarion".

As to the "New Moral World"⁴ – I should like to have any old volume of it – in which Mr. Owen sets forth his views and teachings regarding the reconstruction of society. I thought that, perhaps, in the course of your travels in search of old books, you might chance to come across one. If I remember rightly the periodical, a weekly, commenced its career about 1839 or 1840, and ended it about 10 years later. I think Mr. Owen personally edited the paper in the earlier years, and constantly wrote the article on the front-page – After a few years I think Fleming edited it, and Owen discontinued his contributions. Of course I do not wish you to take much trouble over the search, or to pay a heavy sum for the volume, (a few specimen numbers would do), say not more than 3/6 including postage.

I hope your health, of which you gave a pretty satisfactory account when last you wrote, continues good, and that you suffer no after ill-effects from the surgical operation. I had a letter from Mary Ann, dated May 29, delivered here July 16. In it she says the last account she had of you, about three weeks before writing, was favourable, and that you were then well in health. I have not heard from John Hookham for a long time. I wrote to him last, and have also posted newspapers occasionally to him. William kindly continues to send me Lloyds' Newspaper⁵ weekly and in addition a short time back forwarded some fine coloured drawings and an illustrated tale by Dickens published by Pears at Christmas last⁶; they came by a friend of his, Mr. Pepperell, a Christchurch resident returning here from a visit to England.

We are all well here, and our winter which has been a very mild one, is nearly over. The weeping willows did not completely shed their leaves until the end of June, and now the new green leaves are visible, and the rhubarb is just showing leaf, and the crocuses in the borders are in full blossom.

I don't know if I told you in my last that we are trying to sell our homestead and section here. We want to get within a mile of our great city, and we are now away two miles. I have been asking £530, intending to reduce the price by £50 or £80 if necessary – But the only offer I have yet had is £375 cash down and this is much too little. However, it is winter time and bad for selling a country place. I think a couple of months hence I may perhaps get my price. If not, well we must just stay where we are. In any case our usual address will find us, as the Post Office people will see to it that we get our letters wherever we are.

We have a general election in three or four months. The Conservatives are making frantic efforts to get in, and if money and lying will bring it about they will undoubtedly succeed – The radicals have had six years in office and we Socialists think they have not done much, and some of us are rather disgusted. Still I don't think many if any Socialists will be induced to vote for a Conservative under any circumstances – but other people may, and the issue is somewhat doubtful.

Marianne, Ada and Annie write with me in love to you

My dear Brother Yours affectionately, H. Hookham



32. Croquet and Tea under the Willow Trees, 14 Jacksons Road, Fendalton

l. to r: Henry senr., Marian Ada, Marianne, Henry junr., Annie Emma, Jane

1. The 'Weekly Times & Echo', a London weekly from 1885-1912.
2. James Keir Hardie (1856-1915) founded the Labour Movement in 1889 and became MP and first Leader of the Labour Party in 1906. He first published 'The Miner' in 1886; it became the 'Labour Leader' in 1894 under his editorship and continued under various names until 1987.
3. The 'British Chess Magazine', a monthly from 1880.
4. 'The Book of the New Moral World: containing the rational system of society, founded on demonstrable facts, developing the constitution and laws of human nature and of society' by Robert Owen (1771-1858), first published in 1836. Robert Owen was an early socialist and a philanthropist who formed a model community at New Lanark Mills in 1799.
5. 'Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper' commenced in 1842 and from 1902-1918 became 'Lloyd's Weekly News'.
6. 'Pears Annual' was published in London from 1891 to 1926. Between 1893 and 1903 it was the Christmas issue of the weekly 'Pears Pictorial'.

29 October 1896 Henry to Thomas Fendalton nr. Christchurch N.Z.

Henry and Marianne are about to leave Jacksons Road, Fendalton after 14 years.

My dear Brother,

I write to you from Fendalton for the last time¹. We have sold our house and section here and move away with our belongings on Monday next Nov. 2. Our new address is Onslow Street, St. Albans, Christchurch, Canterbury N.Z.

The Suez mail leaves here tomorrow – It is due in London on Dec^r 16. The next mail leaves here/via San Francisco/ on Nov^r 25 and is due in London on Dec^r 30, which is after Christmas Day. As I should like you to get the P.O. Order enclosed herewith for £4* before Xmas Day I must post this tomorrow. It must therefore be much shorter than it should be in reply to your long and very interesting letter commenced on Augst 3 and concluded Augst 23rd. *£4.10.0 – 10/- with Ada's love. HH

We are all high busy in getting our things ready for our move on Monday – We have been living here nearly fifteen years. It is really wonderful what a number of things one collects together in a few years. It is taking us days to put them in order for removal! The house and grounds, an acre in extent, were sold for £475, but I get only £450, - the difference goes to the house agents.

I suppose we have spent on the property (i.e. Marianne and self who each own a half share) more than £600, but the value of landed property has declined since we bought nearly cent for cent, and the house is now, of course, not worth so much as when newly put up. On the other hand the lawns, garden, orchard &c. are improvements to the extent of £50 at least. We have taken a house for four months (sixteen weeks) by the expiry of which time we hope to get the house we are intending to build, finished. It will be similar in construction to this house, with which we have no fault to find. We have bought a quarter acre section just opposite the house we have rented for 4 months; so that we shall be able to watch the progress of our new domicile – It is situated just one mile from the centre of the city, about half the distance of the house we are leaving – and we shall have the additional advantage of being close to the tram line by which we can get to town for 1½^d – but we shall generally walk, unless the weather is bad or it is late at night.

The Canterbury Chess Club held its annual meeting under my presidency last evening when the members not only re-elected me President, but made me a presentation of a handsome set of Chessmen and board as a birthday present on the 72nd anniversary of my birth! It was quite unexpected by me, and very kind of the members.²

Your letter was read aloud, Marianne, Ada and Annie being present. So your messages to them were delivered at once – Since its receipt I have written to Jane and have told her what you say about her. Since receiving yours I have had a letter from Mary Ann, who seems in very low spirits and suffering from ill-health. I feel sorry for her, she complains so much of loneliness, and in a former letter she was very sad at seeing so little of you.

I have to acknowledge with very many thanks the receipt of the “Clarion” and “Weekly Times and Echo”, both of which have come regularly to hand ever since you commenced sending them to me. I said in my last to you, which was written shortly after you began to send them, that I liked the “Clarion” best, and asked for you to kindly order it at the office in Fleet St to be sent to me. If you did so, would you please now call there and get my address altered in their books to Onslow Street, St. Albans, Christchurch, N.Z. If you are continuing to take in the “W^y Times and Echo” I should be very glad to see it whenever you can conveniently send it on, as there is, I find, a great deal of interesting matter in it, particularly the weekly article of Morrison Davidson³. In fact I deem it not far behind the “Clarion” in interest, although as you say, the writing is not so good as in the latter!

I have duly noted and carefully read the parts of the “Clarion” to which you called attention by pencil marks. I admire the cleverness of the writing and the tone of the writers. By the way I have not yet read or seen the “Scrumptious Girl”⁴, nor can I get it in Christchurch, although I have often tried. So please send it to me, and also the “Clarion Penny Pamphlets” Nos. 1 to 10, & if I am in your debt please let me know. I fear I hardly sent enough to pay for my last order.

We are on the eve of a general election here and in a great ferment. The Conservatives hope to get in, and probably they may be returned more numerous than at last election when their party nearly suffered annihilation. But I don’t think they will get back to power. We are not generally Socialist in New Zealand but are being educated up to it, & although the Seddon government has not done much the prevailing sentiment is that it is much to be preferred to the return of the Conservatives to office.

It was very kind of W^m Carpenter to so endeavour to assist you to a holiday and so unkind of the fates to prevent it! I wish I had sent a pound or two at that time.

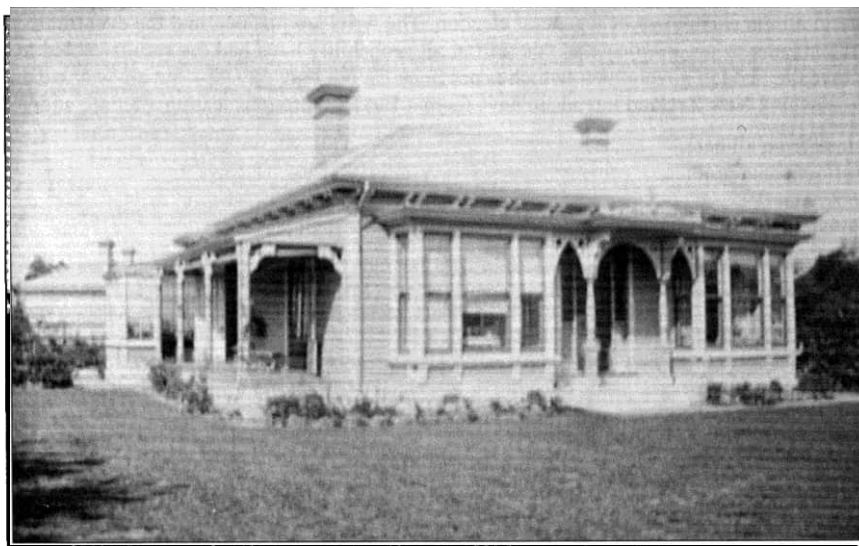
With best love from all here to yourself and Mary Ann, Dear Tom

Your affectionate brother Henry Hookham

Please mention my change of address if opportunity occurs to Mary Ann, William (Geo. Blandford), William Carpenter, and John Hookham

1. Henry and Marianne had lived at Jacksons Road, Fendalton since 1882, when he retired as Head Teacher at Yaldhurst School, where his daughter, Jane, had also taught.
2. The Canterbury Chess Club was formed by disgruntled members of the Christchurch Club after the Championship of 1879, won by Henry. By the end of the year the Christchurch Club, founded in 1866, had ceased to exist.
3. Probably John Morrisson Davidson, born 1843, a Barrister living in South London, who published a number of works between 1880 and 1910.
4. ‘Scrumptious Girl’. A story by Robert Blatchford, printed as one of the Clarion Penny Stories in 1896. It was extracted from Blatchford’s novel ‘Tommy Atkins of the Ramchunders’.

