INTRODUCTION

I do not know why but when I saw your letter on the table I felt ashamed and thought that you ought to have seen the same but though I tryed ever so much I could not (Letter 4)

On 20 August 1836 in the British Embassy in Paris, William Makepeace Thackeray, aged twenty-five, and Isabella Creagh Gethin Shawe, aged twenty, were married. From the beginning it was a love match. Petite and red-haired, Isabella played the piano and sang charmingly, and eventually evinced enough courage to leave her mother and marry. Like Thackeray, Isabella was born in India. Again like him, she left India after the death of her father, Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Shawe. Innocent and insulated from the world, Isabella became Thackeray’s child bride, calling to mind Dora in David Copperfield.

Although there are superficial similarities in the backgrounds of Thackeray and his wife, there are greater differences. Thackeray arrived in England at the age of five, the heir to a sizable fortune inherited from his father. After attending Charterhouse, Thackeray entered Trinity College, Cambridge, which he left after three terms. For two years he traveled on the Grand Tour of the Continent. Returning to London and the Middle Temple, he read law for a year. At this time, 1833, owing to the failure of a bank in India, he lost the bulk of his inheritance. After trying his hand at journalism, he left for Paris to study art.
When he met Isabella in 1835 in Paris, he was a gentleman by birth, education, and lost fortune. He had traveled, mingled in the bohemian societies of the artists of Paris and the journalists of London, while retaining his public school and university ties. Because of the circumstances of his childhood, he remained all his life a man divided. The family life from which he was uprooted in India took on an exaggerated glow of goodness and warmth, and the stimulating outside world he had met in his youthful wandering challenged him intellectually and artistically.

In Isabella he found the little woman around whom he could build his little nest. Blinded by love and desire, he did not see her shortcomings nor the inadequacies of his own fantasy. Thackeray soon returned to London with Isabella, who was expecting their first child. They lived with the Carmichael-Smyths, Thackeray's mother and stepfather, until Thackeray established himself as a journalist able to support his growing family.

Anne Isabella Thackeray was born on 9 June 1837, shortly after Victoria came to the throne. She was named for both her grandmothers, and this heritage of English decorum and Irish volubility proved to be more than symbolic for her.

Early in 1838, the Thackerays moved to 13, Great Coram Street. For Thackeray it was a time of great domestic happiness as well as professional growth. He was fulfilling his young man’s dream of marriage and parenthood; he embraced the challenge of Grub Street with enthusiasm and vigor. In May of 1838 the first part of the “Yellow-plush Correspondence” appeared in Fraser's Magazine, followed in July by the birth of a second daughter, Jane. Thackeray’s and Isabella’s letters are filled with the joys of marriage and the delight of watching a precocious first child develop. Most of Anny’s memories of Isabella are those of a happy, loving mother who danced and sang and played the piano.

The first tragedy to mar Thackeray’s fairy-tale existence occurred in March of 1839 when Jane died. Soon Isabella was once again expecting a child, and Thackeray began to notice but did not understand the insufficiencies of her character. However, it was not until after the birth of their third daughter, Harriet Marian, on 27 May 1840, that the greatest tragedy of their lives emerged and ended the happiness of their married life. A postpartum depression after Minny’s birth (as Harriet Marian was called) drove Isabella to two attempts at suicide.
Unable to work, with an infant, a small child, and an increasingly mad wife to care for, Thackeray moved his family to Paris, where his mother and stepfather provided a home for his children. Thackeray traveled from one country to another, trying to help the alternately raving mad or catatonic Isabella. This “year of pain and hope”\(^5\) (1840–41) tempered Thackeray as he searched his guilty soul for the part he had played in Isabella’s downfall. Her weakness of personality, her inability to cope with reality, her limited intellect, were all burdens she could not overcome. Added to these was the anxiety of being both wife and mother. When Thackeray accepted the doctor’s diagnosis that Isabella could not live at home, he placed her with Dr. Puzin in Chaillot, where she lived until 1845. At that time he brought her back to England to live in a cottage in Camberwell with a companion. In this way Isabella lived out her life; she died in 1894 in Leigh, Essex.

In 1849 in one of “Mr. Brown’s Letters to a Young Man about Town,” Thackeray wrote: “I don’t think they [women] have fair play. I don’t think they get their rights. Enslaving them as we do by law and custom it is for our use somehow that we have women brought up; to work for us or to shine for us, or to dance for us or what not it was we who made the laws for women.”\(^6\) Thackeray understood Isabella’s position but not until 1849, after the fact. He recognized her shortcomings as well as her goodness and he remained always a little in love with the woman she was not, as well as what she was. He wrote, “I like this milk-&-water in women — perhaps too much, undervaluing your ladyship’s heads, and caring only for the heart part of the business.”\(^7\)

As for Anny, she was his child of love. Jane had died before she was a year old; Minny was a sickly, crying child. Although she was not the cause of Isabella’s illness, her mother’s madness manifested itself after she was born. It was unavoidable that Minny’s birth was linked to Isabella’s madness. Yet, they were both Thackeray’s adored children. Anny was to remain his “fat lump of pure gold,”\(^8\) and even though he insisted that he loved Anny and Minny equally, his partiality for Anny was obvious. She was so much like him: “a chip of the old block,”\(^9\) intelligent, outspoken, and sensitive, and with a talent for writing. She was the reminder of happier times, when he had luxuriated in a wife and a home. For Thackeray divorce was impossible, and so he lived on to the end of his life, in a vacuum, a married bachelor determined to make a home for his children.
For six years, from October 1840 through late September 1846, Anny and Minny lived in Paris with the Carmichael-Smyths, except for holiday trips around Europe. Thackeray's mother was a strict Evangelical, a beautiful woman with a private court of worshiping friends and an adoring husband, Major Henry Carmichael-Smyth, a former soldier in the Indian Army. Living on a retired major's half-pay, he and his wife were a serious, dour couple who set about raising Thackeray's daughters with much love but little laughter.

Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth's letters reveal a remarkable woman. On her young granddaughters she bestowed the maternal love they needed, yet she imperiously ordered them about, laying down rules for them at long distance. Devoutly religious, she insisted they attend church every Sunday. Anny's hemming of endless tea towels is a further result of Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth's Evangelical predilection for work, even for nine year olds.

While Anny and Minny were living in Paris, Thackeray visited them, but the trauma of losing Isabella was intensified for Anny by Thackeray's frequent disappearances. He dashed in and out with laughter and excitement, wrenching visits that were difficult for father as well as children.

In 1845 FitzGerald described Thackeray as "writing hard for half a dozen Reviews and newspapers all the morning; dining, drinking, and talking of a night." He visited Isabella regularly at Camberwell, but his life was essentially that of a bachelor. Whatever other arrangements he made, he was discreet. Accepting the fact that "the poor dear little soul will never be entirely restored to us," in 1846 he ended his rootless, lonely life. He wrote, "I am child-sick." Over the objections of his mother, his daughters came back to London to live with him at 13, Young Street, Kensington.

The nightmare journey that had brought the two little girls to Paris was vividly described by Anny in the 1864 journal, and revised in the 1878 journal. For three-and-a-half-year-old Anny this coach trip was a haunting experience to which she referred often in adult life. Uprooted a second time in their young lives, Anny and Minny entered the house on Young Street as dutiful children, returning to a father they loved but barely knew, leaving behind the grandmother who had reared them.

After Thackeray's mother brought the little girls to Kensington, she stayed on a while. She then returned to her husband in Paris with-
out a farewell to her granddaughters. Thackeray was later to leave for America without saying good-bye to his children, feeling the experience too painful for him to do so. For Anny, such stealthy departures were bewildering and unsteady, reminiscent of Isabella’s disappearance. Still, though heartbroken at Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth’s sudden departure, Anny’s common sense as well as her sense of humor asserted themselves.

An emphasis on separation can be seen in Anny’s discussion of her reading. Even as a child, Anny was steeped in the literature of the period. As a nine year old, Anny was reading *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and *Dombey and Son* (Letter 6). Her critique of *Dombey and Son*, chapter 18, carries an almost verbatim report of Florence’s plea to her father (after Paul’s death) and his reply to her. This critical and cruel relationship of father to daughter obviously had a special meaning to Anny. She is reassuring herself that this scene could never be reenacted between Thackeray and herself. As sensible as she was, and as loving as Thackeray was, she feared that she would lose her father as she had lost her mother. Later, in her diaries and biographical introductions, she recognized and acknowledged how honorably her father had managed his burden and how much he had loved his children.

Not wanting to part with his daughters, Thackeray spared them the limitations of a Miss Pinkerton’s academy for girls. Whatever they had lost in Isabella, they were now under the aegis of a person of superior intellect and sensibility. In their motherless state, the little girls accompanied their father to many places otherwise out of their reach. Later on, Anny became Thackeray’s hostess, enlarging her circle of friends to include the great.

Mrs. Butler (Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth’s mother) came to live with her grandson and his children on Young Street in order to ward off possible gossips about a young governess living in a motherless home. Thackeray tried to hire unattractive-looking women in order to satisfy his mother’s sense of decorum, but they often turned out to be unattractive in other ways as well. The problem of finding a good governess for his daughters was to plague Thackeray throughout their childhood.

As time passed, Anny missed her grandmother less and became more attached to Thackeray. In addition to educating his daughters, Thackeray made companions of them, treating them as young ladies instead of children. Of Anny, Thackeray wrote, “in 3 years she will be
a charming companion to me: and fill up a part of a great vacuum which exists inside me.”

His daughters were the anchors, the domesticity, the substitute “little queens” for everything he had lost when Isabella had left his home. To the end of his life, their welfare was his chief concern.

Thackeray’s opinion of Anny during this period underwent a subtle change. From the beginning, he thought her bright. In a letter dated 23 July 1846, he described her: “she is going to be a man of genius.” However, he criticized her character, “I would far sooner have had her an amiable & affectionate woman.” After his children came to live with him, only his evaluation of Anny’s character altered.

In March 1847 he described her as having “a delicate soul. What a noble creature she is,” and again in May of that year he talked of “Anny’s great noble heart & genius.” In January 1848 he wrote, “my dear old Nan goes on thinking for herself, and no small beer of herself— I am obliged to snub her continually, with delight at what she says all the time.” That spring, he wrote about Anny’s “strong critical faculty” as well as her “generous and loving and just” nature.

Describing their journey on the Rhine in July 1851, Thackeray said, “Anny is famous always magnanimous and gentle a little affected & ostentatiously useful — her reasoning being ‘I am very plain & clumsy, I must try & make myself useful & liked by helping people’ & so she did with all her might.”

