INTRODUCTION

I think for my part that we were all very old in those days & that it is now that we are very young. (Letter 36)

From 1859 through 1863 Thackeray’s star was setting; Anny’s, smaller and less brilliant, was rising. Thackeray was plagued with worries about his finances, his literary ability, and his health. He wanted to leave his daughters a fortune and to enjoy the remainder of his life. This necessitated that he earn more money, but his failing health and ensuing sense of desperation made the creation of a highly successful novel less likely. Within these four years Thackeray’s health deteriorated rapidly, leading to his death on Christmas Eve of 1863. Besides accumulating a fortune for his daughters he was determined to leave Anny the legacy of a career. Anny had her first article published in the Cornhill in May 1860. He was proud to see his predictions about her talent come true. She, in turn, was modest about her success. Once Thackeray was confident in his daughters’ future, he appeared content to die.

Thackeray’s traveling was no longer frenetic. His failing health may account in part for this, but he appeared to have achieved an inner peace that resulted from his greater maturity. He built a new home, which he ironically named “Vanity Fair,” and despite the great expense, he loved it. In Letter 34 Anny complains about the cost. She admits that even the beloved Palace Green “has its drawbacks,” as the cost of the house escalated. “Papa has been really out of sorts J & G send in more & more bills 800 just come in for nothings — ” They all
loved the house on Palace Green. Red brick, and built in the Queen Anne manner, the house facing Kensington Gardens was (and still is) beautiful. Their happiness in it added to their delight. Describing her feeling after a performance of *The Wolves and the Lamb* which was given to commemorate the completion of "Vanity Fair," Anny wrote in her diary, "I remember such an odd feeling came over me I suppose this is the summit I shall never feel so jubilant so grand so wildly important & happy again — " And indeed Anny's jubilation was short-lived. The Thackerays moved into Palace Green on 31 March 1862; Thackeray died less than two years later.

His last four years were filled with close association with his mother and his daughters. On 9 September 1861 Major Carmichael-Smyth died. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth moved into Thackeray's home. With Thackeray as arbitrator she caused fewer problems for Anny and Minny than when they had lived with her years before. Even with a broken hip which had left her lame, Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth was a vigorous, opinionated, regal old lady. In 1859 Anny was twenty-two and Minny was three years younger; they could now be his adult companions. Because he was ill so much of the time, Anny and Minny rarely left him alone; they visited away from home one at a time.

Weekends were spent with such friends as the Trollopes, Rothschilds, and Knightons (Letters 32, 35). Other trips were taken not merely to accommodate Thackeray but also for Anny's and Minny's enjoyment, for example, attendance at the Mount Felix Ball (Letter 28). Longer journeys were taken to Folkestone (Letter 29), and to Europe (Letter 30).

For the first time, Anny and Minny wrote to each other because they were traveling without each other. They each went to recuperate from an illness; yet their primary concern in the letters was always their father's health. Anny and Minny's relationship seems to have been a good one, but Minny was still dependent on her sister (Letter 33). Anny treated Minny as the baby sister even in 1859, when Minny was nineteen. In the 1878 journal Anny admitted: "I used to treat Minnie as if she was a very little girl always but one day she looked at me & said You dont suppose Anny that I dont know all the things you think tho you dont say them." Minny exploited her little sister status when it suited her, but was quite capable of being an adult at other times.

The letters written by Minny at this time show a young woman
trying to be independent, yet often regressing into her former position of baby of the family. Anny's description of her, even by Victorian standards, is of a much younger girl. In an 1861 letter Anny characterized her as "nearly 21 and absurdly young for her age for she still likes playing with children and kittens & hates reading & is very shy tho' she does not show it & very clever tho' she does not do any thing in particular."6

Away for a month in Scotland for the frequently prescribed change of air, Minny's letters disclose, by 1863, an intelligent, witty, and sharp-tongued young woman. Her letters are lively and full of acerbic observations. For example, to Anny:

I may as well write to you pour passer le temps as the french say. Have something nice to eat prepared for me against my return Mind this & remember that I am now accustomed like Brownie to a great deal of notice There's a sweet oyster woman if you had a voice like a oyster what a comfort it w'd be to Papa — (Letter 40)

Minny also alludes to feelings of rivalry between herself and her sister that Anny only mentions in her journals.

Minny's visit to Scotland was a success. Thackeray wrote to his friend John Brown:

I am very glad you like my little Min. With her and her Sister I have led such a happy life, that I am afraid almost as I think of it, lest any accident should disturb it. . . . I think she ought to come back to her Papa and sister. We three get on so comfortably together, that the house is not the house, when one is away.7

In The Virginians, begun in 1857 and finished in 1859, Thackeray portrayed his exemplary family the Lamberts. The Colonel and his wife live in harmony, understanding, and love. They have sons who are away at school; thus the two daughters, Theo and Hetty, complete the family picture. In a letter Thackeray wrote, "I am afraid the 2 Lambert girls in the Virginians are very like them [my young women], but of course deny it if anybody accuses me."8 Although Anny is lovingly portrayed as Theo, the elder Lambert daughter, she is really a synthesis of eighteenth-century virtues, Thackeray's milksop maiden,9 and Anny's real character "(with her usual propensity to consider herself a miserable sinner) always reproach[ing] herself" (chapter 92). In the 1864 journal Anny wrote, "Papa once said — not long ago — Anny always manages to reproach herself whatever happens." Theo's
physical appearance matches that of Thackeray’s dear fat old Anny. His description of the two Lamberts, “saucy Hetty or generous Theodosia” (chapter 23), is also reminiscent of the two Thackeray girls. In the Colonel’s introduction of his daughters, he dismisses Hetty with a curt “Here is Miss Hester,” but he affectionately lists Miss Theo with all her virtues, comic or otherwise. Thackeray repeatedly calls Hetty “saucy” and “Madam Pert,” attributes jealousy to her (chapter 23), and indicates the Lambert girls’ different reactions to a situation by recounting Hetty’s anger and Theo’s pity (chapter 62).

In *The Virginians* Thackeray is writing nostalgically, sentimentally, remembering what he experienced for only a short time—a happy family life which contained “among the blessings which Heaven hath bestowed the love of a faithful woman” (chapter 21). Theo and Hetty are faithful to their father, but in a curious way which departs from reality. Theo marries, has a large family and lives in Victorian happiness ever after. In love with the obtuse Harry, Hetty remains an old maid devoted to her father. The course of Anny’s and Minny’s lives did not follow fiction, nor did Thackeray live long enough to see how his determination of the situation was altered by reality. While he depicted what he knew about his daughters, the young Lambert girls remain charming, natural, and honest. When they grow older and Thackeray turns them into stock Victorian heroines, they become dull. However, he always writes of them with affection and tenderness.

Amy Crowe had also become an integral part of the Thackeray household. Thackeray himself dubbed her “dear good little Dorrit!” who was “so good and gentle that actually nobody in my family is jealous of her.” What Thackeray said of Amy was augmented by Anny’s description of her: “one of the best and gentlest & kindest of women.” Anny’s letters to Amy afford an honest assessment of the Thackerays because they describe a home with which Amy was familiar, while at the same time she was unhampered by family ties. Amy was and simultaneously was not Anny’s sister. A greater freedom of exchange of ideas existed between the two than between Anny and Minny, because Thackeray the father never came between the friends. Amy’s father may not have been very kind to her, but he existed; Thackeray was only a substitute and, given Amy’s “little Dorrit” quality, no real threat.

In Letter 36, written to Amy in India where she has gone to live
with her husband, Anny described the Thackeray household with the assurance that Amy will "know exactly what it is all like," comparing it with her life as a child: "I think for my part that we were all very old in those days & that it is now that we are very young." Still, there are problems: "it is not at all so couleur de rose." She explores her own feeling with a pen: "Isn't [it] a delightful comfort that we are all so happy together. I should be quite happy if it wasn't for those mysterious griefs of mine. There is rather a tragedy going on in the house." Abruptly she defuses the topic of her own griefs by speaking, not of her tragedy, but of one in which the housemaid has been caught pilfering. What her "griefs" are, she does not specify, if she knew them at all.\textsuperscript{13}

Although Anny was launched on a career, she was not certain of its promise or even of its assured existence. Her beloved Amy was gone; her friends (many younger than Anny) were getting married; her letters are full of references to engagements and marriages (Letters 29, 30, 34).

In Letter 35 she described Amy's departure for India, "Yah what hateful things partings are." Anny had developed the ability to generalize from a specific situation. Perhaps Amy's departure caused her to remember the buried trauma of Isabella's removal. Anny's dark moods became more pronounced as she got older. However, she was aware of them and learned to deal with them. In Letter 28 she wrote: "This is an unfavourable day for my correspondents. I mean I'm very grumpy & in the blues, so please don't fancy from the desponding tone of my letter that things aren't going very well with us, & that we aren't very grateful to Providence." After outlining all the externals that had gone wrong and how the problems had been solved, she added that "Now we are very jolly, that is as jolly as people are generally, when they have everything they can wish for, except Mr. Yates friendship." Her own state of being depended to a large degree on those around her; her answer to despondency was humor. She took a serious situation and laughed at it—often at herself. As in the letter to Amy in India when Anny denigrated her mysterious griefs by following the reference to them with the housemaid's tragedy, here she diminished her own problems with the reference to the Yates affair.