33. The Onslow Street House, 1896



22 November 1896 Henry to Thomas Onslow Street, St Albans, Christchurch

My Dear Brother,

I duly received your kind letter of Sep^r 20, and also the books, which you have been so good as to collect and forward by post. I am very much obliged for the trouble you have taken for me in [the] matter. Pray do not search further for the “Glasgow Commonweal”¹ as I do not particularly require it, neither for Mr. Owen’s book, which can be left over for the present as I should not care to spend much for it. I was only thinking to acquire a specimen of the “New Moral World” as a curiosity. I think that I ought to pay full price, - I really have no claim whatever to be considered one of the trade after having been out of it about 32 years!

– If my balance in your hands will permit of it I should feel much obliged if you would post to me at my new address as above the six following vols of works issued in the Bellamy Library series at 1/- each viz:-

No. 27	Ten Men of Money Island.	By Norton ²	1/-
23-24	What is Property.	By Proudhon ³	2v each 1/-
17	The Anatomy of Misery	by Kenworthy ⁴	1/-
14	Rent Interest and Wages,	by Flurschein ⁵	1/-
13	Karl Marx's Theory of Value. ⁶		1/-
Published by Wm. Reeves, 185 Fleet Street			

I forgot to also return thanks for the "Clarion" for which you paid a Year's Subⁿ for me, and which comes to hand by each mail quite regularly. We are all very much in love with it, and it was very kind of you to send me that and the "Times Echo" so regularly for so long a period. I looked forward to the coming of both of them, and if you continue to take in the last named I shall still be very glad to get the reversionary interest of it, if you can spare it.

You, of course, guess from my change of address that I have succeeded in selling my pretty place at Fendalton. I got my price last-named, £450 for it. £475 was got for it, but the £25 went to the agents. The buyer, a Mrs. Beveridge, would have done better to have come to me direct. I was [near?] sorry when I heard that it was actually sold, and Marianne was too, a little so, I think, although she had been strenuously urging me to part with it for at least twelve months previously.

We have bought a quarter acre in this same street and our temporary house is just opposite to our quarter section – so that if we build – and already tenders are invited – we shall be in a position to see the works in progress. We have taken this house for 13/- a week for 16 weeks, by which time the other will, we hope, be ready. We are here much more conveniently situated than at Fendalton, being only half the distance from the centre of the town, so that we can walk in in about a quarter of an hour, or as the tram passes to and fro in the next road, we can ride if preferred, and the fare is a penny halfpenny –taking a shilling's worth of tickets at a time. Ada, particularly, is much advantaged by the change.

Our moving was an awful piece of business. We had accumulated so many things in the more than 14 years we had been living at Fendalton that it was a most difficult matter to get them all away. Indeed we did not try it altogether, as we thought it more advisable to burn lots of rubbish, but still there remained so much that it took three journeys of a very big covered van (3 horses) and all day from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. to effect the object. And the distance between the old and new houses was only a mile! Marianne and Annie, Henry and myself, the owner of the van and another man were all engaged continuously with the exception only of half an hour for refreshments at dinner time.

I am very glad the two pounds came opportunely, and hope that you will get the £4 I sent last month safely. The mail was due in London on or about Dec^r 20, I think. I regret, however, that your trade done had not been of late satisfactory. I hope however, that things will have been and continue better ere this reaches you, and, above everything, that you will have good health, without which I know your prospects must be sad indeed, as business must fall away.

We are in all the excitement of a general election. The writs are just out, and the eventful day is fixed for Dec^r 4 – But I shall waste time if I attempt to prognosticate as you will in all probability have had the results cabled to you long before this letter arrives. We don't love the Seddon government, which is not Socialist but only radical – but anyway we don't want the Conservatives back again, nor do we think New Zealand intends to have them – But I am prognosticating after all, and you know! How silly of me.

With love from all here,
Your affectionate brother,
H^y Hookham

I am intending to find time to write to Mary Ann before the mail leaves.

1. The 'Glasgow Commonweal' commenced in 1896, but soon became simply 'The Commonweal'. An anarchist journal, it ceased in 1900.
2. 'Ten Men of Money Island' by Seymour Francis Norton, first published in Chicago in 1891.
3. 'What is Property', translated from the 1840 French publication of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65), a socialist and political activist. First published in London in 1876.
4. 'The Anatomy of Misery – Plain Lectures on Economics' 1893, by John Coleman Kenworthy.
5. 'Rent, Interest and Wages' 1895. Michael Flurschein (1844-1912) was a wealthy German industrialist who sold his business and devoted his time to monetary reform.
6. 'Karl Marx's Theory of Value', from 'Das Kapital' vol. 1. Karl Marx, born in Germany, settled in London in 1848.

13 April 1897

Henry to Thomas Onslow St. St Albans, Christchurch

[Rec^d May 20]

My Dear Brother,

I am taking advantage of the mail which leaves here tomorrow and is due in London on May 10, just to send you a few lines. I think I acknowledged the receipt of yours of Dec^r 23 when I wrote to you on Feb^y 17 but I then forgot to enclose a letter I received in January from one who bears our name living in Sydney, N. S. Wales. I replied to him to the effect that I could not say from my own knowledge whether or not we were related, but in any case should be happy to make his acquaintance and asked him to give me a call if he should at any time visit Christchurch.

Ada has duly received your letter to her which arrived about a week ago. She bids me thank you for it, and says that she intends to reply to it after a bit.

Would you kindly send me per post the following:-

Bellamy Library No. 20 "Laws of Eternal Life" by Headlam 1/- Reeves, Fleet St.¹

"Value" by Armsden 2/6 Reeves, Do²

2 copies of "Constitutional Socialism" by C. Hart 3^d Reeves, Fleet St.³

"Facts for Socialists" a tract published by the Fabian Society.⁴

Very many thanks for the "Weekly Times & Echo" which continues to arrive with great regularity and with which I am very pleased indeed. Also thanks for informing "Clarion" of my change of address.

We are now in our new house. We moved into it on March 22. As our temporary abode was near to the new one the work of transport of goods was more easily effected and the cost much less than the previous move. But the getting to rights in the new place has taken a very long time. It is now just three weeks since we moved in and we are not quite settled yet. We should, however, have completed arrangements sooner but that we lost Annie's services for about ten days. This arose from the sittings of the Women's Convention⁵, which commenced in Christchurch on March 24 and did not terminate until April 3, and Annie being a delegate to it from the Fabian Societies of Christchurch and Dunedin had to be in constant attendance. Marian (sic) and I also frequently went to listen to the debates, which were well worth hearing. There were 17 delegates and the meetings were held in the Christchurch Provincial Council Chamber, a lofty handsome chamber, where formerly before the abolition of the provinces, our provincial legislators used to meet for the dispatch of parliamentary business.

Ben Tillett⁶ is in Christchurch. He has come to N. Z. for the benefit of his health. From what I can learn he suffers from some affection of the heart. Although he has been enjoined to take rest he has yet addressed large meetings in Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland in which places he has been received with enthusiasm - We (including Jane, who was on a visit here) were all present at the "Social" given here in his honour in our Opera House, the largest building of the theatre kind we have. Tillett spoke for about half an hour, and very well. He is staying at the residence of a Mr Atkinson⁷ who is the leading man of the organisation we have here called the "Socialist Church". We are all members of the Socialist Church but (except Ada) strongly object to the word church, and are trying to get our organisation rechristened - we want it called the "Socialist League" - But the religion of the Socialist Church is not very objectionable, as it has not a single dogma attached to it.

Atkinson is a capital fellow, and can speak pretty well, having received a fair education. He is a nephew of Sir Harry Atkinson, who died about seven years back. Sir Harry was quite a Conservative and held office as our Premier for several years. Mr. Atkinson has promised to bring Ben Tillett to see us on Thursday next April 15. He will spend the evening with us, and we shall have a musical one as he sings comic songs, we are told. Ada is to preside at the piano, which was tuned yesterday. So everything is in order for the occasion!

During February, while the house was building, Annie took a month's holiday and started off for the North Island. She stayed most of the time with Charlotte at Feilding. During her absence we had Jane with us all the time.

I am sorry that you have still to do so much hard work to get a living. I sometimes wish you were out here, although it is not very easy to get along in this country either. Employment is not by any means plentiful in any line of business. But the climate is a grand one, and to some small extent compensates.

I shall have the pleasure of remitting £2 for yourself by next San Francisco Mail which will reach London about the middle of June, and I will add 5/- for the publications I am now asking you to post to me.

So good bye for the present. With love to you both from

Your affectionate brother,

H^y Hookham

1. Rev. Stewart Duckworth Headlam,(1847-1924), was a curate at several London churches between 1870 -1884 and author of works of a Christian Socialist outlook.
2. 'Value: a criticism' by John Armsden 1892.
3. 'Constitutional Socialism without confiscation or revolution' by C. Hart 2nd edition 1894.
4. 'Facts for Socialists from the political economists and statisticians', first published by the Fabian Society in 1887. The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells to further research into socialism and influence politics.
5. The world's first 'Women's Rights Convention' had been held in the town of Seneca Falls, New York, as long ago as 1848, becoming a worldwide movement focussing mainly on suffrage. This present Convention was presumably a meeting of the New Zealand National Council of Women, whose first meeting, also attended by Annie, was held in Christchurch in 1896.
6. Benjamin Tillett (1860-1943) founded the Dockers' Union in 1887 and was also a founder of the Labour Party. MP 1917-24 and 1929-31.
7. Harry Albert Atkinson (1867-1956) Born in New Zealand, he married in England and returned to New Zealand in 1893 where, in 1896, he founded a Socialist Church based on an English model.