By 1849 Anny was “a great sensible clever girl, with a very homely face, and a very good heart and a very good head and an uncommonly good opinion of herself as such clever people will sometimes have.” His single-sentence description of Minny was “Minny is very well for cleverness too as children go.” His preference for Anny, here as elsewhere, is obvious.

Inevitably, Thackeray became disappointed in women he loved, but not in Anny. He confessed that he liked “second-rate books, second-rate women, but first-rate wines.” His mother bedeviled him with her religion and her refusal to treat him as a mature man. His wife had not been able to cope with the love and life he offered her; Mrs. Brookfield’s timidity did not allow her to repudiate her husband; Sally Baxter would prove too young. If his mother smothered him with her love, the others were too mediocre to rise to and accept his love. But with Anny, his love was returned and acceptable; she was clever, good, and adoring. Early on, in Young Street, Thackeray wanted a wife; later on,
just before his death, Anny wanted a husband. But for the time being, they needed and complemented each other.

Anny's early maturity and maternal feelings are discernible in her attitude toward Minny. Later on Minny asserted her independence of Anny, but while they were children, Anny assumed the role of the mother and Minny that of the child, as in Letter 6.

Because so few letters by Minny are extant, Thackeray's evaluation of his youngest daughter must fill in the missing data. At first he thought her better natured than Anny, but by 1851 he changed his mind.

Minny keeps all her claws for poor Nan. It's all smiles & good humour for me. The little hypocrite! She has little Beckyfied ways and arts. It's almost disloyal the way in w'h I find myself observing her; Minny's jealousy pains me — She is envious of Anny snappish with her before strangers.23

A harsh estimate by a father of a daughter, but Thackeray as always was honest and he read her character without sentimentality. Just as his laudatory estimate of Anny was unclouded, so was his measure of Minny.

To Anny, the life she and Minny led with Thackeray in Young Street was filled with excitement and novelty. After the austerity of the Carmichael-Smyths' home, life at Number 13 with its rotating governesses, its outings, its garden, people coming and going, and Thackeray's awesome presence, presented a kaleidoscope of adventure to the nine-year-old Anny. An extrovert, she accepted all the friendship and love that was offered. For Thackeray, having his daughters with him was a joy, but undoubtedly a chore as well. Occasionally he indulged his habit of escaping to an inn to work in England and abroad.

In 1848 Thackeray and Mrs. Jane Octavia Elton Brookfield, wife of his Cambridge friend Reverend William Henry Brookfield, reached an understanding. Estranged from her husband, she needed a friend, while Thackeray without a wife became enamored of her. She was his "beau-ideal."24 While Anny and Minny were on holiday in 1849 with his parents, Thackeray contracted cholera. JOB, as Mrs. Brookfield was called, nursed him back to health. However, the following year a daughter, Magdalene, was born to her and her now reconciled husband. Thackeray still visited and wrote to JOB constantly. This
intimacy proved too much for Brookfield and he forbade Thackeray his house. Granted that there was not much a dependent Victorian wife could do under these circumstances, Mrs. Brookfield's conduct toward Thackeray was insensitive. There is no proof or likelihood that they had been lovers, but Thackeray suffered greatly when, under her husband's direction, she spurned him. Begun in August of 1851, *Henry Esmond* bears the marks of his thwarted love for Mrs. Brookfield. Gordon Ray's analysis of Lady Castlewood points out how Thackeray sublimated his feelings for Mrs. Brookfield and revenged himself on her by making her the older heroine who loves and is ignored by the younger hero until the very end of the novel. However, for Anny and Minny she remained all her life the loving and beloved Mrs. Brookfield.

The texture of the Thackeray household comes through most significantly in the letters Anny wrote as a child to her grandmother in Paris. Anny outlined the trips to church, the state of nature in the Kensington house garden, Thackeray's comings and goings, including his progress on *Vanity Fair*, all of her feelings in her new life. These letters contain a great degree of sophistication, revealing her intuitive grasp of people's emotions and motives.

Anny's childhood experiences, her remembrance of her life with her father, were narrated in the 1864 journal, then in the 1878 journal, and finally in the Biographical Introductions to Thackeray's *Works*. Each time her views underwent a slight revaluation as she weighed and assessed the same scene from a different vantage point of increasing maturity. She further interpreted several biographical events when she shaped them artistically into scenes for her novels. However, here in her first known letters is an uncensored, uninhibited version of her life as she perceived it.

Anny's early letters reflect many of the qualities that her letters, her journals, and her novels would manifest throughout her life. Perhaps most apparent at first glance are the lack of dates or misdating, the frequent spelling errors (commented on in Letter 8), the lack of full stops, and the use of dashes. These idiosyncrasies of punctuation give the letters a feeling of breathlessness and of energy and joy in life. In Letter 1 her grandmother warns Anny "never to keep anyone waiting," but Anny always seems to have been late, and in her journals she reveals the pain that her father's criticism of this trait caused her. Conscious of her own feelings, she wrote about them, as she did in
Letter 4 to her grandmother, “when I saw your letter on the table I felt ashamed and thought that you ought to have seen the same but though I tryed ever so much I could not.” Anny shows her awareness of her failures and indicates the high standard she set for herself. Her revisions show her attempting to describe as well as she can, an ability she would retain through her life.