Anny's joke about the Garrick Club affair in her letter to Synge is a good indication that Thackeray, often thin-skinned where his honor and dignity were concerned, had finally decided to back away from his grievances. In an earlier letter to Amy Crowe in December of 1858
(Letter 26) Anny related with gusto the state of the affair, relishing all the gossip and hearsay; however, after a year of wrangling, public attacks, and private feuds, Anny and Thackeray as well were satiated with it.

Anny's letters to the Synges are chatty and full of reports about Thackeray. Although replete with details, the letters do not contain the confidences found in Anny's letters to Amy. In Letter 28 Anny described Thackeray's health: "It's all lemonade & giving up other more intoxicating liquors." About the Garrick club affair she wrote: "We are begging our Jupiter to keep in his thunder & not even read it [the Yates pamphlet] & as he has taken to paying great attention to what we say lately perhaps he wont." Yet no matter how indulgent a father Thackeray was, no matter how much Anny thought he was listening to her and Minny, she admitted to the Synges that they "let Papa do as he likes" (Letter 29).

Thackeray's closeness to his daughters is revealed by the fact that he discussed his financial and literary concerns with them. Anny knew about the arrangements Thackeray had concluded for his editorship of the Cornhill: "1000 a year for editing & then he's paid for his articles beside" (Letter 31). In addition, she recounted his anguish at the lack of success of The Adventures of Philip. "Well then Philip is a regular failure if you know what it is to have a pianoforte played upon y's nerves that is what Papa is going thro. Though he dont say much about it" (Letter 34). Because of the expense of the house and the failure of his new novel to make money, Thackeray was forced to "write like mad. wh isn't very favorable to composition." However, the real problem was, as always now, Thackeray's health. "These are all very trifling troubles if he could get 3 days of wellness I shdnt care hes not worse than usual only more bothered." Once caught up in the fever of building his house, Thackeray spared nothing. He was resolute about leaving a fortune for his daughters. Tired and ill as he was, he drove himself, knowing that what he produced was not up to his usual standard. 14

In a later reminiscence Anny disclosed that her father lived in "good company." 15 As a child she had been witness to his way of life; now as an adult she became part of Thackeray's world of "eminent Victorians." Still functioning as Thackeray's daughter, she also partook of the London season as well as of its cultural activities. Her description in Letter 36 of the paintings in the exhibition of the Royal Academy which opened on 2 May 1863 is sensitive and knowledgeable.
Another important factor in Anny's letters is her growing literary ability. Descriptions of both people and places became sharper and more focused. She dispensed gossip in narrative scenes, complete with conversation. Though her subject matter flowed in an unconscious stream from one topic to another without paragraphs, she was extremely conscious of her style. For example, in Letter 27 she wrote, "We thought of you on Sunday with very red noses & numb fingers & bad colds — that is us you know — not you." When the meaning was muddled, she clarified it.

Her ear for the vernacular in conversation (even in French) is sharp, as shown in the exchange between the Thackerays and the waiter and other travelers who share their journey. Particularly amusing is the Frenchman "with a fat old wife sucking liquorice big rings mittens dyed hair" (Letter 30). These descriptions—briefly highlighting striking characteristics, authentic sounding conversation, and suitable tone—are all reminiscent of Thackeray. Her thoughts, her judgments, are of course her own, as is her love of nature. For example in Letter 36: "Outside the moon was shining the stars blazing a beautiful soft little breezy wind came through the lilac trees. It was a sort of poetry tonight in the middle of prosy everyday." Some of her sentences are still rough and unpolished (she was writing letters which were not for publication), but there is ample evidence that she was seeing and hearing with a professional's sensibility.

Anny's letters reveal a startling candor mixed with a pull toward exaggeration. Thus she writes in Letter 27, "I wrote you a letter last night full of such astounding news that Minny would not let me send it — So tonight I must send you a little word much more common-place & rather more truthful." And later in the same letter Anny insists that her story about Dr. Anslie was a "pure invention" of her own. Anny needed to find a format for her inquiring mind and her judgments of character that would not slander any of her acquaintances.

Many years later she explained to George Smith, publisher of the \textit{Cornhill}, how her first article, "Little Scholars," came into being.

I had written several novels and a tragedy by the age of fifteen, but then my father forbade me to waste my time any more scribbling, and desired me to read other people's books.

I never wrote any more except one short fairy tale, until one day my father said he had got a very nice subject for me, and that he thought I might now begin to write again. That was \textit{Little Scholars} which he
christened for me and of which he corrected the stops and the spelling, and which you published to my still pride and rapture.\(^6\)

In his own *Reminiscences* Smith continued the story:

> Thackeray sent it to me and a letter containing the following passage: “And in the meantime comes a contribution called *Little Scholars*, which I send you, and which moistened my paternal spectacles. It is the article I talked of sending to *Blackwood*; but why should *Cornhill* lose such a sweet paper because it was my dear girl who wrote it? Papas, however, are bad judges — you decide whether we shall have it or not!”\(^7\)

Describing three charity schools in London, the essay is simple, conversational, and without pretense. Although there is no Dickensian horror or shrill indignation at the poverty of the children, neither does Anny whitewash or falsify reality. She admires the efforts of those who try to alleviate the distress of the children and teach them useful trades, all the while being captivated by the children themselves. She informs her readers about how many children may be fed a hot lunch for one shilling. Without comment she tells the harrowing tale of a little girl and her drunken father; while of another group she writes: “Mr. Millais might make a pretty picture of the little scene.”\(^8\)

Of special interest is the third school Anny visited, one for Jewish children in the slums of Spitalfields. Whether Thackeray chose it for her is not known, but her treatment of this school is refreshing and strangely clear-sighted for a Victorian: “Little Jew babies are uncommonly like little Christians; just as funny, as hungry, as helpless, and happy now that the bowls of food come steaming in” (120). Anny speaks to the reader with a charming grace. It is indeed a “sweet paper.” Thackeray recommended the article to a friend, “Read the *Cornhill Magazine* for May; the article *Little Scholars* is by my dear old fat Anny.”\(^9\) Having guided Anny’s career, Thackeray was happy with her debut.

Several other publications followed in the *Cornhill*; Anny’s first novel, *The Story of Elizabeth*, ran in the magazine from September 1862 through January 1863. “*Little Scholars*” with its honesty, clarity, and simplicity set the pattern for Anny’s nonfiction; *Elizabeth* became the prototype for her fiction.

Anny’s plots comply with many conventions of the Victorian novel. Her plots begin with a change in the life of the heroine, and then, like her father’s masterwork, *Vanity Fair*, trace the vicissitudes of the lives
of two women, one of whom is frequently more moral and seemingly more deserving of happiness than the other. Yet this heroine has some kind of moral lapse. Eventually, however, she rejects one suitor and is consequently married to the “right” suitor.\textsuperscript{20}

With the exception of \textit{Mrs. Dymond}, which is a full bildungsroman in that the heroine grows and matures into a woman, the heroines in Anny’s novels reach only a partial awakening. They are passive Victorian ladies whose psyches Anny explores so that the reader understands them better than they do themselves. Anny’s novels are notable for their sense of reality, for their evocation of the past, for their appreciation of nature, for their honesty, humor, and understanding of the predicament of many women in her age, and for their easy and graceful style.

It is striking that the heroine in Anny’s novels is frequently an orphan. Although this is a common theme in Victorian novels (though in Thackeray it is Becky not Amelia who is an orphan), given her own parental circumstance it is understandable that Anny’s literary mothers are usually absent, ineffectual, or cruel, so that the heroine sometimes must mature within a single-parent home and often will have difficulties owing to this limitation. There is perhaps in Anny’s history also a personal reason for the repeated usage of dead fathers in her novels: such a close daughter-father relationship as she and Thackeray had can bring with it a need to keep the father absent or, symbolically, no longer existent in order to avoid any threat of unconscious incest.

Interestingly, \textit{The Story of Elizabeth} was attacked in \textit{The Athenaeum} because the reviewer found that it “turns upon a subject which is, or ought to be, quite inadmissible for a novel: the antagonism of a mother and daughter, both rivals for the love of the same man. it trenches on the sin of incest.” The reviewer does not seem to understand fully the dynamics of the relationship, but shows proper Victorian outrage at the tone that Anny adopts toward a man who entices three women to love him. Reviewers of Thackeray’s first novel, \textit{Vanity Fair}, also objected to the mocking tone of the author. Looking toward Anny’s future, \textit{The Athenaeum’s} reviewer admits that “there is enough in the author to make us wish to see it come to perfection.”\textsuperscript{21}

Despite \textit{The Athenaeum} attack, \textit{The Story of Elizabeth} was generally well received. The plot hangs precipitously on chance—yet there are passages of great authority. Her descriptions of the household of Pasteur Tourneur, the man Elizabeth’s mother marries, and of his
preaching are striking. Modeled on Monsieur Monod, the minister whose cours Anny was forced to attend by her grandmother in Paris, Tourneur possesses the right proportions of cruelty and pride underneath his charismatic religiosity. The meanness of the strict home bears the touch of authenticity. Anny’s probing of Elizabeth’s psyche uncovers pertinent questions. Elizabeth “could not have told you herself—what she wanted, what perfection of happiness, what wonderful thing.” Unsure of herself and outmaneuvered by her mother, Elizabeth allows the older woman to sever her relationship with her lover, Dampier. After an almost fatal brain fever, Elizabeth and her lover are reunited. On this simple domestic tale Anny has superimposed her knowledge of the Calvinist Parisian society, and an exploration of the two women’s inner lives. Although Elizabeth is the heroine, the mother’s mature discontents override the daughter’s adolescent problems.