34. Delegates to the First Meeting of the New Zealand Council for Women 1896
Annie Emma Hookham is first left, back row, in front of the right side of the archway.

9 May 1897 – noon Sunday Henry to Thomas Onslow Street Christchurch
(received 17 June 1897)

The death of Henry's daughter Jane, and the agony of a friend smitten with cancer.

My dear Brother,

In accordance with my promise contained in my last letter to you I herewith enclose a Post Office Order for Two Pounds, which please kindly accept, and five shillings for the books I then asked you to send me.

It is with a heavy heart I am writing now, for the greatest blow is falling on our family that we have suffered since we came to this country. We are expecting to hear daily of the death of our dear Jane (Mrs. Akers). Yesterday morning I had just returned from home after taking out the P. O. Order, and about a quarter past 12 was digging in the garden, when a telegraph arrived from Mr. Akers. It was given to me by the telegraph boy. I could not read it, the sunlight being strong and my sight bad, so I asked the boy to read it. It ran "Jenny taken suddenly ill last night, ulcer has perforated stomach, the worst feared". After telling Annie and Ada we had to break the sad news to Marianne, whose grief was so great that it was piteous to witness. We wired back to Mr. Akers for further particulars, and to know if some one or more should take steamer same evening. The reply was "another doctor consulted – much worse – come".

Marianne wished to go and began packing up some things in a carpet bag, but it was evident she was quite unequal to the task, and had reluctantly to give up the idea. One hundred and seventy miles by sea and more than one hundred by railway would have been too much for her and she would have broken down. We arranged after much discussion that Ada should go accompanied by Miss Dearden, a particular friend of Jane's and they started by last night's steamer from Lyttleton for Wellington at 9.15 p.m. The average passage of the steamer they went in is 15 hours to Wellington. Arriving there about noon today, they must wait until tomorrow morning before leaving by train from Wellington for Palmerston North, which latter place they will arrive at in the middle of the day.

I and Annie are taking care of Marianne who is keeping her bed today. We are all three awaiting further tidings with fear and trembling – a third telegram yesterday said "no hope of recovery – come". At this moment we are in a state of dreadful suspense, hoping against hope. As the mail does not leave until Wednesday next, the 12th, I shall keep this letter open to send you the latest news. As Marianne is quieter today I may venture, perhaps, to leave her, if I can get Henry to take charge of her in my place, but I hesitate to do so as Henry could not, I fear, altogether leave his business for several days, and I could not get back for four or five days. Then again I fear there will be no steamboat leaving before Thursday evening, and the worst news may come before that.

It is such a sudden blow, for we had not previously heard that she was even ill. She has always been delicate and has suffered much in various ways, but we none of us had any suspicion as to an ulcer. But with the fact now before us we can account for certain symptoms which showed themselves from time to time, such as sickness, pains and great delicacy of, and want of, appetite. She has always been so bright, clever and good that all who knew her were charmed. It is indeed a great affliction. There is but one mitigating circumstance connected with the disease, namely that its fatal course is almost painless. Alas, poor Jane, poor Jane.

Marianne had been miserable before this sad news came. I have I think mentioned to you in one of my recent letters that one of our oldest friends made in this country – Mrs. Travis – whom we have known for 32 years, was lying hopelessly ill of cancer. One breast

was entirely cut away by the doctors, but a year or so later the disease again appeared. This time it worked its way up the face and took possession of the right eye. The Doctors then took out the eye! Within a few months of undergoing this operation the fiend again commenced its ravages. It seized her arm and before long rendered it completely useless. When this had been accomplished the Doctors said her arm must be taken off if her life was to be prolonged and even then it would only be prolonged for a little time. But Mr. Travis would not allow her to be more tortured, and in about a couple of months she died – she died on Friday last and on Saturday the announcement appeared in the papers, and four hours after we read it came the telegram about poor Jane. Of course the two shocks coming so quickly after each other had a violent effect on Marianne. But at the time I am now writing, half past three, she is I am glad to say recovering considerably and becoming somewhat resigned.

I hope you continue to bear up against all the ills you have had to suffer. Your constitution must be a very fine one that you can do as you do at your age. I think you will outlive me – My lungs are not so good as they were, and my eyesight decidedly weaker. I think your one eye is worth both mine! Many thanks for so kindly continuing to send the “Times & Echo” which comes to hand regularly.

I shall not have time to write to others to tell them the bad news. Will you please do so for me with my love to Mary Ann and kindest regards to William Carpenter whom I hope is well; also to “William” and John Hookham when you see them.

Your affectionate brother,
Henry Hookham

Monday May 10

Our worst fears are realised. Our dear Jane passed away yesterday at an early hour in the morning – was gone before [end of sentence missing]

31 August 1897 Henry to Thomas Onslow Street, Christchurch, N. Z.
(received 7 October 1897)

My dear Brother,

I had put aside Sunday last to write to you and sat down in the afternoon to commence my letter, when to my surprise and disgust a friend called at about 3 o'clock and did not leave until 10! As the mail leaves tomorrow I am unable now to write very much.

Many thanks for the Socialist books you forwarded on May 22 and which duly came to hand – also for your long, very kind, and sympathetic letter dated June 20. That extract from Jane's last letter to you – I have read it over several times – it brings back to me sadly how much I have lost. Her last goodbye to me when she left our house, our new house here, to return to her husband after her last visit to us of six weeks duration. Poor child, she was so downcast, laid her head on my shoulder while tears rolled down her face – I then tried to cheer her up, of course thinking it only ordinary grief at parting – but now I cannot help thinking it had somewhat of the presentiment about it on her part – Especially when we since recall how she tried to find a home with us for her dear little doggie “Midget”, which Ada brought back with her after the funeral – But I must not dwell further on this painful subject.

I was very grieved to read of the attacks from which you have suffered & which the doctors have pronounced to be “slight paralytic strokes”¹. I feel very grateful to all who so kindly and promptly gave you assistance, and most particularly to our good friend William Carpenter. I am very glad indeed to read that after taking the medicines prescribed you are, after a time, sufficiently recovered to resume your usual occupation.

I notice that your attacks happened in April and am a little surprised that Mary Ann did not send me a line of information about them. They are, of course, serious indications of the impaired working of the system, but yet I hope and trust by no means so serious as to forebode immediate disaster, as you fear. Cases are frequent in which after a severe stroke the person attacked has enjoyed fairly good health for years. A next-door neighbour of ours is one instance. He is about my age, and experienced a sharp paralytic stroke some time back, - I cannot say exactly how long ago, but I believe several years. Yet he is apparently in good health, rises early and does certain domestic work, then goes to office (government employment) at 9 a.m. and returns home at 5. 30 p.m. He has to a small extent an ambling gait but otherwise appears in no way the worse - Some similar cases are within our knowledge. So I am in confident hope that you may not experience another attack.

As in my tumour or cancer case,² when a re-growth was to be expected as probable none has taken place up to the present date, 2 years and 9 months after the operation, - so I think that there is equal probability that you may not experience another attack, perhaps at all, at all events for years to come. But I think the event should be a warning to you to pay the greatest care as to diet &c, carefully avoiding anything likely to lower the tone of the system.

[the final page of the letter is missing, but the following book list is appended]

Please send me the undermentioned by book post: -

The Fallacy of Marx's Theory of Surplus Value, by H^y. Seymour³
Murdoch 26 Paternoster Square Paper 1/-

The Real History of Money Island, by Michael Flürscheim⁴
Brotherhood Press, 28 Clerkenwell Road, London E.C. 1896
Paper covers, price 1/- or 1/6

The Economics of Socialism, by H.M.Hyndman⁵
20th Cent^y Press Lim^d, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London E.C.
? price, paper covers will do.

Commercial Crises of the 19th Cent^y, by Hyndman⁶
Swan, Sonnenschein 70, Paternoster Row. ? price, paper covers will do.

I enclose P.O.O. for £2. 10, £2 for yourself & 10/- for the books & postage.

1. 'slight paralytic strokes' – a more graphic term than the modern parlance, 'transient cerebral ischaemic attacks', abbreviated to 'TIA'.
2. See Henry's letter of 1 September 1895.
3. Henry Seymour, an anarchist, publishing in 1897.
4. 'The Real History of Money Island', first published 1897. Flürscheim (see note 5, p.130) visited New Zealand in 1898 and later went to the USA and Mexico.
5. 'The Economics of Socialism – 7 lectures on political economy' published 1896. Henry Mayers Hyndman (1842-1921) formed the Social Democratic Federation in 1881 and the National Socialist Party in 1916.
6. 'Commercial Crises of the 19th Century', published 1892.

15 February 1898 Henry to Thomas Onslow Street, Christchurch, N.Z.

Thomas has fallen victim to London's increasing traffic, and Annie perhaps to her bicycle.

My dear Brother,

We are all deeply grieved to hear of the sad accident which happened to you early in December last, full particulars of which have come in a letter from Mary Ann written just before, and concluded on, December 31 last¹.