The early letters also reveal Anny’s psychological and observational acuity. Anny’s gossip and her analysis of people’s characters appear to be more than the work of a nine year old. Living in the society of her grandparents and their friends for six years, she had fallen into the habit of listening to and observing her elders. Her best writing would later reveal a special talent for observation, both visual and oral. Anny’s daily intimacy with such things as their pets and untended garden, including the “yellow lillies in the garden [that] shut at night” (Letter 9), and her telling descriptions of them, became a part of her professional style. Some of her opinions may have been Thackeray’s or what she thought them to be. Her succinct dismissal of her governess with a curt “Bess cannot bear to teach” (Letter 5) is an astute appraisal. Thackeray was soon aware of Anny’s ability to judge character. In 1848 he wrote, “Anny has already taken Captain Alexanders [sic] measurement.” Her opinion conformed to his own.

That Anny lived in the home of a writer was evident in her explanation of Thackeray’s latest chapter (35) in Vanity Fair (Letter 10). Anny was sensible enough to understand that her rendition of Thackeray’s woodblock was merely “something like” her father’s. Her narrative of chapter 35, “something like” as well, was remarkable on several counts. Anny proceeded with no hesitancy or awe to describe what her father had wrought; without embarrassment she acknowledged that her father’s drawing was “much better drawn” than her own.

This habit, like Thackeray’s, of including sketches in her letters, continued to the end of her life. Thackeray’s insistence on drawing lessons for his daughters was justified in Anny’s case. The sentence “she has (the French girl) got sabots on” displays Anny’s understanding of sentence structure: she used parentheses to eliminate any ambiguity about who “she” was; Anny’s use of the word “sabot” demonstrates her familiarity not only with the French language but with life in France. She draws sound conclusions about the narrative from the woodblock; her resolve to keep the chapter’s contents secret in order to guarantee the sales of the numbers is amusing and wise.
Earlier she may have thought Thackeray was Jesus Christ when he made his whirlwind visits to the Carmichael-Smyths in Paris, or even have seen him as Jupiter in his later dealings with Dickens and Yates, but at this time, Anny wrote of a father who happened to be a writer. There was nothing exalted in his calling or in his perception of himself, or in Anny's view of him. Writing was part of Thackeray's life as it soon became part of Anny's. Even in her juvenilia one can recognize a nascent writer. She enjoyed writing, and although she sometimes wandered in her narrative, her explanations of what things are and how they work, and her insight into human nature, were developing tools of the storyteller. Anny can be seen to be conscious of her inheritance from her father when she signs her poem written to Amy Crowe (Letter 11) "A I Titmarsh," using her own initials, but her father's nom de plume.

The early letters as a whole reveal a busy Thackeray, working and caring for his daughters. No mention is made by Anny of her mother, and as became more apparent in her teenage letters, her dependence on her father grew. The little household, sometimes chaotic, sometimes melancholy, cohered and became a family, because this was what Thackeray wanted—this was his duty as he saw it.

To the mature Anny, looking back on it, life in Kensington not only carried with it the charm of childhood memories but always represented another way of life, when bustling London had not yet encroached upon the farms of Kensington. In her novel Old Kensington, Anny fictionalized her activities at 13, Young Street. In the 1878 journal she told her niece, Laura, "all that part of our lives I have written about in Old Kensington." Although in the novel she presented a delightful evocation of Victorian childhood, a solemnity dominated the portrait. When writing about Young Street in her novel, Anny was an artist, distanced by art and maturity. However, life—reality—was often very exciting for young Anny and Minny, even though the missing Isabella cast the potent and unhappy aura over their lives that Anny the novelist understood and emphasized in Old Kensington.
From Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth to Anny and Minny

Letter 1
17 Rue des Vignes
Ray/Morgan
Mardi
[Postmark: 27 Nov. 1846]

My own precious Nanny & Minny & Everybody Here I am with dear G. P. very snug & warm; for it is much warmer than at Kensington. We left Boulogne at 7, & were very nearly too late for the train, from being half an hour after our time: and I can't tell you how many evils would have happened, if they had not waited for us: in England they w'd not have done it, so mind Nanny never to keep anyone waiting, it is so easy to be ready — You may think how happy dearest G P is to have his old Wife back, & we have talked so much about you all. This is a pretty little apartment, for him & me, with such a lovely view, & we could see to read at ½ past 5, when I thought my pretty maids were jumping about by gas light. Tell G. Mamma, G P has taken a very pretty apartment in Beaujeu, Avenue Chateaubriand & whenever she feels strong enough to get as far as Folkestone, she could wait for a sunny day there, cross to Boulogne & sleep, go to Abbeville in the 11 o'clock Dilly, sleep there & take a carriage to Amiens, all the diligences pass Abbeville in the night, either at 8 or 2 — she must sleep at Amiens & come without fatigue to Paris. Abbeville to Amiens is 4 hours — We can go to Beaujeu when we like, it is only the little difference of a few days here, so you must pack up her things & mind please dear Bess to keep her from any packing — it is so much better in the train carriage than the dilly that I wish her by all means to go to Amiens in a carriage because she would have bustle in getting out at the Chemin de fer — My last day at Twickenham, put me off many little commissions, but what I most regret are some warm stockings for GP which I will thank G Mama to bring. They will not be dearer at Kensington I think than elsewhere, large woman's size of soft lambs wool, & a roll of shoe ribbon. if she puts 3p' in her box & 3 in
Flore's there is no danger, I wish dear Annie you would write & tell Aunt B. of my being safe at Paris — write clear & tell her all the news — & ask Papa to take you to call on M's Dance to say how sorry I was not to have called on her, but that I was ill the day after I saw her & a great many things prevented. It is raining & I dont know if I can get to the post — GP & I are so snug here, & we talk of you always, & I think it is such a comfort to talk with our pens. I long for the time when my Minneks will be able to write — till you have a governess. I hope you will every day do your sums & writing — & Sunday write me what the sermon is — that is, what you understand it to be — the 2 prayers I wrote for you are to make you think of what you ought to pray for; everything I know is better said in different parts of our Church service, but we cant turn to that, & I want my children to feel that “in every thing by prayer & supplication to make their requests known unto GOD,” it is their duty & comfort — I shall begin very soon to write a journal for you — tell dear Bess I am going now to see Maria & take her things. Give my love to M's Gloyn & thank her & every one who is kind to my precious ones — & tell Papa to kiss you 10000000 times for Grannie & you can do so to him — & GOD bless you & bless you tell P love I send his letter today