Strangely, the novel ends on a melancholy note, despite the fact that Elizabeth and her husband are walking in a moonlit garden. The last paragraphs describe Elizabeth’s mother as “haggard and weary,” her husband as “old and worn” (194). Told by a narrator, the last sentences of the novel read:

I looked back for the last time at the courtyard with the hens pecking round about the kitchen door; at the garden with the weeds and flowers tangling together in the sun; at the shadows falling across the stones of the yard. I could fancy Elizabeth a prisoner within those walls, beating like a bird against the bars of the cage, and revolting and struggling to be free.

The old house is done away with and exists no longer. It was pulled down by order of the Government, and a grand new boulevard runs right across the place where it stood. (194–95)

The narrator looks at the present and sees within it the past which Elizabeth escaped and the future which will destroy all outward signs of the present. Elizabeth the prisoner escaped into the arms of Dampier; Anny had no such hero. As Lady Dampier, Elizabeth forgets her earlier questioning; life with Dampier fulfilled her tentative quest for a “perfection of happiness.” For Anny, her quest was just beginning. Her heroine was typically Victorian; Anny was not.

Both George Lewes and George Eliot have left interesting comments on The Story of Elizabeth. Lewes was editor of the Cornhill at the time it was publishing Anny’s novel. He wrote: “But I am savage with Miss Thackeray—she has gone abroad without sending the finale to
her story and without letting me know how much it will make. Chip of the old block!” Eliot, however, was more appreciative of Anny. She wrote:

We send to-day ‘Orley Farm,’ ‘The Small House at Allington,’ and ‘The Story of Elizabeth.’ ‘The Small House’ is rather lighter than ‘Orley Farm.’ ‘The Story of Elizabeth’ is by Miss Thackeray. It is not so cheerful as Trollope, but is charmingly written. You can taste it and reject it if it is too melancholy.

Eliot’s admiration of Anny’s writing increased with the years, until in 1875 she wrote: “I am obliged to fast from fiction, and fasting is known sometimes to weaken the stomach. I ought to except Miss Thackeray’s stories, which I cannot resist when they come near me—and bits of Mr. Trollope, for affection’s sake.” This is indeed praise from the most intellectual of Victorian novelists.

An earlier short story published first in the Cornhill in 1863 titled “Out of the World” uses a variation of the two-women plot. Roberta keeps house for her brother Dr. Rich, who marries a spoiled patient, Horatia. What she needs is an occupation, he tells her, “Don’t most women? Don’t I find you all like prisoners locked up between four walls, with all sorts of wretched make-shift employments, to pass away time? Why, this room is a very pretty prison.” Alluded to at the end of Elizabeth, the theme of woman as prisoner is here openly stated both by the doctor and Horatia. Cut off from fashionable society, she leads a “Petit Trianon existence” (139), and Rich realizes his mistake. “The two pictures [each had of marriage] were not in the least like one another, or like the reality even” (138). Disaster follows and Rich dies. Although at first overcome by grief and guilt, Horatia returns to her old life. Anny concludes with a conventional happy ending of marriage for Roberta, but her handling of Horatia is unconventional. Given a chance for a fuller, richer life, Horatia cannot live “out of the world.” Anny explains her title: There are “people of the world” (that is of society) and “people out of the world, Horatia was a small person of the world” (109). In the end she consciously returns to her useless, frenetic existence. The absence of resolution of Horatia’s problem echoes an immaturity similar to Anny’s at the time she wrote the novel. The story is slight, but Anny’s questioning of a woman’s role in society is valid. Out of her own strivings, Anny fashioned a narrative with a prickly ending and a heroine conscious of an unresolved problem.
For the last six months of his life Thackeray was busy writing *Denis Duval*. He worked on this historical novel with renewed artistic vigor; the opening chapters prove that his imagination once again matched his skill. In the eulogy Dickens wrote for the *Cornhill*, he spoke of Thackeray’s daughters: “In those twenty years of companionship with him, they had learned much from him; and one of them has a literary course before her worthy of her famous name.” 27 The future would prove Dickens right.
LETTERS 27–40

To. Mr. and Mrs. Cole

Letter 27 36. Onslow Square. S. W. [before 6 March 1859]¹

Ray/Morgan

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Cole. I wrote you a letter last night full of such astounding news that Minnie would not let me send it — So tonight I must send you a little word much more common-place & rather more truthful — Everybody sends you their love & is charmed to hear you are getting well & journeying pleasantly. We thought of you on Sunday with very red noses & numb fingers & bad colds — that is us you know — not you — & we pictured Mrs. Cole in a light muslinette & Mr. Cole in his shirt sleeves sitting in an Italian temple on a marble bench eating ices. Tishy² came to lunch with us off roast Beef and Papa paid her so many compliments about her blue ribbons &ct that I began to tell her she had best go home & see how her brothers & sisters were getting on. And then we went for a walk in the H. G.³ Crowds of fashionables — three young men from Harveys — an old lady in a fur jacket — an old gentleman who stood stock still for ten minutes looking at us thro' his eyeglasses until little Manson Craigie⁴ cried out [sic] I say old feller dont stare!” upon wh he meekly put them up and went away — and then a couple—such a sweet couple — this is for Mrs. Cole because a stern masculine intellect would despise the feeble gossip — The big Hairy Hat young man with the pipe & little Miss I think who called him “Tom.” Tishy said. — then there was Capt Fawke.⁵ O O cry the little Craigies is that the man who invented the umbrella! and a hundred other people besides. Grannie has just come home from Southampton where she went to see Edmund⁶ off — poor Mrs. Craigie breaking her heart abt him Mrs. James Wilson⁷ was on board with a daughter & going to Malta & I think that sounds rather pleasant. Today Mary⁸ came to see us looking very bright & nice & we had a walk to Harveys where we spent some of our 2 Papa’s money & Tishy we were told was going to stop at home all day and make Gingerbread nuts for tomorrow. That sounds
like the Queen of Hearts doesn't it? I told you in my letter yesterday that Dr Anslie had been taken up by the police after partaking too freely of the champagne at Mr. Theggelas [?] [word illegible] breakfast but that was a pure invention of my own and a shameful thing it is to spread such unfounded reports. His Aunt came to see us the other day the dearest nicest bigottedist little Catholic. She is going to take us as a great treat to the convent of the poor clares who never lie down & pat about on stones all the winter. I wish by the by I could manage to tell you how cold it has been and as for my showerbath Burrrrrrooooooo.
Papa has been pretty well all this time & comes down to lunch saying quite cheerfully "there's a deuce of a row going on upstairs between Emily MacWhirter and Eliza Baynes" and then he goes off on his own devices & we see him no more. I went to call at Mrs. Brookfields on Saturday and found her with a beautiful sort of violet Toga she had made & designed herself entirely. It's a gown but there are no seams & long graceful folds & I assure you the effect is perfect. I think a livery of this sort for the young ladies at the Museum would be most desirable but of course if the plan should be adopted I shall expect something for my idea. Mrs. Brookfield is going to stop at Lady Dorothy Nevilles with whom they have struck up & Magdelene is busy decorating her room all over with painted paper butterflies with the wings turned up to look natural. That puts me in mind of a letter [w]h I didn't but Amy providentially read in [w]b he says he is very much obliged to Mrs. Cayley [w]h I didn't but Amy providentially read in [w]b he says he is very much obliged to Mrs. Cole & tells us confidentially that he is persuaded there is a market for his wares & that he shall get ten pound for the Honeycomb pattern. Mrs. Bell says nothing & so I am beginning to quack. Grannie is having a little dispute with us about Molyneux clock [w]b we say is a quarter of an hour slow She says all the other clocks are fast but all the clocks I am afraid say it is time to go to bed & leave off talking to you. I have been writing ever so long and I have not said half as much as I could do if I could be with you for 5 minutes at Florence. But we do hope you are enjoying yourselves & were you not delighted about your eldest little he-pig at Woolwich and all the others looking very well & fat & ready for killing — or killing other people rather & we send our love and I am always y' affectionate

Anny THY
P.S. Monday morning 8.30 a messanger arrives f[m] the Secretary of
the Guy Fawkes Committee to request me instantly to pay up my
subscription

To W. W. F. Synge

Letter 28
Fales Sunday. March 6. 36. [1859]

My dear M’Synge.