The accident is most unfortunate – you have been struggling for years with difficulties of various kinds, and have met them courageously – But this is a cruel and very serious blow at your age. In your letter to me of Nov^r 14 it is noticeable that you appeared to anticipate this sort of misfortune, for you dilate on your defective eyesight and the danger to which you were exposed in consequence when coping with badly lighted streets at evening time. That letter, by the way, I replied to on January 19, when I had the pleasure of enclosing £3 per P. O. order, being the amount which you had asked W. Carpenter to advance. I hope you will have got it safely, and also the amount of £4. 10. 0 (10/- from Ada) which should reach you ab^t Dec 27/97. No doubt you have received both and, of course, the accident has prevented you from acknowledging the receipt of the Dec^r amount as you were in the hospital and could not write. Mary Ann tells me as latest news that you thought yourself progressing favourably and hoped that you would be released from hospital before very long. I hope and trust it may be so, and that by the time this reaches you, things may have improved.

Please receive P. O. Order for £3, which I enclose herewith. I know that you must and will be wanting money and I therefore forward some at once, instead of delaying the remittance to May, as I had said in my last letter. I hope to be able to send £2 or £3 in April reaching London in May. I have written in answer to Mary Ann also by this mail. I am glad her letter came when it did – last Saturday Feb 12 – as there was just time for me to reply by this mail which leaves tomorrow the 17th.

We have had some illness ourselves, Annie having been laid up for 12 weeks with broken tendons below the ankle of her left foot. The doctor has now left off paying visits, but she is only slowly improving, and is not able to walk very far at a time, not more than a quarter of a mile or so. I have also had a little bout of illness, but am pretty well again now. It was not serious enough to have in a doctor; but I find myself getting weaker. I suppose the experts would call it "senile decay" – that's the matter!

I must conclude for the present, with love from us all, and hoping for the best.

Your affect^e Brother

H. Hookham

1. It appears, from subsequent letters, that Thomas had been knocked down by a vehicle, severely damaging his writing arm.

March 1898 Henry to Thomas

The address and date are not given, but Henry's reference in the second paragraph to 'Thursday last March 10th', fits with 1898, three months after Tom's accident.

My Dear Tom,

I am writing this at a lodging house at Lyttleton & not at the above address, but I head with my usual for fear you may in haste suppose I have gone away from my own place permanently. Marianne and self are only in Lyttleton for a week. As you may perhaps know it is the seaport of Canterbury – It is 8 miles distant from Christchurch, and we are on a visit of a week for a change, both of us being a trifle out of sorts. You must excuse my queer writing but my pen – the lodging house pen – is very broad knibbed (sic) and the ink thick.

I duly received your letter, written by your friend in the next bed. I had hoped from the tenor of Mary Ann's letter, dated the last day of December, that when you wrote it would be in your own handwriting, and was therefore disappointed, as I fear you are not progressing so favourably as had been anticipated – and as late as Thursday last March 10, I received a "W^y. Times & Echo" directed still in the handwriting of your friend, as were also the two numbers of the same which arrived with your letter. This seems to prove that you were at the [the next three lines are half obliterated] ... still in hospital ... fear this means ... [con?]fined longer than you [expected]... I will hope however that it may be otherwise, and that proper care for your complete restoration is the cause of the delay – and that before this reaches you you have been released as sufficiently convalescent to be discharged. For it must be wearying in the extreme to be so long confined in such a place.

I was most gratified to hear that W^m. Carpenter had been to see you twice and had so kindly promised to assist you in the money way when you came out of hospital. I was not very much surprised for I had an idea that his odd letter¹ was written in a fit of irritation

which would subside after a time – By the way I think it would be well for you to tell him some day my financial position. I don't think I can take any notice myself of his letter, but I have no objection whatever to your telling him what you please about me. In fact it would be better, probably, for you that my exact position & what I have done and am doing (little though it be) to assist you (sic). You can say what amount in all I sent last year. I think if my memory serves me correctly it was about £9 – and also what I have sent this year – This to show him that I have done what I could, and that my means are not as considerable as he perhaps thinks them.

I cannot send more money this time but next month I hope to dispatch a pound or two. Of course it is obvious that you should have something more to rely upon than aid such as W^m. Carpenter and I can supply – And the serious question is how it is to be got for you. I suppose some charitable aid such as was got for Mother might possibly be secured for you if sought for by persons of influence in the proper way² – Could not some thing of this kind be done by the joint action of the Brookes and Carpenters? I have been thinking of writing myself to George Brooke³ on the subject, but on second thoughts delay until I hear your wishes in the matter. So please when you next write let me know.

Many thanks for the newspapers. They are always welcome.

You will be sorry to learn that Annie is still a cripple – She is I suppose getting right again, but very slowly. She cannot walk more than a quarter of a mile at one time in any one day yet, without feeling the worse for it. But she is able to bicycle a little, and can work in and around the house much as usual. Ada is very well, and also Charlotte who has just returned to the North having been on a visit with us for a month.

Hoping to hear from by next mail and that you will be able to give a better account of your progress

I remain, Dear Tom,

Your affectionate brother, Henry Hookham

Don't trouble about sending the books for myself and Ada to which you refer in your letter. We shall be able to get along without them for a time. Particular love to Mary Ann. I hope she is better. Marianne desires me to add her love and sympathy to you in your troubles.

1. This letter has not come to light, but the implication is that William Carpenter is resentful of demands on him for help. That such help was within his power is reflected in the value of his estate at his death in 1899, £12,761-3-1, compared with that of Thomas, £44 -11-6.
2. This suggests that the attempts to gain an Annuity from the National Benevolent Institution for Henry's mother, referred to in Rosa's letter of 22 September 1875, had been successful.
3. George Brooke (1840-1906) was a cousin of Thomas and Henry, their mothers being sisters. He was a barrister employed at the Inland Revenue Solicitor's Office.

11 April 1898

Henry to Thomas Onslow Street

Henry, so soon after the death of his daughter, Jane, writes with sadness and great affection about the death of her husband, Harry Akers.

My dear Brother,

I duly received your letter written by your kind neighbour, dated January 20, and replied to it by last mail due in London on April 23. I now have the pleasure again to write and to enclose herewith a P.O.O. for £2. I had hoped that a San Francisco mail now due would have come in before the one which leaves here on Wednesday next, the 13th inst. But it cannot now, as it is not yet reported from Auckland as in sight, and when it is in at Auckland it takes two days to get the mails on to Canterbury. So I cannot yet learn more as to your health and progress.

However, Mary Ann was so kind as to write to me on Feb 18 a letter which came to hand at the end of March. She reports that you were up and permitted to walk about, and that some of the bandages had been unwrapped, but that those above the elbow still remained. Further that you were apparently much disappointed that some time must elapse before you would be discharged as cured. I fully sympathise with you in all the trials you have undergone. At the time Mary Ann was writing you had been a prisoner for more than two months and release was even then not in view! I am glad to learn that you have not been without visitors during your sojourn in hospital – which must to some little extent have relieved the monotony.

You will see from the announcement in the newspaper I today post to you that we too have been in trouble, have lost Mr. Akers, Jane's husband. Like the news of Jane's illness, it came suddenly upon us. Marianne had a letter from him only three days before his death, in which he says he is well and hoped soon to pay us the long deferred visit. He was to have come down with Charlotte (Mrs. Amesbury) at Christmas but was unable, and has since from week to week been writing and telegraphing about coming. Pressure of business was, he said, the cause of delay; but I am now inclined to think that his health may have had some thing to do with it. He has never been very strong; his chest has worried him and since poor Jane's death he has not been looked after. From what Charlotte tells us he never recovered from her loss. The proximate cause of the sad event was pleurisy; but he has, it seems, for some time suffered from Bright's disease.¹

We are all deeply grieved, for we esteemed him highly, not only on account of his deep affection for Jane, but for his many amiable qualities. He is much regretted by people at Palmerston North, where his gentleness and generosity made him a great favourite. I have written to Mary Ann, also by this post, and in her letter have given some few additional details regarding poor Akers' death. It took place on April 9, exactly 11 months after his wife's, which occurred on May 9 last year.

The rest of us are at present pretty well in health, although, of course, sadly distressed at this melancholy event. Marianne was very much affected at first by the news, but after a few hours calmed down, and has now recovered, to a considerable extent, her usual tone. I think I have in former letters alluded to Annie's broken tendons. The breaking took place some eight months back, but she has not yet got back the proper use of her foot, as she can only walk to the extent of half a mile at a stretch. She complains also of pains

in the muscles, and tendons occasionally. In addition to the two great losses, we have, during the past few months lost by death no less than four old New Zealand friends – three of them from cancer! which disease has increased alarmingly in this country of late years.

All here write with me in love and best wishes.

I remain, Dear Tom,
Your Affectionate Brother,
Henry Hookham

Many thanks for kindly continuing to send me the “Weekly Times & Echo” several n^{os} of which have come both immediately before and since your illness. H. H.

1. Richard Bright (1789-1858) graduated at Edinburgh and became a physician at Guy’s hospital, London. He was the first to describe the clinical features of glomerulo-nephritis, the inflammation of the kidney that became known as Bright’s Disease.

11 May 1898

Henry to Thomas

Onslow St. Christchurch

Henry is concerned that Thomas may not be receiving his letters, Marianne hears of the death of her sister, Emma Denniss, and William Carpenter seems more aggrieved.

I send this per Mary Ann in case you may have left Marchmont St.

My Dear Brother,

The last letter received from you was dated January 20th 1898, and was in the handwriting of your friend and neighbour in the hospital. This came to hand on Feb^y 25. I wrote to you a letter containing a P. O. Order for £3, and posted it here on January 19. It was due in London on Feb^y 23 – Did you get it? And have you had the money? I am seriously anxious about the matter, because two San Francisco Mails have come in, which left London on subsequent dates to Feb^y 23 and neither has brought any communication from you although both have brought Weekly Times and Echos for which I kindly thank you.