GP will write next time his love & kisses

Dearest Bess Thinking over again upon the precious ones — a word of M's Hollingsworths governess occurred to me wh spoke so much — “it is not what children learn as lessons Ma'am, it is the charity, honesty teaching, by example more than precept” — how much good sense there is in this — As the old Man preaches it — God by with you in yf excellent work.

Yr Ever Aff—
ACS
To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 2
Ray/Morgan

26th November
1846

Dear Grannie

I cannot tell you what I thought on Monday. Bess came in and began with ain't you happy Grannie is going to GP. Fancy him sitting by himself by the fire — She then told us about your going — what should I do without you — how happy GP would be — I was happy [sic] — so unhappy I could not cry but it is all gone now and I am not unhappy a bit: we took your note to the Scots to day — we are all well now Bess has been very unwell so she went to bed we went yesterday to Lilla's¹ — and amused ourselves very much —

Thanks for the pretty book I have not finished the lay of the last minnestrell² yet I am writing this with the pen you gave me I had the large one Minnie is so fond of her book she is reading it for hours at a time we all send our love to GP and Grannie Grandmama made punch stop and we saw it she made a funny mistake at dinner John³ asked about you and so she said you were quite safe and she said in answer to his question if you had a stormy passage, why the sea was so calm that they were buffeted about by the waves —, my how was that GM, why the sea was so calm that the wave where very high tell GP that I have been working pretty hard at his chain⁴

To Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 3
Ray/Morgan

Saturday the 5th
December 1846
13 Young St. Kensington

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Grannie GP —

I hope you are very well. I am and every body too GM is much better Bess was not very well yesterday but she is quite well today We went to Mrs. Beyne's¹ to spend the day on Thursday and amused ourselves very much she is another cousin of papa's Mrs. Prime² her Mother took us with Mrs. Beynes little girl, she has got two children, a girl and a boy, to Madame Tusades Wax works³ which are very pretty one of the figures
used to sigh but she was broken on Monday so the keeper told us, there were two Princes (?) a Gent — and a lady who noded their heads — one of the groops was Prince Albert the queen and their children. Prince Albert has got his arm round the princes Royal her sister I forget her name is standing on the sopha with her doll in her hand the Quee [sic] has one hand up and is reproving her daughter for making a noise to awake the baby on her lap — is not it a pretty Groop. I forgot the prince of wales that is standing beside her.

you can easily imagin an emense hall or home (?) filled with all the historicall references you can think of. there are a number of babies. We went to the Crowes on Sunday they lend me the 1st 3rd 4th and 5th Vol of the robinson Suisse but 2d is missing. it is a very pretty book. they played and sang a goodeall. Eugenie has got a very fine voice. Minie has been washing her eye with Flore and it is quite clean and not inflamed as usuall. Bess told me to tell Maria that she began her note but could not finish it because her finger hurts her so — Minie's thing in her hair is a great deal better too, one minute after, instead of being better it is gone. I have begun the dumpling net it [sic] pretty well advanced. I wrote or began my journall but I canot manage it. Mr. Gloyne gave Minnie a pair of sisors as big as that. The London News came today — Monday the 7th.

I dated my letter wrong as it was the 5th. I went out with Elisa where I left of [sic] I got your letter this morning, last Sunday not the same. We went to the Crowes but the text was put ye on the whole Armour of God.

Florie has just been in & I have been listing her all your messages here are hers Remerciez votre Grané pour moi et dites lui que Je'spère qu'elle sera bien contente pour moi et ma petite fille — I wrote to Aunt B. when you first left she is very well and has sent you a not [sic] by GM — I have got a little seall for Laure and a brooch for Flore — wich I have given her — I have not got any Christmas book we have got the wollen stockings for GP. Papa is not gone to Brighton [line crossed out — illegible] — We went to M's Dances yesterday. M's Dance is not very well. We went to St Marks yesterday and all the servise was such a sleepy one if not chaunting that I cant not tell it to you. M's Gloyne [word illegible] each a savings box saving bank written on it. Flore has just sied the Constitutionelle. she has carried it away a great many loves to every body. M's GP. I dreamed that you had the gout and came
to see us thanks for y'r letter M' GP M' Haris is y'r glue pot now you have not written as you promised

Kiss to my Suse  
Goodby lara I shall answer y'r letter soon

Annie

Dear Grannie  I have mad [sic] a mess the part under the stroke is a letter to lara but now I am going to put it in an envelope thanks for haveing given Maria the work bag — what do you think I had best get for the remanig party of the Colmaches and for Miss Susse by remaning I mean whom I have not written to.