I have been looking about all over the house for thick paper to write
to you upon & give my news such as it is. This is an unfavourable day for
my correspondents. I mean Im very grumpy & in the blues, so please
dont fancy from the desponding tone of my letter that things arn’t going
very well with us, & that we arnt very grateful to Providence. First of all
that Papa is really a little better. Its all lemonade & giving up other more
intoxicating liquors, next that we are home again, for I think I havent
written to you since Granny broke her hip & Min & I went to Paris to
nurse her & Amy to Wales & Papa ill here and everybody wretched.
Now we are very jolly, that is as jolly as people are generally, when
they have everything they can wish for, except M’ Yates friendship. The
lawgoing has been given over. It w’d have had to go into Chancery wh is
expensive & so a abusive pamphlet is coming out.¹ We are begging our
Jupiter to keep in his thunder & not even read it & as he has taken to
paying great attention to what we say lately perhaps he wont. I needn’t
tell you how glad we are to have news of you (even thro the N. York
Paper) & how we are beginning to want you back again. One goes on
very well for a little time when one is away oneself & quite miserable,
but now that we have time to look about us we are thinking that we
want you all back very much & that you have ben junketting about with
plenipotentiaries quite long enough.² I want to see my God son³ too &
question him in his catechism. Only I dont think his mother w’d stand
it. The Mount Felix ball this year went off famous. Papa behaved nobly.
took us down dined at Oatlands Pk Hotel. Went with us stopped till
4½ slept at OPH.⁴ Came back to town next day. As for Partners we
had 22 each, & really liked it as much as last time. I dont know if other
people did though & M’e Sturgis⁵ as I was going away said. Ah. We
wanted M’e Synge to set it going. I have been wishing for him constantly
this evening. It's not been the same without him. and then she said it
over again to somebody else. The Russels were in the house. Katey
looking really extraordinarily good looking. I was quite surprised &
wondered whether it was her. a high wreath. bright colour & white dress
& flirting rather with M. Crawford. I should have like to pull his nose (only
please this is confidential) there was some mystery or other. Everything
has been on & off again between him & Lily & the poor child looked so
awfully wretched & miserable that it almost twisted ones heart to see her
& there he was gallivanting about & spiting her. Its a shame, because his
side broke it off, & I am sure he's bad natured. John was frisking about
& flirting also a good deal with Lou while Mr. John looked on benignly
tho an eyeglass She was beautifully dressed, exceedingly bumptious and
I really think one of least prepossessing women I have ever come across.
Mr. Felix has on his brass buttons. He had a white waistcoat & a black
neckcloth — Harry had a white neck ribbon & a black waistcoat. May
had no end of partners Miss Gordon was there not so handsome as
last year Miss Holland Lady Holland in flimsy satinet. Col. Ham-
ley of course & a little old comic Mr. Alexander who is perfectly frantic
about Mr. Julia & has seen the Colonel very near indeed. This little
O.C. danced the highland fling (so did I with Arthur Prinsep danced
everybody down) We met Mr. Alex. a day or two ago. Ah! said Minny
there is nobody so handsome here as a certain lady we know Mr. Alex.
I dont know who you mean said he, but if it is the most beautiful of
natures works & the most charming & amiable of her sex with whom
there never was anyone to compare — Mr. Russell Sturgis in short; I
quite agree with you. He wears pumps with large bows Mr. A does &
a wig with a curl on each side of his head. The fashion
is really very comic, & we cant help laffing at him for
it. Our Coles came back from Rome, by the same post
wh brought your two last letters. They went for their
Fathers health wh was quite broken with hard work & so he & Tishy
& Mary packed up 3 little carpet bags & set off on their travels. I am
trying to remember how many of your friends we have seen but we've
been extremely quiet & hardly met anybody. Mr. Abbott I saw one day at
Mr. Ells's & had a little talk with, his uncle dined with us, a charming
old gentleman we both fell in love with. Florence Proby came to tea
with us (I just rather think we missed you then — it didn't go off half as
well; through we had a grander tree & a Magic Lantern in Papa's room)
looking very very smart in little white silk boots. Uncle Arthur has been very nearly put into prison by Mr. Isaacs over the way (this is also confidential) Farel goes on being ridiculous the winter has vanished & everybody is coming out in large white linen umbrellas lined with green. Please bring it home with you — there came a ring at the bell & Mr. M's [word illegible] walked in, very glad to get news of you; it was six o'clock & I felt very guilty at only having tea to offer him as Papa & I were going out to dinner. He's been ill with a cough he told me & sent his very best messages to you. Minny is upstairs studying astronomy, Papa is not up & is reading the Times, Amy is improving her mind at the window and I am everybody's mouthpiece when I tell you that we wish you health & happiness & good luck & lots of money & are your affectionately. 36. Onslow Sq.

To W. W. F. Synge

Letter 29 Pavilion. Folkestone
Fales Aug. 27. 1. 5 p.m. [1859]

Abominable brass band shreiking discordant polkas, vessels swinging in the port. Old gentleman with yellow waistcoat & umbrella under his arm walking across the prospect [?] Papa wild in next room Virginians (No. 24) brought to a sudden stand still Sunshine hills ladies in Spanish hats, gentlemen, [two words illegible] masts lamp-posts, young lady in No 8 writing to gentleman at the other side of the world. Who she wishes back again with all her heart, & so do her relations who are also stopping at Folkestone & taking their pleasures. When we opened y' letter & found that instead of saying I shall be home on the 14 with my wife and children & y' Godson, it was only I have been ill & am seedy still I neednt say how sorry & provoked we were but I hope my dear M'. Synge you will be all right again long before this sheet of paper has travelled out to that mysterious country you write from and that the next time we see y' writing it wont be shaky & wont give us bad news about you any more. I gave y' message with the figures to Papa who says he has
written. He's in very good spirits & jolly today at last thank God. His No. is finished, he's recovered f[m] his last attack of Spasms I think he's really better of those & though constantly ill one way or another we aint ½ as anxious as we used to was. As for the V8ns1 It's a great comfort they're over — Sat'dy R.2 will be in to them as sure as eggs is eggs, Sat: is very welcome for though I own they're stupid & uninteresting they're gentlemanly & dignified & a man can't be lively for ever. (We went out fishing at 8 o'clock this morning & brought home two small fishes & I still feel so sick I hardly know what I am writing about & so if I am not lively w'h I ought to be, its only a temporary stoppage) I suppose you will laff to hear of Mf. Crawford's marriage. I did as I perfectly well remember abusing him to Miss Ford w'h ought to be a lesson to one never to speak ones mind abt anybody to anybody else particularly if they're privately engaged to be married. Mf. Abbott is also spliced to his cousin Miss Smyth3 & Mr. John Sturgis has got a baby. I forget which sort. We have hardly seen anything of them this y'r. She asked us once to dinner & we cdn't go & she couldn't come to us when we asked her, but we saw em out once or twice in white & green & diamonds & dear old Stister Murgis in a clue boat with bass bruttons. John looks 20 years older & Lou Perry has been going to be married, but there was some hitch about money & I dont know how its ended. Y'r uncle came & dined with us one very hot day when the ice didn't come till dinner was over & ladies & gentlemen & dinner were all melting away. he was as kind & pleasant as ever but a talkative Baronet shut him up so he only looked pleasant through his little eyes. We have been coming out very strong in Baronets all middle aged bachelors, there's one of them very nice here who we see all day long; not middle aged of course or it w'dn't be the thing but 60 or so we breakfast & walk & dine with him & let Papa do as he likes, & go over to Hythe where they practise musquetry & drink tea with Granny & GP every day who are living there for the present.4