Again on Feb^y 17 I wrote and enclosed to you a P. O. Order for £3 which you should have got by March 23. I have just received a letter from William Carpenter dated March 14, and newspapers kindly sent by yourself and George Blandford of dates March 13 and 20, and Clarions of March 19 & 26, all by the ‘Frisco mail arriving here on Friday May 6. But no letter comes from you acknowledging the receipt of the £3 sent by me on Jan^y 19 in letter which should have been delivered at 20 Marchmont St. on or about Feb^y 23. Has the P. O. Order been appropriated and cashed by yourself or by somebody else - Wm. Carpenter tells me that you were still in hospital at the time he was writing, March 14. Perhaps my letter had not been sent on to you from Marchmont St?¹

As to the £3 I sent on Feb^y 17 due in London on March 23 I am not anxious about that not having been acknowledged, because the mail which has just arrived here on May 6 probably left London only a few days after March 23. That is I am not alarmed on the supposition that the first £3 has safely come into your possession. But if otherwise the second £3 may have likewise gone astray.

I hope all will be explained when next mail arrives. Meanwhile I have given you full particulars in case the moneys have gone astray. I also wrote you in April when I enclosed order for £2. I have little room and time to refer to other matters as the mail closes today. News came to Marianne by this last mail of the death of her sister Mrs. Denniss, after a short illness.²

W. Carpenter’s letter is a long one, much of it about his family affairs, and the extent to which he has suffered from donations to impecunious and in some cases unworthy relatives. Considerable space is taken up in Art matters. A short reference to yourself occurs. He seems aggrieved that you do not make application for relief to some “Bookseller’s fund” (his words) instead of to him. I don’t at all like the tone of his remarks. I think I shall have myself to tell him in self-defence what sums I have sent you.

Hoping that by the time this reaches you you will have recovered your usual health, and will have left the hospital, of which you must be heartily tired.

I remain, my dear brother,
Always yours affectionately,
H. Hookham

1. After the collapse of the Library Thomas had many changes of lodgings, all in the Bloomsbury area. In 1881 he and his wife Elizabeth, née Bide, were in Store Street, but at her death in 1882 had moved to Hart Street (now Bloomsbury Way). At the 1891 Census Thomas was alone at 19 Melton Street, but at the time of this letter lived at 20 Marchmont Street.
2. Marianne Hookham’s widowed sister, Emma Denniss, née Jones, died on 20 March 1898.

6 June 1898

Henry to Thomas Onslow Street Christchurch N. Z.

Henry is concerned for Marianne, whose health is affected by multiple bereavements, but takes a more charitable view of William Carpenter's motives.

My dear Brother,

Your letter bearing dates of March 24 and 31 came to hand on May 13 and I was very glad to get it, as I was getting anxious about you, on account of the delay in acknowledgment of the receipt of the £3 sent in Jan^y from here. Your letter fully explains the cause of the delay, and, under the circumstances, I need not have been so apprehensive. I am glad the money got to you all right. I am now, enclosed in this, sending P. O. Order for £3 by mail (San Francisco) leaving here on Wednesday the 8th, two days hence. The postal authorities do not say when it is due in London, but as it takes about five weeks I suppose it will arrive on July 13 or thereabouts.

The mail per 'Frisco coming to us is due in five or six days, that is two or three days after the one bearing this leaves – A very aggravating arrangement for I am hoping to hear satisfactory news about the operation which you were to undergo on April 1. I am a little nervous and anxious about the result, I confess. Operations of a serious kind when the patient is advanced in years are always risky – and then the administration of ether is also attended with risk for elderly persons. So we are very anxious, and shall feel much relieved when the news comes that the operation is over and that you are going on well. One mail has come in since your letter, and as I did not get a letter by it, I am hopeful that no news means good news, because Mary Ann would certainly have written had the result of the operation been unfavourable.

I am sorry to say that Marianne's health has been anything but what we could wish of late. The case is one of great nervous debility. The difficulty is how to proceed to strengthen her. Our doctor has been to see her twice, but he will not come again unless sent for. He says her condition is simply the result of shocks to the nervous system. Jane's death last year was the first shock she got. Then three or four very old New Zealand friends passed away, and this year we lost Mr. Akers which affected her only less than Jane's loss. Lastly she got the news of her sister's death. We make her stay in bed till 11 o'clock, and give her something to take every two hours or so, but her recovery is very slow. I think, however, that she is a little better now than she was a fortnight back.

Annie's foot is getting gradually stronger. She does not take much walking exercise. The doctor told her she might use her bicycle, which she does very freely, and apparently with no ill consequences. She has to do the work of the house and has no assistance except that a washerwoman comes for half a day once a fortnight. It would be very unfortunate if she were laid up, as Ada is away all day, except Saturday & Sunday, keeping school. Ada is well, and carrying on school at present, but I think she intends to give it up shortly, as the attendance is falling off owing to the difficulty of competing with the Government schools which are free while Ada's is a church school charging fees.¹

The tone of W. Carpenter's letter when referring to you necessitated my explaining to him exactly what and how little I am able to do in a financial way to help you. I could not well avoid telling him what and how little my means would enable me to do, because by what he wrote I could see plainly that he thought I was shirking my duty. I told him that were I able I would at once place you in a position beyond the fear of want; but that being impossible, it only remained for me to do what lay in my power. I also told him that I felt sure you had never the slightest intention to offend him in any shape or form – That you had always expressed to me the keenest sense of gratitude to him.

I doubt very much his being really offended by anything you said or did. I think he affects to be in order to induce me to do my duty towards you, which he thinks I am neglecting to do. A good motive on his part if my surmise is right. Anyway he has been a kind friend in the past and merits our gratitude.

With best love and best wishes from all here, Dear Brother,

Yours affectionately,

H. Hookham

Please don't trouble about sending me any of the books I wrote for. I can do without them well.

Mrs. Denniss left all her property and effects to her brother. I am not at all surprised – It only confirms the opinion I have all along entertained of the brother. He tells Marianne he will leave it to her and her children by will – I doubt it!²

1. Mention has been made in Part 1, chapter 1, about the achievements of Marian Ada as Headmistress of St. Michael's Church School, Christchurch.
2. Emma Denniss's estate was recorded as £2,667 – 10 – 0, her brother Henry Hammond Jones being her executor. It is evident from Thomas's letter of 13 October 1878 (Section 3) that he and Henry had mistrusted Marianne's brother since the death of his and Marianne's aunt, Ann Miriam Besser.



35. Marian Ada, Headmistress, St. Michael's School



36. Annie with her mother and her bicycle

2 August 1898

Henry to Thomas Onslow St. Christchurch N. Z.

Henry is warned of weakness of his heart

My dear Brother,

On the 25th ult. I was very glad to receive a letter from Mary Ann, because it contained the very good news that your arm was at length getting into proper order and that you might expect from the hospital authorities your dismissal in about ten days. That time must long ago have elapsed and no doubt you are now at liberty. And how glad you must be after so long confinement! I expect only one who knows what imprisonment is can fully appreciate liberty! What I fear is that you will find difficulty in following your avocation, and in securing sufficient income.

Mary Ann says she writes to me for you, and that you say I am not to remit more money – But I hope you will reconsider this and will kindly permit me to do what little I am able. I sent £3 on June 7, which I hope you have safely received. And I now enclose herewith a further sum of £3, which please kindly accept. I hope to be able to send more money in October early in the month; and, of course, a remittance as usual to reach you by Christmas. I am sure you have borne your long incarceration with great fortitude and at your age deserve an old age pension if any one ever did. I wish it could be ensured to you.

Marianne had to call in medical aid some two months ago. She was suffering from nervous debility. The doctor only paid three visits and said we were to send for him if we wanted him again. With careful attention to diet &c. Marianne improved very much and became almost herself again, but unfortunately I fell ill. The doctor said my case was one of weak heart. He has visited me four times, and has done me good, and has now left me to get on as best I can. I am told not to over exert myself, to keep as much as possible in a temperature of from 55° to 60°, and to avoid climbing up any stairs. This latter injunction is very inconvenient, as I have had to get the “Times” people to let me send for my Chess proofs, &c. &c., instead of going for them myself, as the latter involved getting up about 50 or 60 steps.

The Doctor also forbids my going out after dark until winter is over – So that I cannot go to the Chess Club at present. But the worst of all is that this being our mid-winter the nights are so cold that I am ordered a fire in my bedroom, and this fire has to be attended to three or four times in the night. This unfortunately falls on Marianne to attend to; and as a consequence she is not so well as she was. The winter will not last more than two or three weeks longer, and then we shall knock [sic] off the fires, and I hope be both better.

I have had several nice letters from Mary Ann of late, and have replied to all of them except this last, which is written for you, and to you therefore I reply. But give my very kind love to her and say my next shall be to her. Meantime in reply to her question I may say that George Brooke has not sent ..

[the last half-page of this letter is missing]

25 September 1898 Henry to Thomas Onslow Street Christchurch N. Z.

The affair of the Russian bonds: after the death of Marianne’s brother, William Henry Hammond Jones two months earlier, his alleged machinations against her are set out.

My dear Brother,

Yours of Aug^t 4th came to hand on Sep^r 10, supplementing your previous letter bearing date July 20, which reached me on Sep^r 2. Both letters are deeply interesting – you thank me too much for what, in the money way, I have done and am doing – It is but little – I wish it could be more.

About the date of your last letter I remitted £3 more, of which you should be in receipt about the middle of the present month (Sept^r). I now enclose P. O. Order for £2, the half of which is from myself, and the other half jointly from myself and Marianne. Early in November I intend sending you £4 which will also be jointly from Marianne and myself.