Mini sends her love  
GM told me to tell you that she gave her love and was losing all this fine weather [four or five words illegible]

My dear Laura  I thank you for your note and basket

My dear laura I thank you for your kind note and basket M'Cолмаче will bring you a seall it makes a very good impresion I hope you are very well. We [word illegible] love to monsieur Moris Mademoi­selle Pauline

I have done half y'r Chaine and almost Grannies net good by every­body — Annie

I have not got laura's basket but I do a If [sic] I had.

To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 4  
Ray/Morgan  
Saturday 26th December 1846:

Dearest Grannie

A merry Christmas to you and GP and every bodie will not you write soon to us? WE send you kisses in plenty  
And I am afraid the letter will be 2 weight with them. we have gone to such a number of invita­tions this week on Monday to M' Fanshaws on Christmas Eve to M' Coal and yesterday at M' Crowes — What have you got for Christmas?
We have had a Bonbonniere Bess told me to tell you that she sent her love to you and a kiss to Maria Wednesday we went yesterday to M. Ervings and there was a party in the evening and we danced and amused our selves very much if you had but seen Minny in hight of a galop with little Master Loe all her hair flying about her and looking so pleased their was a magic lantern to and one at the New Years day before breakfast images and a pink sheet and it opened slowly opened it self and became a full flower.

This letter was began the day after Christmas day but since that We have got your letter I could not finish it yesterday for I went out with Bess to see M. Wadelle And we staid there I do not know why but when I saw your letter on the table I felt ashamed and thought that you ought to have seen the same but though I tryed ever so much I could not

My dear grannie & GP

love to every one and dear M. Auber to there is a little velvet for her did you get the locket with our hair as you do not wear lockets put it in your desk so that you may see or think you see us in it tell GP to take away that beautiful ribon from his eyeglass and put my square bobbin chain in its place I do not think he will lose his glass as it is pretty strong thank you for the presents you have given to the Medams Colmach we have got some nice little note paper Bess was so angry with the Weights But they are gone now loves to old friends and kisses to you from

Annie

To Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 5 13 Young Street
Ray/Morgan 14th January 1846

My dearest Grannie And GP —

Many thanks for your letter which I have just received and I shall try to write this so as you can read it you will get the nets from Nina — and Maria is to make them up Give her a kiss and tell her that I will write to her but it is fair she having write to me I have got a new white frock and Minnie has mine made up for her only think it was not a bit
to big for her except the bodice which was too long but the waist was just
the size Minie can read the printed letters very nicely and I think reads
better by a good deal though you must give her the merit of getting on
by herself for Bess cannot bear to teach and Grandmama makes her read
to her the service or psalms which are too difficult for her. She has bought
her a copy which would be more for me than for her and the lessons are
printed in it
and instead of the first or 2\textsuperscript{nd} class it is the 8\textsuperscript{th} as for Flore one day I
went out with Mrs Gloyne when I thought she was going the day after
next, and bought her a Scotch pebble brooch and gave it her as a parting
present thinking that she was going so soon but Grandmamma did not
go Minnie gave her a pin —
Did I tell you about the congerger we saw on New Years day he was
given a ring put in a wine glass then covered it with a pocket handker-
chief and put the wine glass in a box after some time he took out the
box opened it and took out another box opened that one took another
anso on till at last he took out a very little one and out of that the
ring was not that curious I have got all your letters in my desk I am
reading the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Chapter of St Luke when Jesus was found in the temple
with the Doctors of Divinity.
love to Mrs Auber [word illegible] Miss Hammerton &c and every
bodie I wish you would not look so cross every morning at the head of
the table sometimes it seems to me you smile when I do very hard
indeed but that is only my fancy there is a little lone letter for Maria
we are going to a party this evening Grandmama has given me a white
frock of Book muslin Maria will tell you all about it
Goodbye dear Grannie
Annie

Do you observe the kisses on the newspaper in the shape of little seling
wax dots
Mademoisales Thackeray presents ses complement a Madame Smithe et
espere qu'elles aissant le plaisir de la voir a printemps prochain.\textsuperscript{3}