To Amy Crowe

Letter 30
Ray/Morgan [16 September 1859]1

My dearest May Anne. This is Sepbr 16 Thursday I think more or less. I'm writing under a nice cool arcade of columns with lilac trees
growing I have got 2 dz. great mosquito bites round my poor little eyes. We have been O jolly to Blgne as you know thence dash across Paris (only dining there also an amazing little cafe by the J des Pltes to Tours; w\textsuperscript{h} we reached at 3 o’clock the morning after, & where we had peaches for breakfast & saw a nice smiling old city with gardens full of flowers & turrets & not very many people, and from Tours another long day to Bordeaux w\textsuperscript{h} we reached one night with all the stars shining & the South seemed to begin, black eyed folks a great Bustling station & then splendid, long quais & bridges & rows of lamps handsomer almost than Paris: We drove off in state to a filthy hotel decorated with dahlias & Laurels & dirt & slop & pails in every corner & were shown into some swell apartments reeking with dinner, & no wonder. I thought I’d fling open the window & enjoy the lovely evening & it only looked into the passage with half dozen people coming & going & all staring in & so though we dont like making a fuss we weren’t sorry when Papa asked for another room upstairs for us, a little step, but a great blue sky with stars & tall houses opposite where we saw them all at work in the morning. Young lady with black hair & yellow handkerchief cames looks out spits into the street. Old lady in a peignoir brushing her combs ditto, femme de menage dusting & brushing, femme de chambre coming & going with caps &ct. The old Lady came out very smart when her toilet was completed & sat the whole day long at her bed room window. On Sunday we got into the old Bordeaux w\textsuperscript{h} is very curious & striking brown red light & shade Amazing old women in great white caps little Murillo boys & a funeral 30 young ladies in black & bottines tripping along after it with their hair parted on one side, parties playing at dominoes in the by streets a couple of ancient churces & a tower: We descend? Qu’est qu’il y’a Des Cadavres M. parfaitement conservés. But we didn’t w\textsuperscript{h} I wasn’t sorry of. We’d been to some wine vaults in the morning quite awful enough goodness knows with rampant fungii & creeping & slimy & oozy horrors till just as you come out its a perfick vertigo of em layer over layer. As for the bottles, you have seen bottles & can imagine them. And indeed as we each walked along with a candle in a little procession
we thought we had seen enough long before the entertainment was over. We stayed at Bx 2 days in which time the dahlias & Laurels were only stuck up for the Kg. of Belgium, not the mere luxuriance of the South as I fancied at first, had time to fade & look more and more untidy & we were very very glad to get away from all the grub to Toulouse for Papa had a fancy. I never saw a charminger road no — not anywhere — Vines and ancient villages all along the way & miles & grapes & aboundings, in fact very much what I have so graphically represented in the accompanying sketch from memory. Flocks of turkeys pigs and queer interiors. But all this jolly business stops at Toulouse where theresa very nice inn with Algerian curtains & a very nice dinner (by the way we had none for 3 days or only such a scamper that it scarcely counted) & more peaches. Theyre a sort of mixture of grapes & apricots very tough. Toulouse is like Neuilly like Courbevoie only uglier but they are very kind folks whereas at Bordeaux they actually glared at us in the streets. The quai at Bdx is a wonderful sight there are queer gay painted flat bottomed barques with country folks on board which look like scenes at the play. One awful old woman dressed in yellow was crouching all by herself at the prow of one of these, & it was piled & piled with great onions behind, you can fancy with the blue for a back ground what a bit of colour it made. Papa called her The Lady of Shalott. The next days journey was a very queer one the lovely South of France is perfectly hideous & horrible (here came a long drive by the sea limpid blue with lilacest hills & mermaids dashing against the rocks & now only half an hour to tell a thousand things.) To go on with the Sth of France its covered like snow with miles & miles of chalky dust so thick on the ground the men & women the trees that you see no colour except this dismal whitey brown paper colour in which everything seems to be carefully wrapped up. We passed Carcassonne standing like this in a vast plain black ruins with the sky beyond & night (as you observe coming on — that was awful enough but when we got to Narbonne where we had meant to stop the great mouldering dust the silence the awful black lonely towers black & Moorish & ghastly beyond description, when we saw all this we dashed down some dinner with a lot of Spaniards (N. is close upon Spain we were
very near going) & getting into the train again went on to Séte where we thought we shd like some tea. Little old teapot standing all by itself in the middle of the table. Here waiter, du lait du sucre du pain et du beurre s’il vous plaît: "Nous n’avons pas de lait Mademoiselle. (Min declares I mildly replied in English French O n’importe) bread & butter then. Nous n’avons pas de beurre Mademoiselle. il n’est pas bon dans ce pays ci. & so we sopped our bread in the nastiest tea very pale rather sweet & with an indefinable dusty mouldy taste. Very nice family travelling the same way, old lady in red feathers uncommonly confidential How dirty one gets travelling to be sure (if you cd have seen her you wouldn’t have said no) And how expensive the washing is. I never have any done. No. I calculate and bring all I think I shall want with me from home. You see I wear a black petticoat, whipping up her dress and if I get to any place I slip a white one over it. But she was very good natured & not a bit X when a lady travelling with an invalid husband in a night cap upset a bottle of wine over it. Another queer little man got in with a fat old wife sucking liquorice big rings mittens dyed hair. M. said he La Ferrance demande la guerre perché l’Angleterre sostine a garder et proteger les coquins qu’ont voulu agragoener [?] notre empreuer Monsieur La Ferance J’indigne. M. la Ferrance vous fera payer votre ostination avec les dernières gouttes de votre sang & he clenched his hands & jumped on his legs & we burst out laughing. Voilà la quatrième stationg says his wife quite placid — Then he told us that he had been up in a balloon & down at the bottom of the sea in a diving dress he had himself invented & that there are lovely grottoes covered with coral & grapes & raspberries w’h go squash if you bring them up & that he supplied the Navy & was going to build a Hotel at the B. de Blgne. Veux tu du Regliss Fillo! to the fat wife who wd just point her wishes & then he’d execute them. J’parie ché c’est le cousin J’parie ché c’est son chapeau dant c’té caléche says she. and then he very grand, Ce sont nos parents qui viennent nous chercher dans leur voiture a eux. Bonjour Monsieur Bonj’ Mesdames. After Séte it grows very pretty again you
skirt the sea now — then you pass Nimes Arles & Montpellier all dusty & wrapped up in in brown paper. You know how Nathalie goes on I'm sure she never was there But if it wasnt for the dust Nimes & Arles too w'd be charming places & lots of flowers grow I fancy. Tarascon is perfectly charming. You come to a river & to a little quai again, & on each side of the river is a hill & on each hill an ancient town with convents & a castle on the brow & spires & old brick walls & by the way Tishy & Mary have seen Tarascon but I don't fancy they can have taken the drive at Marseilles that we did this morning. I think it beats Naples blue & green & lilac & heavenly tints all over. Tomorrow we are going post to Nice. 4 horses 3 outside one (Sims) in. We are at the Hotel d'Orient. We went out this evening to go to the play but lost our way & came home again. We dined at the table d'hote today. There was a tall gentleman in spectacles & 2 yng. ladies all over mosquito bites besides ourselves. With a little bottle of ammonia w'h they keep dabbing on. And we were rung in to dinner by a tremendous bell & you may fancy how foolish we looked at the 3 plates. I who had thought of putting on a silk dress! I sh'd think theyre only full when the boat comes in & out. We met that woman with the fish this morning & then a donkey. I can't draw donkies very well & then an old woman sitting in a basket with great melons to sell & then a monk & then two bare legged Arabs & the queerest spelling. ici on donne a

boire et a manget, & a boire et a mangé I've seen. And now as we must be up very early in the morning good night dear Amy — I hope you got all safe & dont know where to tell you to write we are going to Turin I think perhaps Poste Restante, Geneva at once addressed with a T not w'd be the safest so goodnight & goodbye. Pls Enclose this to Tishy with this scrap as I havent time to write two & with love to E. and all the little letters I'm always y' afftest

A. I. T.
My dear Mrs Synge.

Two days ago M’s Proby came to see us & brought us some very good news of you all. — Says she “I’m glad to be the first to tell you that our friends are coming back” & I needn’t add how we were the people to be glad to hear it. I want to see my little Gilbert very much again & his parients & brothers & sister & so this is a little congratulating letter to the family from the other one in Onslow Sq & not a mere gossipping one, & as I expect it to be answered in person I dont write to M’ Synge but to you — who I find by the way do write to other people) Miss Russell told me & we meant to concoct a joint letter & screw one of you when we heard you were on yf way home. Miss Russell & Minny & I sat up till 2 o’clock one night in the haunted room at M’ Felix telling gohst stories & talking about things in gen. We paid such a jolly little 3 days visit — no Whites no Perrys nothing to put one out it was all just exactly perfect & I dont know when we have had such a pleasant time. M’s Sturgis looked so kind & handsome, Miss Russell & her brother were so friendly (& we always thought her a little trump you know) & all together it was just what we all wanted to set us up again. We have had a g. deal of illness in the house since I wrote me & Amy was the victims. first I took ill abroad & was awfully bad so that I almost thought I should never get home again, that was a mistake however Im glad to say but I didn’t get well till Amy fell ill wh the doctor first said was small-pox wh gave me a turn & cured me. This was a false alarm, & another mistake but mild typhus, or typhoid fever is bad enough & now after 2m the half she’s not herself again. That same kind Mount Felix has had her down for the last ten days & I xpect her back with her hair grown long & all right again. Katey Russell is still there — you know all abt. Harriets wedding of course — thats the only one I have to tell you of I think. — poor M’s White has had a paralytic stroke, Hervey is as fat & friendly as ever, Hoddy Toddy has turned into the very sweetest little boy, May’s hair is quite long, old nurse gong on just the same — & really their kindness about Amy has quite touched me. Col. Russell is good looking, rather slow, sensible, quite a contrast
to the other Col. who by the way I heard Miss Warren speaking most unkindly of & indifferently at wh I winked my i. I'm sure you will like to hear abt. the 90,000 & 100,000 copies of the Cornhill. Only I don't think it pays much the expenses are so great that after 50,000 I fancy it doesn't pay at all. Advertisements don't pay after 50,000, & then are given gratis. Of course Papa gets his 1000 a year for editing & it doesn't affect him directly & then he's paid for his articles beside. Its famous occupation for him suits & amuses & interests but isn't so profitable as old business used to was. However on the strength of our reduced fortunes we have set up another hoss, & the open with the 2 little cantering mares makes a very neat & creditable appearance & y sons Godmother means to call & fetch him in style one fine spring morning when you are all safe back in Cumberland Street. I don't think except once to call on M Proby we have been in that way since you left — stop once — to y house Miss Vincent having told Grannys husband's nephew's wife's mother that you were back in the old place again. Granny has got a snug little house in Brompton Crescent where we go & see her everyday. Eyre Crowe has some sort of place with M Cole. We saw Ld Kilmarloch in Reg Street 2 days ago who made a beautiful bow There's a row in the Cabinet. Tories are coming in they say. I like a shindy & am y most affectionate

Althackeray

From Minny to Mrs. Carmichael-Smyth

Letter 32
Harvard

My Dearest Grannie We found your note yesterday when we came back from Waltham where we had 2 such pleasant days, it is such a jolly place, a nice old fashioned red brick house with a pretty garden. All M Trollopes servants are tremendously Irish & the greatest fun in the world, especially old Barney the groom who has only one eye & joins in all the conversation & one only regrets that one cannot understand a word he says. We had 2 delicious drives in an Irish jaunting car; it is the County of John Gilpins ride & I think we must have looked very like that famous family, all packed in the Car, with M Synge trotting
in front on a mare his coat tails flying in the wind. It is quite pretty to see the children riding down to little Gilbert, they all seem to take to it quite naturally. Old Barney was anxious to make the baby ride & saw that his 2 young masters both rode before they were a year old & as this Baby is 14 months old I suppose he sd have taken him out with the hounds. I went to Mr. Craigies last night expecting to find Addie (?) & the girls but they had not arrived. I am glad that you don't think of staying with Mr. Green at Boulogne for it would surely be very dismal & you had much better come back here — Anny doesn't like her shower bath at all. She also takes some medicine with a villainous smell — but I think she has been much better since the last 2 or 3 days. Papa is not very brilliant. London is beginning to fill. It is superb weather we had not had 2 such days as those at Waltham all the Summer. With best love to the children & AM & UC. I am always my dearest Grannies