How we are able to send this sum of £1 and £4 jointly I will explain. When poor Jane died she left in my hands a little sum of money. I told Mr. Akers about this money, asking if I should remit it to him – he replied that I owed him nothing and he positively refused to take it. I wrote back that I should certainly pay it over to him when he came to see us, which he had promised to do in a short time. But he never paid us the promised visit. He kept making excuses for delay – in fact I think he feared to add to his grief by seeing us again and so made up his mind not to come. He never got over the loss of poor Jane; was continuously ill; said on one occasion when remonstrated with for not taking more care of his health, that he did not care to live, and died just eleven months after the one he loved so well. If anyone ever died of a broken heart Akers did.

Well, the explanation of his refusal to take the money was simply this, that Jane’s little capital had gone to assist in the business, a hotel, which he entered in at the time of their marriage. The venture was unfortunate and he lost all he had at that time, including £70 of Jane’s money. It was on this latter account he would [sic –presumably ‘would not’] accept from me the sum alluded to. He left no will; consequently his brothers came into possession of his personal effects. They said he left nothing in money and did not administer. The sum in my hands belonging to Jane in any case comes legally to Marianne and me, in equal shares. Now in sending you £5 out of this little fund we think we are doing what Jane would wish. And I am not able from my own resources to send more this year than I have sent, so that this comes in nicely in aid of the usual Christmas Box.

I am very glad to hear that your old friend William Carpenter has kindly come forward once again. But the surprise is to hear of the £5 presented by the late Mr. Jones – for perhaps you have not learnt that he is no more. He died on the 27th of July – His sister, Mrs. Denniss, died on the 20th of March, so he did not live long enough to enjoy the property he got her to make over to him by will, half of which property was intended by Mrs. Denniss herself to come to Marianne and would of course have come to her if she had made a will to that effect, or if she had outlived him. He wrote immediately after her death, acknowledging that half of his sister’s property

(perhaps totalling two or three thousand pounds) should by her express wish come to Marianne, and said that by his will it should still come to her. But he revoked this will by another made a few days before his death. By this last will Marianne gets not a penny – but he leaves £500 to be divided between our children and grandchildren, at the rate of £50 each.

To show that he acted with malicious intent towards Marianne he within a month before his death returned all the photographs of the family together with a lot of Marianne's and others letters, and wrote himself what he intended to be a final letter to Marianne full of the most abusive language – at least Marianne supposes it was all like the first half, & after having read as far as half she put the precious document in the fire, and wrote a line saying she had done so, because the time might come when he would be glad to know she had not read more of his vile abuse than the half. This letter of Marianne's I sent to sent to [sic] Mary Ann to post in London, thinking that he would not read anything coming direct from New Zealand. But he died before the letter reached England.

Now the only real ground, positively the only ground for all this malevolence was an act which Marianne did, or rather an act of mine on her behalf so long ago as four or five years after we came to this country – that is in the year 1869 or 1870. Marianne had received several letters from Emma (then Miss Jones) of a most alarming character to the effect that Mrs. Jones (who was suffering from softening of the brain) was being bullied and ill-treated by her son who was endeavouring to get her to make a will entirely in his favour, and that if something was not done to prevent him he would certainly succeed in his attempt. The letters contained details of Mr. Jones's goings on, his ill usage of his mother, and concluded with imploring Marianne to take some step to check him.

At Marianne's request I enclosed the last of these letters to their Uncle, Mr. Besser, Mrs. Jones's brother, who lived at Trowbridge, Wilts, as you may perhaps remember. I wrote only a line or two saying that the letter enclosed was one of several we had received and asking him to intercede on his sister's behalf, should he find that Miss Jones's allegations were true. Mr. Jones averred subsequently to his uncle's death, which happened three or four years after Miss Jones's letter reached him, that in consequence of this letter his uncle altered his will, leaving a large sum to relatives of Mrs. Besser, which sum would otherwise have come to him. All he got as his uncle's residuary legatee he says was £100.¹ He had an opportunity of reading the obnoxious letter later on but put it in the fire so he said without reading a line of it. He preferred pouring out the vials of his wrath on his other sister and on me!

He subsequently accused us of managing to appropriate £700 worth of Russian Bonds² which he could not trace after his mother's death,³ when her property was administered. After Mrs. Denniss's death he found proofs (so he wrote to Marianne) that Mr. and Mrs. Denniss had managed to get Mrs. Jones to make her mark on the transfer of stock from herself to Mr. Denniss – she being then too ill, and mentally incapable to write her name. Consequently Mr. Jones became fully aware in March last that we had not had anything to do with the loss of the £700, – yet he makes no apology for the false accusation made against us twenty seven or twenty eight years ago! But on the strength of that accusation and perhaps of Emma's letter, he bullied Emma into making her will entirely in his favour, when he admittedly knew she wished to leave her sister the half of her belongings (Mr. D. having died she had no nearer relatives than the brother and sister). I have no room for more this time on this subject – more in a future letter.

Marianne and I have been ill for some three months, but both of us are better now – still not quite ourselves as before. Old age, of course. Marianne's complaint is nervous debility; mine a weak heart. By the doctor's orders we have breakfast in bed, & a fire in the bedroom when the temperature is below 55°. This entails extra work on Annie. I am hoping to be able to get up as usual soon.

We all deeply sympathise with you, and I am specially desired by Marianne, Ada & Annie to tell you so with their best love. I will write to George Brooke on the subject referred to, by this or an early mail.

My dear Brother Affectionately yours H^y. Hookham

1. Details of Isaac Besser's Will were given in Section 3, letter of 13 October 1878, note 15. Although there were four Codicils to this Will none made any reference to the Jones family nor was there anything in Ann Besser's Will to support William Henry's allegation.
2. Imperial Russia, among other states, raised loans in the City of London by the issue of Bearer Bonds. Interest was paid by the presentation of detachable coupons on pre-arranged dates. Being 'Bearer' the Bonds could be sold or transferred without documentation. Cancelled after the Russian Revolution, these colourful Bonds are now highly collectable.
3. Charlotte Jones, widowed mother of William Henry, Emma and Marianne Jones, died on 17 November 1871, aged 78. She left effects under £2,000.

8 November 1898 Henry to Thomas Onslow Street Christchurch N. Z.

Henry's last letter to Thomas

My dear Brother,

Your letters dated Sep^r 16 and Sept^r 22 were both delivered to me together on Oct^r 31, and therefore, I presume, travelled by the same mail. You acknowledge therein the receipt of the £3 I had forwarded early in August. On Sept^r 24 I posted to you a letter containing a P. O. O. for £2. 0. 0 and explaining that I intended sending £4 to reach you before Christmas day. I have the pleasure now to send on £4 as promised, together with 10/- Ada sends with her love and best wishes. This mail leaves here tomorrow Nov^r 9, and should arrive in London on Dec^r 14.

I read with much regret and apprehension your account of the failure you have experienced to the time of writing in getting back your business connection. I had feared that it would be so. However, I am glad to find you still speaking hopefully as to the recovery of part of your former business – I hope that before this reaches you this may have eventuated and have given you some hope and confidence in the future.

In this connection I may add that I have at present every hope that my income will not suffer any reduction during the coming year. I feared that my Chess Editorship or my Directorship of the "Mutual Building Society" or both of them might be lost owing to my increasing age and impaired health. But the proprietors of the "Canterbury Times" have not hitherto objected to my sending to the

printing office instead of personally attending with my copy and revises – And as regards the Building Society you will be pleased to hear that I have been re-elected director for a further term of three years. The election took place on Oct 31 – last Monday week – I and the Chairman were the retiring directors. Being eligible for re-election we gave the necessary notice of our intention to stand and came in unopposed. So you may rely on it I shall do my best in the way of assistance to you during the coming year. It may be that I shall be able to forward in all as much as during the past year, but not more, and it might possibly be a little less. But in any case you may rely on it I shall do my best, because I know you will need every penny I can forward, as under the circumstances it is not likely that you will be able to earn much if any income for yourself.

If you could find some one or two of the leading booksellers and publishers to take up your case and get you into some philanthropic institution – that is I fancy the best thing that could happen. You would then be faced beyond the fear of being reduced to positive want, and the money I might send would buy comforts &c for you. I wrote as promised to Geo. Brooke much to this effect and asked him to kindly give you advice on how to proceed. This hint to him can do no harm. He and W^m. Carpenter might be able to suggest some way of obtaining the needed aid. I am very anxious to learn that something is being done in the direction indicated – England ought long ago to have established an “Old Age Pension” plan on a liberal scale.¹ Our parliament in N. Z. has just passed under the name, a Bill which is just the merest trifle better than nothing. By it all over 65 years of age, resident 25 years or more in the country, become entitled if they have no income or property, to £18 per annum paid quarterly. It is a miserable abortion of a Bill. The feeling among the Labour party and Socialists here is that the pension should be £1 per week, commence at sixty years after twenty years residence, and be universal, without restriction as to income or property.

I suppose I must not omit to say something as to our health before closing this letter, as we have been compelled latterly to send you bad reports. Marianne I am glad to say has improved considerably. She is much stronger, and more like herself again. But she does not rise in the morning 'till after breakfast, and is not allowed to do much during the day of a kind likely to fatigue her. Of course the manner in which her brother by his will robbed her of the property which her sister had left her, greatly annoyed her, but she has so far surmounted all that feeling and has ceased to fret about his rascally treatment. By the way “it is an ill wind” &c – Had he not resolved to defraud his sister he would not have shown that liberality to you. But, of course, I may be mistaken, and his sympathy may have been genuine – But I doubt it.

