

## Dinton - Dalwood Letters

'Dinton', 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1831.

My dear Margaret,

I cannot tell you how delighted I felt when I saw a letter directed to me in your own handwriting about a fortnight since, as an envelope to dear George's kind letter, dated September 12<sup>th</sup> 1830. I am so glad you can find any interesting news in what I write. As I often think I am mentioning things you care not hearing of. And perhaps leave out that which you would like to hear. Your letters contain satisfactory accounts of the prosperity of Dalwood, and that you are all in the enjoyment of good health and spirits. We packed up a box the other day for you, and you will find a little new music, besides some manuscript airs. George mentioned once that you had lost a music book in Sydney, and I fancied it might be the one you had filled with airs and waltzes when you with use, so I have copied those I remember you liked, together with George's favourites in case my fancy is correct. If I am wrong this will serve as an apology to you for sending such a set of old tunes. I have sent a few of my own pet songs as you may perhaps have some friends or neighbours who would sing them. I think even George will not despise "The Captive Knight", which I sing quite to the satisfaction of Frank and John, who are both pleased to honour me with great applause whenever it is played.

I have sent you a very nice shift made in what we call the new fashioned way. It is made larger than usual in the armhole to give plenty of room, and I hope you will like it better than our grandmother's pattern. I would have had your aprons made like my garden costume. Mr. Scott can tell you it is as rustic as ever, but I could not get the brown Holland before the day it was packed up to be sent to the "Australia", and I fear you will have more needlework than you will like. I have sent a remnant of a gown that was sent to me last year; I thought it might be useful to you to make Weeta a frock, though I do not think it pretty.

I spent more than six weeks away from home already this year, having spent from February the 1<sup>st</sup> to March 16 at Bryanston with Lady Emma Portman, while Berkeley was attending Parliamentary business, and as her sisters live so far from her it was thought a charity to go to her. Though, as usual, I could not bear to leave home at first, I assure you I enjoyed my visit very much. Lady Emma is so very like ourselves in very many ways that it was like staying with a sister. We went out riding whenever the weather was fine enough, and she likes the actual digging and planting as much as I do.

Berkley has two nice boys. The eldest is the image of himself, and he possesses the same quickness and over-activity, if I may call it so, as his father has. The second is but eight months old, and a fine fat fellow. The maiden aunts have sent your little ones a plaything or two, which we hope will please them.

I must not forget to thank you for the interesting account of my Australian nephews and nieces, and I must make a further request now to beg to have a lock of their hair sent me. Your description of your drawing room is delightful, and makes me long more than ever to peep in at the window and see you all quite happy and comfortable. George mentions that though he likes his employment so well it would be misery to me. I will not agree to that entirely for why should I not be as happy as you are, I trust, my dear Margaret? My idea is, give a woman employment, and she will be happy anywhere, and surely I might be of some use. He says I should delight in gardening there and I do not doubt it. Mr. Dawson's book very nearly turned my head, for it convinced me that the Hunter river must be the best place for a garden, besides other necessary ingredients to happiness. He calls that district the garden of New South Wales. Mr. Scott has frightened Marianne from ever thinking of paying you a visit by talking of thunder and lightning. Ella and I are not afraid of such things, and if we retain the name of Wyndham, I think you will have some chance of our returning with you.

I am still busy trying to rear apple trees for you, both by layers and grafts. I have put some layered last year into a hotbed to force them a little, and intend to leave no method untried.

Berkley and Lady Emma leave us tomorrow, and take our letters to Mr. Scott, or rather to-day, for I see it is half-past one, and I must be in the dining room by eight o'clock to make their breakfast, and wanting a little sleep first, I must end this garrulous letter.

Your ever affectionate Sister,

CHARLOTTE WYNDHAM

I long to see a gigantic Lily, so dry me one in the sun and send it to me.