HMT

From Minny to Anny

Letter 33 Saturday
Ray/Morgan 1862

My dear Anny

many thanks for your fond letter. I am glad that my bag and you arrived safe — pray take care of these both — & write and tell me all about Mr. Tennyson & what his wife is like & his little boys, & his house — Now dont make y'self in the least unhappy if I tell you that Papa is not well. I have just been to see him & he says it is a very little attack, & he has got the papers & I think he will be well tomorrow but I shall not be able to write to you because there is no country post — but on Monday I will write & I shall be very angry if you are at all unhappy & dont enjoy y'self, for really he is very little ill. Isabella Irvine has been here so happy with a bit of news. Mary Irvine is going to marry her brother Octavius & Mrs. Kemble has been here and she frightened me because she said I kept contradicting myself — So I did; and I have found a school that I think will do for little Quin at 15 a year, wh is 6s & 6d a week, at least I think so — and if old Miss Cripps doesn't send a better one I think he had better go there — Give my best love to
Mrs Cameron & I assure you Papa is not at all sad, he said so himself.
M. Kemble said that Freshwater was not in the least like Holland —
Oh she confused me so — but I have no time to send you any more —
Ella is coming to see me tomorrow directly after Church. She writes
that she is desperately fond of this new one — I shall be so glad to have
her again — We don't miss you at all — Browny & pussy are quite well,
& Piggy will suck my fingers, I wish she wouldn't. Bobby sits on the
fender rail & Billy & Coo are much as usual.

Good bye

To Amy Crowe

Letter 34
Ray/Morgan

[Postmark: London, 15 Sept. 62]

Dearest Amy — Come any day you like for I don't think we shall go
away again — I'm sorry you're so melancholy dear — Why a year ago you
could not have written a sadder letter. I think Autumn makes people
dismal I suppose there's a dark side to everything — Even Palace Green
has its drawbacks as you will see on the other side of this paper¹. My
dear Papa has been really out of sorts J & G² send in more & more
bills 800 just come in for nothings — curtain, making up old carpets
& that crooked looking glass. Well then Philip is a regular failure if you
know what it is to have a pianoforte played upon your nerves that is what
Papa is going thro. Though he doesn't say much about it. Dear Papa Well
then he has had to take half the American money & he wants to write
like mad & put it back which isn't very favorable to composition. These are
all very trifling troubles and if he could get 3 days of wellness I shouldn't
care he's not worse than usual only more bothered. Granny isn't very
well but so kind & coming soon — We told Edward when we saw him
at Folkestone that Eugenie³ could be more charming than anybody in
the world & also more aggravating — We were rather frightened at the
collision & Minny kept saying there never were two sisters more unlike.
I was rather surprised to hear of things going on smoothly — but don't
let her make fun of him to you. He isn't a bit clever but we should be
dull enough if we had to build a fortification or put out a gunpowder
magazine. And I think it was very clever of him to fall in love with you.
I wonder will you be really more happy? I think so when the first dismalness of going away is over — We too shall be very dismal & at sea without you. There's a lot of places I want to go to (out pops my particular little selfishness) & Minny quite declines. She very amiably came to the dispensary yesterday for Mr. Homers [?] and we made friends with the charmingest handsomest young Doctor with manners exactly like Mr. Travers — only rather better who gave us everything we wanted. I wonder what sort of day we shall have tomorrow at Lydy's — Herman is supposed to be in love with Miss Kate Terry they correspond & he has bought her two pears at 8/-each. Mr. Prescott's want flowers I had no time to send it yesterday. I'm ashamed to tell you what we did — dont look at the seals — I'm thinking about Eugenie I quite understand her impatience — theres so much in being of the same clan after all that of course does not influence her. Give her my love I dont mind her knowing what I think, because I'm honestly fond of her — But I dont think she makes enough allowances for other people — & forgets that they have batteries of nerves, as well as she herself. On second thought please say nothing at all as that is much the safest course in life.

Yr. Affe A.T.

---

To Mrs. Synge

Letter 35
Fales

Thursday, Jan. 22d
[1863]

My dearest Mr. Synge.

Mr. Synges letter & the beautiful bit of coral & Guy's letter have all come — and this morning we are very melancholy for we got up very early and went to say Goodbye to Amy Heaven speed her dear little soul. It is dismal to think that we are parted for ever, but I'm very very thankful to know that she is happy. She looks it. So bright and pretty & smart. And Edward follows her about with admiring eyes. We went to the play last night. It seemed somehow as if she was you — Yah what hateful things partings are. We saw Fechter in the duke's motto — I cant try to tell you the story, he disguised himself as a humpback, in the most extraordinary manner he talked about a shile! a baebe! a lapsdog — he fought lots of duels & married the Bebe in the end —
& then we had — who do you think? — Lord Dundreary to dinner last Sunday. He is perfectly charming. Fair, with a curly moustache, well made & well dressed, quick & decided, & what is so funny he takes Lord Dundreary off. He says he is going to write a new play, with a tragedy of Sam's in it which is to be acted on a little stage on the stage. And he says if ever we have any more theatricals he will come & act for us. It would be quite a treat he said to do something that wasn't Lord Dundreary but we only mean to have some more acting by way of a finale when we go away into a little house — How provoking about your ship — Dear me! I hope it has come to hand by this time and what a pleasant little glimpse of the children Guy's letter gives us, walking up the hill & saying they can see Gardner & England. How does M'r Synge like being Godfather? Did he give H.M. a mug & will he hear her her catechism? I assure though I make jokes people are very much impressed when I tell them. So many folks ask after you & they all say it sounds delightful only that is quite different from having to live with the Savages. Amy is going to Folkestone & Paris, & then on Monday they go to Marseilles & on Thursday embark on board the Vechi.

And we are going down M'r Trollope's tomorrow which is great fun, to & dances & shall come home on Saturday & then on Monday go to the Rothschilds again, at Mentmore. M'r Caulfield is to be there. I have got a new pink gauze and a lilac, & a violet silk for every day & I think it will be rather fun. We have been getting some presents lately — a delightful set of photographs from M'r Fred Chapman & I can't quite remember anything else. Except 2 most lovely tinkling chandeliers from M'r G Smith. They are up in the drawingroom. We have come back to the side of the house lately the weather is cold & we have all got a sort of general family influenza. Rap tap tap — there comes dear old Brodie. Do you remember our old nurse & there she is & Brownie staring just as if she knew I was writing to you & Minny doing her Latin She works very hard at it — I meanly gave in. Grannie is still here & we all jog together quite snugly. Ah! dear! Amy's gone right away. I'd forgotten all about it for the last five minutes (Brownie has turned right round with her legs towards you & has gone to sleep again. Papa instead of writing his great thundering book is thinking of a shorter one first. I'm not sure that I am glad there's no end of sensation novels coming out. A certain Miss Braddon seems to have it all
her own way. We have been making immense friends with the Charles Collins' Wilkie's brother & Kate dickens as was. & I must tell you, one day Mr Julian Fane came to see us we all felt our hearts break on the spot. Young Jim Carmichael called a day ago & Minny met Mr Jervis at a party. He was very nice she said & talked to her. And we have had a grand reconciliation with the Erskine Perrys. Do you know that the Sturgis & Mr Guthrie & Miss Kate Perry are all going to Rome (not roam?) Don't I sound pleasant

Ella Merrivale comes home today from her young mans father's house. This is Kate Collins not in the least like who is sitting in Brodie's vacated chair. And Papa is walking up & down in his dressing gown & talking about a child's book of nursery rhymes. Tell Mr Synge this is all the literary news I can send him. Give the dear little people my love & Good bye dearest Mam & write soon to y'.

Affectionately always
Anne T.