I thank you very kindly for your advice and remarks about my complaint. What you say is, I believe, quite true. Weak heart is not diseased heart. It is a case, as you suggest, of the feebleness of old age. I may possibly last a year or two or even more by taking extreme care of myself.² But one is apt to forget the restrictions, and the winter time is very trying. W^m Carpenter finds it so does he not? Ada and Annie are both quite well.

Please do not trouble about the books Ada and Marianne wish me to say, and I do not need those for which I wrote. I may want others presently, and will then let you know.

Very many thanks for the “W^y Times & Echo” which comes regularly to hand. It has now a Chess Column of which I am able to make use occasionally.

With best love from all here,
Dear Brother,
Yours affectionately, Hy. Hookham

Love to Mary Ann to whom I wrote a letter by last mail. But I fear she thought it a very poor affair. We are all very glad to learn that your arm is now well. But I hope you will take great care of it, & keep it so.

1. Not until 1908 was an Old Age Pension enacted in the United Kingdom. It gave a pension to those over 70, resident for at least 20 years and whose yearly means did not exceed £31 – 10 – 0.
2. Henry, ever more concerned for Thomas than himself, died just 16 days later, on 24 November 1898. He was interred in St. Paul's Cemetery, Papanui.

9 December 1898 Thomas to Henry 20 Marchmont Street London W.C.

Unaware of Henry's death, Thomas writes melodramatically of the perceived abuse of the late Emma Denniss, by both her husband and her brother.

My Dear Brother,

Your kind and long letter of Sept. 25, with its very kind enclosure of £2 more, reached me on Nov. 3, while I was in the middle of a long and rambling letter to Ada. Though I took that opportunity to ask her to acknowledge the receipt of all for me, in order that you might know at the earliest and not be troubled about its safety, and that I might have more time to think over and reply, yet I expect it is now becoming too long a delay, and will proceed at once with my answer. In the first place, as you say I thank you too much while I think it is all too little for these benefits, I must bow to your decision and express my heartfelt appreciation in as few words as possible. I accept then this Present in fond memory of your good Daughter Jane ever to be remembered dotingly, and I thank both Marianne and yourself with gratitude for it at the same time and for putting it in that welcome shape. You both knew her generous heart the best.

It has been so very acceptable and useful for my affairs have not yet returned to me as before the accident. Considering all the amounts I have had given to me this year it might be thought I should have done more to re-establish myself. I am shocked and annoyed. The only reason or plea I can find is that for about 2½ months after I left the Hospital I was completely prostrated and could do nothing in the shape of business, and had to pay a Doctor for attention to my arm. The turning point was when I went for one week to Gravesend; my arm then healed up and I acquired stamina and nerve – but that again was a further expence (sic), though I

am again attending once a month at the Paralytic Hospital¹ as last year and am taking quinine twice a day, which they consider is necessary and which is of course gratis.

We have had a splendid and long summer – I hope yours will follow on just like it – it began late, but I don't know when I remember one lasting like it down into November. Now we are paying the piper for it in fogs almost incessant and cold rain during the last 2 or 3 weeks. Last week there was but one clear bright day that I could go out. As a consequence everything waits, and one becomes impecunious, and cannot pay in advance for the books ordered, and there is disappointment to customers and short commons at home as well.

But all this is better than getting knocked down again, and I am rather shaky on the legs and my sight is dizzy in the daytime, and the traffic of London nowadays is such as I think you would hardly conceive with its 5 millions of population, and notwithstanding the tunnels they are boring underneath in three different directions for our eventual partial relief! One is at work from Waterloo Station under the Thames to the Mansion House in 5 minutes by electric rail. I saw a man the other day who had been by it, and whose only complaint was some difficulty of free breathing. I believe it is 70 feet down. But the one [... line missing] Shepherds Bush, with stations along Holborn, Oxford Street, &c, is 80 to 90 feet below us! ²

I sympathise deeply and earnestly with Marianne and yourself concerning the outrageous conduct of her Brother towards both of you. I thank you for stating so clearly the occurrences of many years as to show beyond any possible doubt the wrong that you have suffered. With many of the details I was already quite acquainted, either from yourself or Mrs. Denniss, but certain connecting links I had to be reminded of, and this abominable conclusion of all earthly kinship was of course quite new to me. As to his Present to myself George Brooke may have been in great part the cause – I do not know how much of his own accord he may have pleaded – I should not myself have done anything of the kind. And perhaps Mr. Jones' own pride may have aided in prompting him. However, though it was a small matter to him it was a real boon to me at the time, and I wrote him a hearty letter of thanks apart from any other question whatever and dictated solely by my own feelings. Owing to George Brooke's delay he never received this letter, and in fact was no more before George communicated with me on the subject, as in one of my late letters to you I explained. I knew nothing whatever of his illness, and do not even now know the nature of his complaint. I should add that I have never chanced to see or meet him personally since the old times so many years ago.

I always liked Mrs. Denniss very much, both as Miss Jones and in later years, but I deplored her want of energy and character – she had no power of self assertion to retain and manage what rightly belonged to herself. I never did like Denniss, and felt heartily glad for her sake when he was gone. He was just the bully, particularly over one like his poor Wife, who fell into his grasp with all her property from the sheer weakness of her character and then and ever after received bad treatment from him not excepting blows.

I do not remember whether I told you at the time or afterwards that very soon after she married him she wrote me a letter surreptitiously complaining of his ill treatment and blows, and threw it over the wall and the neighbour posted it. What could I do? That mere act was compromising in itself all round, and yet it meant nothing but her simplicity awakened rudely to the sense of the great mistake she had made and the danger she ran in consequence, and the certain idea that I should help her if it were possible. I may have the letter still perhaps somewhere. He was a brute and had no earthly right to those Russian Bonds if the matter had been contested in court, considering the subterfuge resorted to. ³

I had no idea her property was so large. ⁴ She never gave either to me or Mary Ann that understanding in the course of conversation, but of course you know the facts pretty closely and our idea was wrongly based on mere appearances without due thought. Time flies so fast now that I am surprised to find it must have been about 7 years ago, about 3 years after Denniss' death ⁵ when I last saw her. I went several times down to see her then, and once she favoured me with a visit at my lodging and she and Mary Ann interchanged visits at the same period. I think I reported to you a general account then.

She was in a very weakly condition, the constitution almost ruined by what she had so long suffered as the slave of Denniss, and her nerves in a very depressed state. Still I hoped she would recover by degrees with proper attention – but she was all alone, and her mind seemed to be utterly prostrated to the guidance of her Brother as her only natural protector left here, although she differed from him in opinion and feeling in many things and thought he treated her harshly. I remember her telling me that on his accompanying her to Somerset House ⁶ after Denniss' death, he vented his anger upon her (I think it was about those Russian Bonds) in the street, raised his voice and stopped and gesticulated and so played the part of a bully publicly that the passers-by stopped and collected and she became quite ashamed and afraid. His tall, gaunt frame, throwing his arms about as if menacingly, and her small debilitated form apparently at his mercy formed quite a picture as she told me, though the reference seemed to rankle and annoy her much. – Alas! She became through her own sad supineness of mind and will an easy victim to his grasping cupidity. He domineered as if he had a right to all her possessions, and she succumbed as if to the inevitable.

You will remember his plea to her against me, as I reported to you at that epoch, that I did not go to church &c. and though she was herself reasonable enough on the subject, yet as he came up from Witley ⁷ every few days and she was afraid he might meet me there, she had not even the power left to disobey his arrogant dictates of who should be her acquaintances. And so I discontinued my visits, though I could see plainly that his greed was the real and only key to that movement from fear of my interference in some way or other directly or indirectly with his aims. He was then wanting her to go to Southsea to live for the benefit of her health ostensibly, but at the same time to alienate her effectively from all her old friends. This did not take place till sometime after I had with deep regret on her account taken my leave, and I never heard a whisper of her after until her decease was intimated to me while in the Hospital.

Mrs. Hammond Jones, who I believe was about 20 years or so his junior, wrote me in answer to my enquiries a nice polite letter which I cannot at the moment lay my hands on, but in which I thought it was observable that she said her Husband died quite peacefully, with one hand in hers and the other in her Sister's on either side of the bed. And in writing later to Mary Ann, who had asked her to call on her when she came to London, she said she was by her late Husbands' wish going to sell off everything at

Tigbourne, and remove to some new quarters the name of which I forget, and that she was not coming to London at all. Well, she and her Sister are rich people now according to all present appearances, and can do as they like, but how far all has been plain sailing may remain yet to be proved.

37. William Henry Hammond Jones

Believed to be a portrait of
the 'tall, gaunt' *bête noir* of
the Hookhams



Mr. H. Jones's conduct towards his remaining Sister was unnatural and persistently bad to the last. You say he wrote a letter of 'abuse' to her when at death's door, as he knew, wreaking on her his revenge on old scores respecting which facts had since shown him to be utterly mistaken, and for which he should have expressed his sorrow & apologised, yet he was so utterly and complacently a church going xtian! It was a great surprise to me, for I always thought they were naturally very fond of each other. As to his 'abuse' it is, as any one who ever knew her perfectly knows, as idle as it is malicious, and I respect and honour her feelings for having thrown it half read into the fire, though I think I should never do that myself with any document which might become legally useful. 'Abuse' indeed! Look how proudly and honourably and well you have struggled on together and brought up those five young children whom I last saw on board the 'Tudor' to be a comfort to her and you as long as you live and to be respected by others afterwards. Faugh! It is patent to everyone that if Mr. H. Jones had had the heart and Mrs. Denniss the head which Marianne possesses so unitedly and thoroughly there could have been no cruel family bickerings and insinuations, and no despoiling of the property of one by the other.