Minnie and Annie MINNIE\textsuperscript{4}
Dearest Grannie

The murkiness just now has been so great that Bess at an arms length could not see Grandmama who was sitting very near her. I can tell you that though you could see the bookcase I could not say what sort of books were in it. We went to see Mrs. Crowe on Monday week poor Minnie fell in to the fier and burned her arm. She was a blind man and before we could catch her she was in but it was not bad. Bess put some wadding on it then some gold better skin afterwards. 2nd of March it is now much better though not quite well. The dining room is being white washed. The contents of Minnie's letter are: My dear Granny I send you my love. And a kiss to GP there is an hippodrome here. Minnie these letters which are marked [word illegible] is a very nice one. Poor Minnie was very much disappointed when GM said that you would think she was making a game of her while Minny spent her last half hour before going to bed on it. When you write, write her a little note because it will be as hers but put a seal or wafer that she may open it when Doctor Quinn sent her her medicen he addressed it to Miss M. Thackeray. But she thought it was a letter from some bodie and almost cried when she found what it was but she did not. I made the pen with which I am writing and have mad some very good. We went to Mrs. Scot and [word illegible] a Capt. Haris Miss Scot has got a little cousin with her for she had been some where to some shire but I forget the name. Is it true that you have got up a subscription for the poor? I wish I could send you a shilling. I would but I cannot in a letter. I am knitting a pincusion for papa. The third number of Vanity fair is come out. Poor little Paul in Domby is dead but the Father is so unhappy and unkind to poor Florence. They went to brighton and Paul is so fond of Florence he goes to Dotor Blimers school and Miss Corniela Blimers gives him to many lessons and becomes ill and dies when Florence goes in to his room she said Papa papa speak to me dear papa what is the matter. Said he sternly. Why do you come here what has fretted [sic] you and then Water who saved her you know goes away.
I bought GM a spectacel case which cost 6 pence. I have now 4 shillings Minnie has given me six pence.

I do not know why from the manner she writes it seems to me as if Aunt Mary disliked us so though I am fonder of her than ever I can not help being very fond of her Mr. Parker had as always been very unwell indeed though she is none the worse for it I hope you are very well and dear GP the other day in the park sitting down with a saddle in checked trowsers and grey coat just like GP only when we came near the face was quite different give my love to every bodie. Papa is just come home and is reading Punch Miss Fanshaw is not coming I am sorry for it I wish when you had been here you could have come an see lord Holland castle it is very pretty Many thanks for the violets I did not open the newspaper Grandmama said it was for me to write the crocusses are coming up I will send you some when they are in flower and some evergreens have been put in the garden which looks very nice We are all very well give my love to Laura. Bess is gone out to dinner and it is 9 so good night Grannie

Annie

Bess has given me a wood pincusion

Dearest Grannie I had a long letter written before and I havenot sent it for many reasons, I know it will give you pleasure to kiss your dear ones on both little hand and as good as gold my only fear is I shall become too fond of them, Mr. Titmarsh is as busy as he can be And Grandmother is again quite well, I regret daily my incapability and repugnance to teaching, the former isn't to be cured, and the latter must be endured I wish you send me one of the shaking kettle holders. My love to M's Auber she will know what I mean, dear GP kiss Grannie for me and I will pay you when we meet, adieu

Your affft Bess

Will you send the enclosed to Maria as soon as you can
To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 7 [April 1847]

Ray/Morgan

My dear Grannie Miss Drury is come she is beautiful with large black eyes. The second face is the most like. She is very like you in manners. We go and learn Dancing every Saturday at the Misses Henries [?] we have I have not much to say. We went to the ethiopians yesterday but I cannot write now I mean when I am in a hurry. GP's purse is not nearly finished but I will get some [word illegible] paper and give you a long letter. The ethiopians sang Lucy [four words illegible] and old tom tucker your too late to come to supper and many other things.

The crocuses are beatiful. We are going to see you Annie. I am writing a play about lady Inez Zollwig [?] but now I have no time to write it any more. Now I will send you our loves and hope you are very well. We went other day out walking and of you we were talking. We were talking of you and GP too.

Of you dear Grannie we 're thinking
Minnie and Annie

Give our love to Flore Marie
and my letter I send you the ethiopian serenader Bill
To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 8 [April, 1847]
Ray/Morgan Thursday

My dear Grannie

We went today with papa to see the house of Lords\(^1\) the new one I mean it was very handsome it is almost nothing but gold the ceiling is done up in squares of oak I think and gold inside of the squares at one end there was some seats for the judges and at the end for attorneys they wore such funny wigs made of horse hair there are ethiopian serenaderesses come out now so that the serenaders are all most forgotten in the placardes\(^2\)

we attend to all your directions respecting G Mama [sic] give the cook and I now make it for her Will you give the enclosed to Flore kiss M\(^3\) Gloyne for us Minnie is makeing great progress in her printing and reads very well she makes no mistakes about the words but is slow.

Mad. Sagnée, our danceing mistress says we are getting on very well the trees are buding and looking very bright and beautiful the boots you got for me are not worn out yet — I have just had some new ones and some strawr bonnets too brimmers with white ribbon and pinck inside just in a simple cross we dig every morning before our lessons for \(\frac{1}{4}\) of an hour the roses are getting on very well G Mama had a letter from Che\(^3\) this morning I canot think they talked about you Cherie did not even metion you perhaps Aunt Mary\(^4\) did We do not get letters as often as
we used but I do not write we have a goodeal to do now but I will write every week and then will expect a letter from you the Ribese a pinck flower is coming up very nicely in the garden I do summes every day now not adition but mulipion and division I forget if I have ever told you of our going to W I quite forget the name it was very pleasant and we had a nice walk and I came and went outside the carriage we saw a black swan today I donot think it as pretty as the white we went in to Westminster Abey but only saw a few tombs because service was going on I have not made a letter in Minnys note she invented and wrote it all herself.

