INTRODUCTION

when My darling [Minny] died I heard his [Thackeray’s] voice saying poor Nan but now I think we shall all be together again some day, & if it is not God’s will, at least it has once been his will to make us all, & when I think of them & of Richmond & of you my dearest children I don’t know how to thank God

ALTHOUGH it covers much the same period as the 1864 journal, the 1878 journal is strikingly different. In 1864 Anny had just begun to write seriously. She was a distraught daughter mourning for Thackeray. By 1878 Anne Thackeray Ritchie was a writer of some note. As the wife of Richmond, she was expecting her first child. Time had alleviated her grief for her father and even for Minny. However, Thackeray, and to a lesser degree Minny, were still important to Anny. Indeed, this journal, ostensibly written for Minny’s daughter, Laura, is really an epistle to Thackeray and Minny. Anny writes an apologia pro vita sua in two senses: this is the story of her life; it is also an apology to her father and her sister for the happy life she is leading. They are both dead and she, Anny, is alive and has had the good fortune to become a writer, a wife, and a mother-to-be.

One significant difference between the two journals is that the 1864 journal was written for no one to read—not even Anny herself—while the 1878 journal is addressed to Laura. The earlier journal is an effusion of emotion; the later one is a conscious piece of writing. For a parent
or a close relative to write a family history was a common Victorian practice. What is strange is that Anny writes as if Laura were a normal child who is going to lead a normal life. Until Minny’s death, Laura appeared to be normal; at least there is no intimation in any letters or journals that she is not.

However, after Minny’s death there was a marked difference in Laura. Whether this was due to the loss of her mother or whether it was the onset of mental problems is all conjectural. Overly sensitive to the fact that his mother-in-law, Isabella, was insane, Leslie Stephen harbored “the vague dread . . . [of] hereditary taint.”¹ Like Stephen, Winifred Gérin believed that “[t]he terrible heritage feared by Thackeray for Minny had mercifully passed over one generation, to blight the next.”² However, Laura was declared mentally deficient, while Isabella had drifted into schizophrenia only after suffering postpartum depression.³ As she grew older, it became obvious that Laura, for whatever reason, was not normal. In Stephen’s description of Laura in the Mausoleum Book, she was first a “backward child,” then “mentally deficient” (44). By 1878, when Anny wrote this journal, she must have been aware of this. Yet, Anny ignores her niece’s abnormalities. In describing how she came to write The Story of Elizabeth, Anny tells Laura that “perhaps [it] will amuse you to read [it] some day.”

Anny persists in writing the journal as if Laura will lead a normal life. “If my Meme lives to be a woman & to marry, it must be somebody good who speaks the truth & who tries to help others.” In this journal Anny recasts the truth in order to be of help and comfort to Laura. For example, Anny emphasizes her own childhood misbehavior in order to reassure Laura that her misbehavior is not unusual. Anny wanted to let Laura know that life was worth living however difficult it may seem at the moment.

At this particular time, when Anny was expecting a child who would be Laura’s cousin, the prospect of hereditary mental disorder (as it was considered in those days) was too dreadful for Anny to contemplate. And so Anny, usually so honest, would not recognize that Laura was mentally deficient or, even worse, tainted with Isabella’s madness. In this journal Anny refers openly, but in vague terms, to Isabella’s illness. After Minny was born, Anny writes, Thackeray was “in great trouble” because of a “deep sorrow.” Later, Anny explains that “[o]ur Mama was ill” and the doctor said “it was better we should
not go & see her”; still later she confirms that “[m]y Mama was ill & away.” Even if Laura had been a normal child, Anny would have found it difficult to explain Isabella’s schizophrenia to an eight year old. The journal, however, was written to be read not only by Laura the child but by Laura the woman, as many revelations of an adult nature show. Anny’s ability to discuss Isabella could be due to the fact that Anny was expecting a child, and sympathy and love for her mother were reawakened.