But are you both satisfied that all this is final and irrevocable, and it is in furtherance possibly of a different view of the matter that I have gone into details so lengthily. If I can be of any use I shall be so glad. This is a great loss of property to Marianne for which I feel truly sorry. For Mr. Jones ought really to have added for her to the half share of Mrs. Denniss' property something considerable of his own in his Will, and this after leaving an ample income for his Widow⁸. Wherever there has been clearly shown an act of deceit and a wrong there is quite room to suspect more – in fact there is no knowing where to stop your surmises.

I find, however, that I shall lose this mail if I stop to write any more now. I had a few other sentences to add on this most important subject, and 2 or 3 other things to tell you which must be deferred till next week. I trust you will both forgive me if I have made use of too strong words and phrases in what I have written, seeing that it is solely and entirely in Marianne's interest that I write and that I deplore the loss she has sustained.

With heartfelt love to you all, I suspend for the present, and remain as ever Your affectionate Brother Thomas Hookham.

1. This probably refers to the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, (now the National Hospital). Whitaker's Almanac of 1893 advertises 'Special Wards for middle-class patients in straitened circumstances at a charge of 21s. per week'.
2. The Waterloo & City Electric Railway (nicknamed 'The Drain') still runs between just the two stations, Waterloo and the Bank. The two-mile line was opened on 8 August 1898. The Central Line between Shepherd's bush and the Bank (6 miles) did not open until 1900, and was known as the 'Tuppenny Tube' as the fare was 2d. for any distance. The third 'direction' referred to was the City & South London Railway from Stockwell in south London to the Bank. Opened in 1890, it was the first deep tube railway in the world, and the first operated by electricity.
3. This seems to be an acknowledgement that Horatio Denniss had indeed acquired his mother-in-law's Russian Bonds by subterfuge.
4. Emma Denniss, née Jones, died at Southsea, Hants, on 20 March 1898, aged 74, leaving effects of £2,667-0-10, her brother, W.H.H. Jones being her executor.
5. Horatio Torrens Denniss died at Fulham on 3 August 1888, aged 78. Probate was granted to his widow.
6. The Principal Registry for proving Wills and obtaining grants of Administration was at Somerset House, as were other Government offices until a few years ago. It is now used for exhibitions of painting and the decorative arts.
7. W.H.H. Jones and his wife Minnie Jane, née Pittman, lived at Tigbourne, Witley, Surrey
8. W. H. H. Jones died on 27 July 1898 leaving effects valued at £7,174-2-7. Probate was granted to his widow.

27 April 1899

Thomas to Annie Emma

20, Marchmont Street, W. C.

In what has been endorsed in Annie's hand as 'Uncle Tom's last letter', Thomas, still suspicious of lawyers 'tarred with the same brush', expresses his gratitude for a last act of generosity by his brother, Henry, through his Will.

My dear Niece Annie,

Please tell your dear Mama, with my affectionate remembrances, that I have been acting under a misunderstanding and beg to correct it as soon as I am able, but having been very ill find I have lost more than a fortnight which I hope may not be of consequence. I enclose her legal receipt in full herewith signed and dated this day and hope all will be right & as she wished. The fact is I never received a legacy before that I remember, and quite ignorant of the process of the Court thought only of the trickiness of the lawyers by whom we have lost such sums in our family and who are much the same "tarred with the same brush" all the world over. But it became evident to me on second thoughts that the Court would never wait 10 weeks before getting a receipt for an advance, and that the sole Executrix was the right and only party into whose hands all legacies would have to be paid and by whom the various receipts must be rendered then and there. Ask her kindly to forgive my egregious blunder.

Really it has been more wintry with us in March and April than all the preceding months. I caught in the third week of March a severe cold inwardly accompanied by a bad cough and much indigestion, and it has not yet left me. I managed to get in our cold winds another attack of a cold upon a cold, and then the pain was so sharp under the lowest rib on the right side that I thought for a time it must be pleurisy. All last week I never stirred out of the house and passed most of the time abed, for it produced such a lassitude that I could not write a letter or do anything. The legs besides are shakey and the walk slow, and worst of all the sight is filmy when I go out even in broad daylight, though I sometimes hope this may be in part the result of indigestion.

I have a good deal of business to do, but can not do it, and as a natural consequence comes the failure of means which are at the lowest ebb. So low indeed that pray tell dear Ada with my love that I have not yet procured the four certificates to send to her. For this my illness is in part accountable. But another reason is that William Brooke, like all the rest of the lawyers, jumps at a bit of business, and says that it is just in our way, all those dates can be easily and at once got for you from Somerset House now for cash down and the charge will be 3/6 each and the postage. Now this is an advance of 4/- for themselves! I wish I had not mentioned the subject to him.¹

But I feel, dear, much concerned on reading your account of the over-exertions with which you have been taxing your poor foot. I gather that you are physically strong and brave, and that you are ever looking out in thought to do good to all your dear ones regardless of yourself. I fear you do too much habitually, not for yourself bodily at your age, but for the sad accident that has overtaken you. Ten or fifteen years later such a misfortune would have crippled you for the rest of your life I believe, but you are only about 40, and there are still great hopes that with as much rest as you can give the tendon, and with a constant attention and care bestowed on it you have time to grow out of it. Try and organise accordingly. Believe me I shall anxiously await to hear, not only that any further damage has subsided, but that the foot altogether is improving.

Mr. Blandford has let me read your nice letter to him, and Mary Ann has had one from you since mine. How in the world you can get through so much in this line surprises me! My arm is going on all right i.e., as well as it ever will be. I never notice it now except to avoid any fresh knocks for it is more tender and weak than the other, which has to do double duty to help the counterfeit one. It is such a dreadful thing that it takes more than 7 weeks to communicate our thoughts. The older we get the more we wish we were nearer. You write me of having received this and that letter of mine, but it was so long before that I cannot remember what it contained. At the time when you informed me you were all going to the Papanui Cemetery to choose a headstone and memorial inscription over my dear good Brother, I thought a good deal of sending you my suggestions of what I would have put there. But they would have reached you too late. And it is better as you tell us, particularly as he wished it so. Let the affectionate honours to his high character be more fully elaborated (sic) in another way if we can.

I hope I shall be able to write to dear, dear Charlotte next and before long. Tell her so with my love, please, when you communicate. Mary Ann is full of the miseries just now again because Mrs. C. Veyhl² has been obliged to go into the country to live, and she being about the same age used to sympathise with her over a cup of tea whenever she chose to go to Holloway to see her. Otherwise she is better in health than I am, though she complains.

I am so glad your dear Mama is so much better and stronger. With my best love to you all I remain as always
Your loving Uncle, Thomas Hookham.

Miss Annie E. Hookham, Onslow Street, Christchurch, New Zealand.

1. Somerset House also housed the offices of the Registrar-General. Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates were obtained there; with name and date supplied the charge was 2/6 plus 1d. stamp duty. Thus William Brooke was charging 1/- extra per certificate.
2. The widow of Charles Veyhl. As Louisa Hellen Cooper she had married, in 1861, Charles Veyhl, cabinet maker, born in Frankfurt. He died in 1882 and was presumably a brother of Mary Anne's late husband, August Theodor Veyhl. Mrs. C. Veyhl had been living in Grove Road, Holloway and was still there in the 1901 Census, so presumably the stay in the country was only temporary.

Epilogue

With this last letter from Thomas a correspondence spanning 69 years comes to a close. On 18 May 1899, three weeks after writing to Annie, Thomas himself died. He was buried in Highgate Cemetery, leaving one final mystery. In his Will he leaves all his estate to one Sarah Ann Freeman, who does not appear in the letters, and he also appoints her son Edward, a horse keeper, as executor. A possible explanation is that Sarah Freeman gave him domestic help in his later years; there was clearly a strong bond. Thomas was buried in a plot purchased by Edward Freeman, and in due course Edward Freeman, his wife, and a daughter were buried in the same grave. Thomas's father, mother, sister Rosa and his own wife, Elizabeth, lie together in a single grave in Highgate Cemetery. One may hope that his other sister, Mary Ann, lies near them: the last of her siblings, she died in 1903. Her place of rest is not yet known, but in her Will she expressed a wish to be buried in Highgate Cemetery. May they all, with Henry and his family on the other side of the world, rest in peace.

Buckinghamshire Papers

Titles already issued or forthcoming :

- 1. Catalogue of the Society's Collection of Archives held in the Muniment Room.**
Compiled by Lorna Head, with additional material by Diana Gulland, 2002.
- 2. Buckinghamshire in 1851, the evidence of the Population Census.** An introduction to, and commentary on, the Bucks. Family History Society's CD-ROM of the Enumerators' books and associated notes, by David Thorpe, 2002.
- 3. A history of Upton Park and Herschel Park, Slough,** by Judith Hunter, 2003.
- 4. Addington Church, an architectural and historical study,** by David Critchley, 2004.
- 5. Making the Road from Princes Risborough To Thame,** A nineteenth century turnpike trust at work, by Peter Gulland
- 6. An Atlas of Gerrards Cross 1840-1940,** by David Thorpe & Julian Hunt
- 7. Economy & Society In Medieval Buckinghamshire: The Hundred Rolls 1254-1280,** including a listing of first names and surnames, by Keith Bailey
- 8. The Railways of Buckinghamshire from the 1830's,** An account of those that were not built as well as those which were, by F. Cockman
- 9. Peasants, Peers & Graziers, The Landscape of Quarrendon, Buckinghamshire**
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- 10. My Dear Brother: The Letters of Thomas & Henry Hookham, 1830-1899**
from schooldays in Princes Risborough, Bucks to later life in London and in Christchurch, New Zealand, by Sandy Macfarlane
- 11. Haddenham & Cuddington, The Early History of Two Buckinghamshire Villages,**
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