To Amy Crowe Thackeray

Letter 36 {6 May 1863}¹
Ray

My dearest Amy I have begun as usual ever so many bits w'h I never can find when I want to go on. What jolly 2 delightful letters, & do go on writing them they are so werry welcome. I can imagine you quite; in full
dress in the morning with all the young officers with their swords sitting round & making conversation — Isn't it different from all our humdrum years & years together? Minny & I get immensely excited, as all your visitors come pouring in. I don't take the same deep interest in F's WT & w[h] Grannie & M's Craigie do but I think I can see it when I shut my eyes. What are you doing at this very instant I wonder? My dear old girl I wish I could see. Now when I tell you that I am in my room at my Davenport that Minny is upstairs cutting sticking plaster because she has cut her little fingers, that Papa is in his study smoking and thinking, you know exactly what it is all like. Could you draw us a sort of plan of where you live or wouldn't Edw[d] like to do it for us — that w[ill] be very kind now — and tell me what you wear of an afternoon & all that & then I shall know. How funny about D['] Charles. Ask him if he remembers telling us how to make noses when we were all very young. I think for my part that we were all very old in those days & that it is now that we are very young. We dined at the Wilsons on Mayday. M's Sartoris was there it seemed like a little slice out of the past; tonight we dine at our ArchBishops & last night we all three dined at Julias & met a Major Noran very fat from India, M's Rogers the good liberal costermonger clergyman. What a shame it is he is only a curate after 20 hard years of work. But his reward is coming & he shall be invited to palace Green. My Elia as Minny calls Miss Steuart came to dine on Monday & we all went off to the SKM. to see the jewels & the company & to hear the band perform at intervals of 5 minutes. The company was so very small posing that we thought it a great privilege to be let into a little gallery with the band. But O. Clang Bang Bong our heads went round & round — We rushed to the farthest corner, all the people down below looked up & [two words illegible] because they thought we were the R[.] family. Bong Bang Clang & the doors we locked & we couldn't get away. You never heard anything so horrible. And as for the jewels they were all gone except one very small & extremely ugly brooch. It was worth no end of money that was some consolation. Outside the moon was shining the stars blazing a beautiful soft little breezy wind came through the lilac trees — M's Cole walked home with us with Hennie & Alan & Bartly & Isabella & Mrs. Corbiere. It was a sort of poetry tonight in the middle of prosy everyday. Somebody — O it was Miss Steuart — was saying that Sir John Simeon had told her how sorry he was you were gone. He said he was not quite sure of the name but he
meant the Watteau-Lady in the writing cap that was so becoming. Of course in India people wear bows behind, & nets & curls all round like M'. M'Callum. But I'm quite sure they don't wear caps any more. Julia Sterling has set one up & I'm still looking in the shop windows for mine. On Sunday (I'm going backwards) we drove down to Richmond. M'. Morgan John on the box looking as spruce as possible, M'. Collins & Papa & me & M inside. We dropped them at the Star & Garter & went on to M'. Prescott's to dine & to sit out in the verandah looking across the garden. That was another garden day — all this sounds so delightful that it must make you long to be back in England, instead of though it looks charming on paper I think I have (nearly) cried three times this week. Once with vexation for someone offered us a £1000 a year almost for the house unfurnished & went away & came back never no more & then once — I can't write such nonsense all the way to India — & I am ashamed of the third time too. So you see it is not at all so couleur de rose as the paper & a person who has such misfortunes as these to contend with is indeed to be.

I went upstairs there & put on all my clothes to go out. But reflecting that M'. Gurney is coming to lunch I took them all off again. Last week I worked so very hard finishing a stupid long story squeezed up into a short one, which is stupider if possible, that I am taking my eees this week & enjoy it immensely. It — the story is called the arbour at the end of the garden — that's all & you will see it in the Cor if they put [sic] it in. I must tell you about the pictures. We went the opening Day Hennie & Minny & I, walked & got there at 12 & were not too much crushed up — There was so great a crowd around Eyres picture that I could not get to see it quite. I don't think I like it quite so much as de Foe. I have not seen what the times says. Everybody is amused at Vals picture which the times says is ugly which considering the model was unjustifiable. M'. Prinsep was the model. They meant to call it Guinivere & Lancelot at first but this was thought inadvisable as it was M'. Prinsep, & then when the picture was quite finished they changed the subject and called it something else. That seems queer art doesn't it? M'. Millais little girl is the prettiest dearest little picture that ever was painted. She is sitting in a pew with a pair of M'. Millais beautiful
yellow kid gloves beside her & listening with all her eyes. Then he's got the Lions den I dont care for so very much. Little boys & girls creeping from under the piano & then he has got a lady with a mermaids gown in the moonlight — I couldn't see that enough either to tell you how I like it. It is very weird & odd & silvery. Mf Hunt has a little funny King of Hearts not bigger than this sheet of paper; a little henry the 8 on a green field playing at some game, and a very uninteresting (they all call it 'very fine') portrait of Df Lushington. Mf Walker has chosen a charming subject a Lady frozen up in the snow with her dying infant & imagine! Mf Cole has sent two funny little etchings. The 'to let' is up in their house & they move in a month; our successors have got rose coloured blinds in the drawing room & seem to be making themselves quite at home. I feel as if they had no business there — Mf Freake has been given a tremendous music. A Duke to play the drum Honorables fiddling lords trumpeting. Everyone says there never was such beautiful music. Isnt this like a paris correspondent letter? Now I must go on to the on dits. You know about Lou Perry & this handsome rich aimiable clever Mf Ricardo, & do you know the Sartoris' are enormously rich now, with a fine place in Hampshire and has Minny told you about Mf Ross & Miss Rosey Smith. Its only a rumour. Lolla Sterling comes to see us very often and we always talk about you, & I give the Coles some of your letters to read because they like it. Heres my poor Tishys note. Isnt it sad? Dont you think Mf Corbiere must have some intention if he always meets them every where & walks & so on. I am afraid he is a rather vulgar person & so I hope almost that there is nothing in it. Mf Trollope is in town — Minny says I like her to aggrivate my sister & Papa has been asked to meet them at about four places & says theres a good deal of sameness, & he doesnt want to meet them very much oftener. Granny writes such dear kind little letters. Isnt [sic] a delightful comfort that we are all so happy together. I should be quite happy if it wasn't for those mysterious griefs of mine. There is rather a tragedy going on in the house. Ellen has taken gardeners money out of her drawer & tells fibs like a little Sophia about it. I dont know what to do. It is horrible to send her away isn't it — but if she wont confess? Grey as usual has been describing all she has felt on the occasion — I got a dear little letter from Mary Irvine who seems very very happy, &
L. John came to lunch one day and has given us a very charming old picture of my Fathers Father. Its over the door in the back drawing-room. In the corner by the chimney where you always sat I have stuck a little frame of the Virgin (one of those photographs) & Mrs. Cayley's little carved bracket. It looks very furnishing, the chief Baron has come home & lives in Papa's study, & the pretty little glass out of our O S bedroom is over the drawingroom book case & looks ever so much nicer than that round one. There are 2 disgusting columns put up in the dining room. I am sorry to say, on each side of the marble table it makes it look like a cemetary we want papa to have our names engraved & I think that's all.

Mind you go on telling us about the people & then we shall get to know them. Cap. Twyford is our last — Edward knows him, he is very funny & at home calls the servants by their names and spends the morning. He has not yet confided all about his heiress but he is very near it & I shall be delighted to listen. I felt as if I was you the other morning with young officers dropping in to lunch. Col. Hamley came one day looking quite young & handsome. How very odd it is that men seem to get younger as they grow older. Why even My Min is beginning to look old & that does make me sad. She has certainly got fatter & stronger & has cream for breakfast & so I hope & will continue. We been reading at odds, & Carlyle who I suddenly find I can understand, & yesterday we went with Lady Low & Selina & sat in H.P. and saw the people go by. Sir James Colvile Sir Arthur Buller &ct. Isabella is married. Ella writes so happily. Her great friends are Merolla's do you remember M'Me Merolla at Paris. Its her son, & we are going to have one last dinner party & then pull in. The Milnes. Col Greathed. the Lows the Troubridges — Sir Ar.B. & I think thats all. Edith Procter is coming to spend the day tomorrow today that great bothering Catholic bazaar is going on & we must I suppose go there. M'Me Marochetti wrote & begged us & it is a bore. Poor little Manson has been desperately ill but he is all right again. Miss Fagan is staying there — My love to Edmund if you see him, I hope you will see some of our cousins & write & tell me all about them. You know your letters are 10,000x more amusing to us, than ours can be to you because you know all about us & our friends & we dont yet know about y's.

Your fetch isn't going to India. I had never thought of that, what fun it will be to give letters of introduction to you when our friends go out. Little Charlotte still wears her velvet frock & goes to tea at the
Coles where a young gentleman she says plays to her upon a sort of flute. This is Alan on the Jews harp. She also says I have a dear Papa wots gone into the city — she stopped in the Park one day & said this to two very grand swells. Julia saw she did not quite like it. Poor Mf. Pollen has been dreadfully ill, he was a Julias last night so was Mf. Doyle so were their adored Mf. & Mf. Martin Smith.

The dinner party guests are the Leechs who really have one every other day — little Booge talked about Edward at Folkestone, & Mf. Herbert Wilson asked about you & Mf. Wilson talked about Mr. Creyke & said he had always a photograph of himself in his pocket. Did Minny tell you Lady Palmerston asked us again at last & we couldn’t go! Papa was at the Acad. dinner P of W broke down in his speech but went on again very cheerfully & speaks with a slight German accent.

Now it is lunch & I must finish goodbye my dearest woman. My love to Ed. Papa wonderfully well but doesn’t do much work. Yf. dear AIT

To W. W. F. Synge

Letter 37 [19 July 1863]

Fales

Dear Mf. Synge. We got your kind letter two or three days ago with the Kings card of acceptation in it & it made me feel very guilty for not having written before. How thankful I am you’re all all right.