On the surface, the mood of the journal is charming and delightful. In order to make one incident more pleasant, Anny alters facts. In her description of their nightmare journey to Paris after Isabella went insane, Anny writes: “The next thing I can remember is being in the dark in a diligence & the baby was crying & I began to cry & my Father struck a light to cheer me up. There was a sick man in the corner moaning & then the dawn came.” In the 1864 journal Anny explains how Thackeray blew out the light because she would not stop crying and then she mourns: “Has the light gone out now for us? because we were not quiet & good — I pray that the sun may rise & a day of peace & forgiving & love for weary aching hearts once more.” In the 1864 journal Anny prays that “the sun may rise,” but in the later journal she states that “then the dawn came.” With adult wisdom, and happy in her new life, Anny provides a happy ending to a painful episode in her life.

In the earlier journal Anny is still enmeshed in overwhelming guilt and acute sadness at the recent death of her father. In the later journal time has lessened her guilt. In general, most of the incidents Anny recalls in the later journal are of a pleasant or happy nature. Even those that are not take on an acceptance colored by time. Anny, the mature woman of forty-one, writes that M. Monod “was a good man & did his duty & when he preached to us, it was not what he said but his whole heart & life that seemed to reach us.” This is a facet of Monod that Anny can only concede twenty-five years after the fact. Her grandmother’s Evangelicalism, reinforced by the French preacher’s sermons, had been the scourge of Anny’s young life. In the 1878 journal she acknowledges that Monod’s theories were at odds with those of Thackeray and of Anny herself. Her earlier passionate denial of Monod’s religion has dissipated. Instead, she carefully examines the man’s motives and his intentions. Her need to assert herself, to strike out for independence, is gone. What emerges is a more
levelheaded and dispassionate appraisal of her earlier life, an appraisal composed by a professional writer.

All of Anny’s memories are not happy ones. Nevertheless, in the retelling, they lose the horror of childhood miseries. She relates quite matter-of-factly how naughty she was as a child and what punishments were meted out to her; she does not dwell on the injustice or the unhappiness. For example, “Grandmama [Thackeray’s grandmother] was very unkind & always scolded me. I was very naughty I ran away three times I must have been a very discontented child I was always in disgrace.” Aside from running away, she never mentions the crimes which resulted in the following punishments: “I was shut up in a cupboard I was shut up in my room I was whipped.” None of these punishments, it must be noted, was administered by Thackeray. Most of her infractions stemmed from unhappiness. She ruminates that she was “out of temper & jealous & suspicious”; repeatedly she remarks how unhappy she was. Much of her anxiety was due to Thackeray’s absence or illness, but a great deal of her unhappiness was part of growing up, made more difficult by Isabella’s absence.

Despite the fact that Thackeray’s daughters came back to London to live once more with him, they could not shed their feelings of insecurity. “[W]e could not bear the manservant whose name was Samuel James. He was very clever & very fond of Papa & he was always thinking what he could do for him, & Mommee & I were afraid that Papa would like him better than us.” As an adult, Anny adds, “Were not we silly little girls?”; but as children Minny and Anny no doubt suffered. Here again, Anny alleviates the pain of the past with an adult amelioration.

Just as Anny was jealous about Thackeray’s manservant, she was even more jealous of Minny. Anny recounts an early dream about Minny when she was still a baby. “One night I dreamt somebody had cut the babys two little feet off & I scrambled out of bed & went to look at her & O I was so glad to see her warm & sound asleep. I had never loved her till then but then I loved her.” Aside from the violence in the dream, what is most striking is that after the dream Anny loved Minny. Was it the relief she felt because Minny was uninjured and that she, Anny, had not harmed her? Jealous as she must have been over a new baby, she could for the first time love her. Or perhaps Anny had to love Minny in order to keep herself from committing a crime against her. In any case, it is apparent that the incident was one Anny
did not forget. She does not mention this dream in the 1864 journal, most likely because it was too painful for her to deal with. However, in 1878 the dream has metamorphosed into a memory with a happy ending—Minny was unhurt and Anny loved her.

More noticeable in this journal than in the 1864 journal is the constant upheaval that Anny and Minny endured. Aside from Isabella leaving their home, they were yanked back and forth between Thackeray’s home and the Carmichael-Smyths. Not only were their guardians switched, but their place of residence changed. The continual parade of inadequate governesses added to the predicament of the shaky household. Anny dwells on their life as children; she reveals two little girls, on the one hand oppressed in the home of the Carmichael-Smyths, on the other hand spoiled and petted by Thackeray and afraid to believe in the permanence of life with their father. Even after they were teenagers their life of vagabondage continued.

