

Dinton - Dalwood Letters

'Dinton',

15th July, 1829

My dear George,

Your letter dated February 16th, Sydney, I received this day se'night, ?? and was particularly happy to find out that you had got Messrs. Drummond's letter, as I fear the letters I wrote to you about the same time shared the fate of some other articles by the ship Columbine off the Cape. I am glad to hear that you have been blessed with such a good crop of wheat in a time of scarcity. Our crops last year of every description were exceedingly deficient owing to the wetness of the summer. South Devon wool sells about sixpence per lb., Spanish twelpence to fourteen-pence, and very little demand even at that price. The farmers complain sadly, and I am afraid many will be ruined, particularly in Somersetshire, where their sheep all rotted last year. It affords me satisfaction to find your government supplies you with useful mechanical labourers, the advantage of which I can hardly conceive in a new country. Mr. Dawson was kind enough to call upon us twice while we were in town and gave us a long account of your situation on the Hunter River, which, with the assistance of a map which has lately been published by a Mr. Dangar, we could ascertain exactly the spot. The last time I saw him (Mr. Dawson) he seemed to think whether he may not again return to New South Wales, but he promised to come and take some partridge shooting with me. Mr. Dawson seems to think that all the good land this side, or rather the Newcastle side, of the Blue Mountains is to be either located or reserved by the Government, and to have anything to do with the land on the side of the mountains would be almost useless from the distance and expense that must necessarily arise for the want of a market. I sent you two sows last March from Portsmouth, which I hope may arrive safe and be approved of. They are of a different stock, as I thought they would be better to cross the breed with. A gown was also sent for Mrs. G.W. by the same conveyance. Rennet was to be sent at the same time, but unfortunately the vessel that contained it broke, and it was sent by the next ship, which sailed soon after. I could not get a stallion at all to my mind for you; indeed, I am told that not one in twenty get to New South Wales alive unless a groom is sent with them. I have therefore given up the idea of sending one, and have ordered a threshing machine to be made for you instead, which, unless the ship sinks, will be sure to reach you and probably will be more useful. I will also send you at the same time a flew-not; they are made generally about six yards, but I have directed one to be made for you eight yards, which for dragging holes I think will be better. The Spanish chestnut tree, the elm and ash trees you planted in the park I am happy to say are growing very well, which I am the more particularly glad of, as I seldom pass them without thinking of you.

I have let my farm at Marshwood, which I think will surprise you, and Mr. Houliston begs to be remembered to you. He does not seem inclined to venture as far from home as New South Wales, but says he should be ready to assist you in the Isle of Skye or Mull. Mr. Felton Matthews, a young man who has been bred as Land Surveyor under Mr. Charlton, at Stourton, has got an opportunity, through the interests of Mr. Bennett, as Deputy Surveyor of New South Wales, and is to embark upon the Morley, a convict ship, on the 18th. He has kindly offered to undertake the charge of these letters and will, if he finds it in his power, deliver them himself. I believe he is the son of a clergyman at Ansford, near your Uncle Heathcote, in Somersetshire. I have this morning, July 14th, received a letter from Berkley Portman, informing me that Lady Emma has presented him with a son and heir on Sunday last, and that she and the child are doing well. But I must return to the threshing machine, which is to be portable of four horse-power, of the best and newly-improved plant, and so light that two horses could draw it on good roads, and I should think four good oxen would work it with tolerable ease. It cost about £70. I hope your wife was quite well on your return from Sydney, and likewise your little boy, George I conclude, but you never mentioned yet his name.

With kindest remembrances from all of us to you and Margaret.

Your affectionate Father,
WILLIAM WYNDHAM