We are going on just as usual, pretty well, & rather happy. Papa is hard at work upon Denis Duval wh is the name of his new book. Not a long one & historical & very interesting I’m glad to say. But I’m sorry to say he has written himself into two bad fits of illness over it so that I owe it a grudge already. This is Sunday 19 of July. We put off going away it is so pleasant here, we sit out in the gardens & enjoy the lovely weather & of a Sunday I see about ten Saturday reviews sitting under the trees alongside of ours Grannie comes & goes, she goes, tomorrow to Paris for ten days. We find it very dismal when she is away & no Amy & all alone of an evening if the other happens to be out. The Collins’ are our greatest allies — They dined with us last Sunday with Mf. Morganjohn who said he had at last written to you, & let us into the secret of the Fair Haired young lady
we used to be so curious about. Minny is quite well again, but she has 
been out of sorts all summer & we have been quite quiet for sometime 
past. Poor Tishy Cole had a fearful illness brain fever & was as bad as 
bad c⁴ d be, but she too is all right although still away getting strong & 
recovering from the affects. We are going down to [word illegible] spend 
the day with her on Tuesday. The Merivales⁵ have broken up house & 
gone for 2 years alas. There seems rather a dispersion of old friends. Of 
Amy we have the best news they are going up country to Debroghur⁶ 
but Colvin⁷ & Co will always reach them Calcutta — She wrote & told 
us how excited she was to find Major Synge⁸ in the Forty when she & 
Edward set up there — We went & called upon the mess [?] at her re-
quest because she wanted to see him, but as nobody returned the visit he 
got disgusted [?] & wouldnt go any more. Hearing however that Major 
Synge was going away she sat down & wrote him a note saying she was 
a very old friend of yours & wanted to see him very much & would he 
come & call upon her. She says she got a very kind little note but he had 
to leave that night or something & so I believe they did not meet after all 
but I'm not sure. She seems very happy & is very well & says the people 
are rather astonished at her very English ways walking & not going to 
sleep & etc. Calcutta is not like London as far as society goes she says. One 
day she saw poor Mr Reddie⁹ M'r Sturgis' flame do you remember. But 
he was walking with Lady Trevelyan⁷ & she didnt like to stop him. M'r 
Sturgis asked us to go down to Walton last week but we couldnt manage 
if Minny was ill & Papa got an attack. There was a Regalia & crowds 
of people Miss Perry told me about it. She is very enthusiastic about 
Lou's¹⁰ intended M'r Ricardo. She says he gets more & more charming. 
Miss Crawfurde it seems to me is hardly used by fortune but she looks 
very jolly notwithstanding & is constant to D'r Manning.¹¹ We dined at 
Richmond yesterday with a M'r or Captain Darkwood¹² who has just 
come in to a fortune & very good naturedly spends it on his friends & 
treats them to peaches & allsorts of good things. He is a big dark man 
& yet so curiously like you, that Minny & I were both quite struck by 
it. I saw your Jugles [?]¹³ the other night looking extremely handsome 
her hair has gone up & she told me Bobbie was on his way home w'h I 
cant imagine to be the case. She is stout & looks ten years younger. Can 
Major Synge be coming home? —

I am very sorry for the poor Bishop. We have been making friends 
with the Archbishop of York. & so have the Trollopes who dined there
last week. Mf Trollope dashed up in a hansom looking very jolly & is going abroad somewhere higher that the something to get out of the way of his fellow creatures — He is the kindest & friendliest soul — I havent seen her for a long time. I like his books very much indeed. There is one of Henry Kingsleys called Austin Elliot 12 w* Ive been reading w* is rather jolly & everyone has got the Bossu the original of the Dukes Motto 13 We want to go to Tom Taylors ticket of leave man very much. 14 on Friday we are going to Faust the opera, 15 w* has had a great success. Madame Rulor, 16 Id have given my eyes to see, but I have kept my eyes, & not seen her We did get to hear Jenny Lind. 17 We had a melancholy little conversation afterwards with Mf Collins about the people whose day is past Kingslake 18 du Chaillu 19 Raphael nothing lasts more than ten days. We are all unhappy at the terrible American War 20 — Is there never any end to it — Backwards & Forwards its like the ebb & flow of the sea

Goodbye and my love to M* Synge (Who could help appreciating her) and my love to the dear little chickens

Mf Lucas 21 is going to marry a very nice young lady [two words illegible]

From Minny to Thackeray

Letter 38
Ray/Morgan

Clatto 1
Cupar, Fife
[Sept. 1863]

My Dearest Papa

I do think it was very kind of you to send me a letter — I hope you liked my pictures? Wasnt it nice of Mf & M* Mener 2 to take such pains with them all for the sake of pleasing you — Every body has been so kind to me, & I have got so fond of them all — except when they sing hymns, which I cannot quite join in. I am very sorry that I cannot get home till Monday instead of Friday, but it is better I think, that I should go with the Lows, as I dont know of any one else going — the Gen’ has promised me that he has quite settled to go on Monday and they are so very kind to me 3 — I wish Papa that you would tell Anny not to want me till Monday for it makes me uncomfortable that she should & it wont be very much longer — & I shall never never never stir from home
again — Oh Papa what nasty things they have for breakfast do you [sic] those things like pale eels stuffed with garlic I am afraid that you wd rather like them — What a funny old lady Mrs Ferrier is. I wonder if you are fond of her? — The Blackwoods brought me to her at the ball & she said that you were notorious & charming — Miss Janie wasn’t there for she is still in weeds but M’s Blackwood says that she has quite got over it — Isn’t it nice — It wasn’t Col Hamley or anyone who knows us, who wrote the review of Eliz in Blackwood but M’s Oliphant — M’ Blackwood told me that he heard her praising it one day & instantly told her to write a review of it wh was kind of him so I am glad to go there — They live 2 or 3 miles off — and I shall go there from Monday till Wed? and then come back here and if I can stay with the Lows till we go to London — I do not much want to go to D! John Browns but if he seems to wish it much I will — for I would not offend him for the world — Goodbye

My dearest Papa

I am very sorry to send you such an untidy letter but I have got someone to post this in the country & am in a g hurry.

From Minny to Anny

Letter 39 [Sept. 1863]

Ray/Morgan

M & M’s Miller & the dear crabbed old Sheriff went off this morg — the bride in a huff because Augusta & I praised the Miss Moncrieffs who evidently were sorts of rivals of hers in Edinburgh — and she made such unkind remarks about them — that I told her that they were girls who wd be thought a great deal of even in London, wh they would — Oh dear; says she, they are by no means thought much of, in Edinbro — we consider ourselves in a far superior social position, do we not M’s Patten — yees yees my dear M’s Miller, says M’s P who always agrees with every one — in fact I did not get on very well with M’s Miller, for she gave herself airs & I could not help showing her that I did not think her at all a swell last night I must say, that she was rather nice & she
owned that tho it was delightful being at the Top of every thing in Edinbro, when she came to London, she found what a narrow stupid little groove she had been moving in — & she wished for a little expansion & universality. Really these Scotch people are great muffs — I asked M’s Patten if she knew M’s Millais, Oh dear No says she, M’s Millais is not visited in the County at all — So I supposed that it was on account of M’s Ruskin — but M’s Patten said that it was nothing to do with M’s Ruskin — but her relations were not people that the County families could associate with in fact her father was a writer. What that is I do not know, but they assured me that it was not at all what my father was — Can you fancy these stupid County people, not making much of a genius like M’s Millais who passes many months in the midst of them — of course I dont wish to say any thing against my very kind host & hostess — M Patten I am sure you wd like, he gets quite ill with laughing & M’s Patten is a character & amuses me immensely — M’s Moir told me before he left, that if any thing should happen to prevent D J Brown from ciceroning about on my Edinburgh day — I was to be sure & send for him — he is very shy tho he is a Sheriff & I was rather surprised — I have got to go & be photographed again M’s Mercer has sent to me to come because my other has gone wrong I hope it will hold up for me to walk today — the hills have their lovely bloom on them again this morn — Why will you go racketting about in that way — The Workhouse, M’s Senior & Julia, all in one day — of course you have headaches — Look here tell me if you wd like me to come home without going to the blackwoods — at the beginning of the week — I send my [sic] to Papa.

I am y’ dear
Minnie

I shall write separate to Grannie you neednt shew this
My Dear Gal —

I am sorry that you did not hear from me yesterday but in honour of our departure from Clatto I don’t think the post went. I really felt quite melancholy at leaving it, as if it were my own Country Seat. It looked so dismal at the end with all the basons & jugs packed up. It finishes up all of a sudden everything shuts up & all the servants drive off in a bus to the station & we in the Carriage. It was very rough in the carriage by the way & Augusta & I were quite poorly. Paul wears a most disreputable travelling costume in Mad de C’s style he looks like a gambler in it his master & mistress are distressed at his appearance but too nervous to mention it — The poor little page was sadly sick during the horrid passage & we were all uncomfortable Df John Brown & Nelly met me at the station — Nelly is a dear little thing — I must tell you that I wrote to Eugenie & told her to settle when I was to go to her & when I was to come here. I shall end by stopping here altogether & I am sure that I am very glad if it gives them the slightest pleasure — I can see that this is a very very melancholy house — especially I should think for poor Nelly — I was afraid before I came of seeing poor M’s Brown, but she can neither move nor speak and is quite helpless in her room — I don’t know whether you will get this letter much before me — but I may as well write to you pour passer le temps as the french say — I am going presently to see Eugenie & the Lows & Minnie Senior & the dear old Sherrif. The Low girls are very much bored at the Edinburgh Hotel I am very fond of the Lows — I shall not be sorry to see Brownie & pussy the day after tomorrow. I dont think I have any more to tell you except my love to Papa. Df John Brown sends you his bitterest hostility — Have something nice to eat prepared for me against my return. Mind this & remember that I am now accustomed like Brownie to a great deal of notice — I have been invited to 3 parties to night one with the Lows one with the Browns & one with Eugenie to dear dear M’s Kinglakes sister — Theres a sweet oyster woman. If you had a voice like a oyster what a comfort it w’d be to Papa — he will be pleased to hear that I shall join him in Scotch.