I have been writing to brodie it went of today an Aunt Becher's letter will be put in at the same time She is always asking after you — Uncle Arthur went away on the same day as M Gloyne I will now tell you all we do in the day first we get up have prayers at nine but I will not have place here so good by dear Grannie

Annie
Give our love to every bodie

To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 9 [July 1847]
Ray/Morgan Sunday

Dearest Grannie

I wrote to M\textsuperscript{1} Auber yesterday and asked her M\textsuperscript{1} Simpsons’ address we went to church this afternoon the sermon was when Samuel asked Saul if the Lord liked burnt offerings better than being obeyed out of today’s lesson he then said that some said that they where astonished that though Saul wanted so much to be forgiven that he was not and that his crime was not so great only to have pity but then he said that it was not pity as he destroyed those that where of no use to him and
only kept those that would be and he compared it to our own sowls that we pride ourselves in not doing things that we have no temptation to do and the little ones which we do.\textsuperscript{2} The Parkers where here Saturday last and asked us to go there on Saturday of this week last time we had such fun and they have got some rabbits I do not like my sums not at all we have some yellow lillies in the garden and they shut at night We saw them shutting last night Miss Drury says that the convolvulouses\textsuperscript{3} will do the same Edward\textsuperscript{4} did not come on Friday to day is Monday I have not had my breakfast yet it is about \(\frac{1}{2}\) past 8 we are not at all early I sleep very long and do not get up though I can dress myself but I did this morning do you know we have another second cousin Mr. Erving she had on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of July a little boy I have not seen him yet it has just struck nine we have such [ten words illegible] GM is as usual and very week. Mr. Dombey has married Miss Granger — who is very fond of Florence When we come we will [sic] the numbers most likely to boulougne we have not had our dinner yet but I have donne my lessons I have donne Grannies bits of Noel and Chapsall\textsuperscript{5} and written some dictée and read in Grandfathers tales\textsuperscript{6} give our love to every bodie and to Chérie and Aunt Mary

In the garden this morning is a beautiful snake convolvulous come out and some verbena a red one not the smelling verbena but the flowering one it is scarlart Papa dines at home today for a wonder and nobodie to come and dine with him Mr. Parker has got such nice raspberries She brought a basket of them to G Mamma who liked them very much and got more than usuall of them they were the first she had had

Annie

We have planted a dalia but Mr. Parker has promised us a good one Miss Drury planted 2 slips of geraniums and the mignonette is growing up all very well one of the convolvulouses is out and a beautiful scarlart verbena we had a thunder and lightning storm last night with love to every bodie

Annie
Miss Avery\textsuperscript{7} told me to tell you that she is horrified at the spelling and the writing I have practised on the piano today. What a dear little [line illegible] Do not ask him to write to us tell him we will answer him and I will try and get some smart paper Ask him also to put a drawing at the bottom Give our loves to M.\textsuperscript{5} Gloyne do you see her often I did a sum today it was quite right I miss GP & am going to make some book markers for you and GP.

\textit{To Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth}

Letter 10 [July 1847]
Ray/Morgan

My dear Grannie we went to church this morning the sermon was about the wisdom of Solomon and the man without virtue there was no pleasure.\textsuperscript{1} Sometime ago we went to see some pictures of which you will see an account in punch either this one the week before last’s I am not sure which perhaps the little Irvings will come tomorrow. we went to tea at M.\textsuperscript{5} Parker’s yesterday we had some raspberries of which they had a great many it is very hot today. Papa went in to the country on Wednesday and came back yesterday We went to Gravesend.

I think it will be in next V. Fair that George Osborne is killed and Amelia will have a little boy and Capt.\textsuperscript{4} Dobbin will bring him a horse while he is a baby I think it will be in Normandie.\textsuperscript{2} I know all this from a picture on wood where Amelia is in widows weeds with a little boy and Captain Dobbin is coming in with a horse under his arms while a French little girl with cap on is trying to console her she has (the French girl) got sabots on Do not tell this to any bodie because it is a secret
and if every bodie knew it they would not bye V. Fair. The picture underneath is something like it but the other is much better drawn. I wrote to Aunt Becher yesterday Mrs Auber has not answered my letter yet. I must write again would not that black and white picture do very well for a gost the second gives a goodeal more trouble and not so good an efect.

Monday I have just got your letter thank you for not believing G Mama that we write our letters on the slate before we send them to you for we do not. I have just finished the first chapter of Noel and Chapsal where

Tuesday

They put a word wrong and they there are [?] some rules in the book and I am to correct it. The little Irvings could not come yesterday. Mrs Scott has asked us to spend the day with Susy tomorrow so we are going I have sent a newspaper to Aunt Becher. She has not been very well it is so very hot today that we do not know what to do Miss drury has bought some blue muzlin to line our tippets. I have done a yard and a quater. Give our love to every bodie and to dear Marie and Laure and Collmaches and every bodie tell GP that he must make haste and answer my letter but that it need not be in verse if he canot make one. Good by Dearest Grannie

your
Anne

I miss GP Minnie will write to you I have knited a yard and a half of Mrs Aubers fringe.
To Amy Crowe

Letter 11
Ray/Morgan

O! my Amy shallow hearted
O! my Amy mine no more
Yestern we with Pappy parted
He for Gallia’s barren shore
And to day I got a letter
Through a cloud a ray of light
It said “To Hampstead you can go dear
So fair Amy will you write
& tell us when it is convenient
We should to Hampstead take our flight

A I Titmarsh