But in remembering her life for Laura, Anny reshapes it to make a happy story by relating (in addition to unhappy events) how they used to go to “childrens parties in white muslin frocks, to Mr. Dickens & Mr. Macreadys”; how they read “piles & piles of the most beautiful delightful wonderful fairy tale books”; how Thackeray bought them “2 wax dolls” and gave them “bigger helps of jam” and took them to see the Diorama and the Colosseum. Even this recitation of the delights of childhood is shadowed by the fear that Thackeray will spend too much money on them, and yet they are memories of a loving father doing what he could for his daughters. Anny admits that she thought, when she was very young, that he was Jesus Christ. Anny the woman understands that when Isabella left their home “Papa was very lonely at times for we were only little girls.” Her own life until she married Richmond was much like Thackeray’s—she had her work, Amy’s children to care for, but no one to love. Now married to Richmond, she could fully appreciate the void that had been in her life, and which existed in Thackeray’s once Isabella was gone. This unclouded view of her early life lends a maturity to the vision which is absent in the 1864 journal.

However, in other appraisals of her life, she is still trapped in her early sense of guilt and wickedness. Her repeated self-accusations of being naughty are vague and unsubstantiated (except for her running away), merely declarations of bad conduct. Was she in reality so
naughty or does she only think so? Does she think it is wicked to enjoy the good life when Thackeray and Minny are dead? Particularly in the case of Minny, where Anny is still not able to deal completely with her jealousy, there appears to be a problem. The sisters loved each other: "we had lived just the same life together like the married we were not much parted." But Minny married and before she died was on the verge, according to Leslie Stephen, of asking Anny to set up a home of her own. Anny's jealousy was not a new feeling—it is apparent in the 1864 journal in unguarded bursts. "What a pretty little girl your sister is" someone tells her, but there is no reply or comment from the adult Anny. Of the young woman Minny, Anny writes, "All of a sudden y! Mama had become quite grown up & so pretty & beautiful that people hardly recognized her." This is praise of a rather dubious nature. Although Anny recounts disagreements they had with other children, she does not remember any differences with Minny. Anny remembers Minny crying, throwing a shoe at the housemaid, hiding from Thackeray, but never doing anything wrong to her personally. Anny's memory is here exceptionally selective and this in itself may be cause for further guilt. Anny's guilt may have stemmed from the perception that despite the fact that Anny was naughty and Minny good, Minny died and Anny is alive. In writing this journal, Anny tries to come to terms with her guilt. By accepting her jealousy, she can dissolve her guilt, and really love Minny. In understanding herself and her motives, she is able to recognize that none of these feelings are absolutes and that none of them can be completely eradicated, only deactivated. In discussing Richmond, she writes: "I think that is religion, to be true & good & that is why I love your poppee because he is sincere & so thank God is my Richmond who married me when I was so ill & old & unhappy & who has not loved me a bit the less for that." Anny finds it necessary to explain why she married Richmond. She apologizes for cutting short her grief and for finding happiness. After Minny died, Anny heard Thackeray's voice "saying poor Nan but now I think we shall all be together again some day, & if it is not God's will, at least it has once been his will to make us all, & when I think of them & of Richmond & of you my dearest children I don't know how to thank God." Anny was now ready to lay away her guilt and accept the realities of her present good life. As for God, she could only hope that He, along with Thackeray and Minny, would approve.

In the 1864 journal Anny reviews her life with Thackeray. There
is no chronological sequence to it; her feelings and thoughts lead her into examination of past events without any regard to when they happened. In the 1878 journal Anny makes a strong attempt to impart a narrative sequence to occurrences. She is telling a story using chronological ordering. For example, on the first and second pages she wrote, “The first time I saw y’ Mommee Then I can remember her as a little baby and The next thing I can remember.” She also tries to anchor events in time. She explained that in “1848 there was a revolution in France & people were afraid that in England too all sorts of terrible things w’d happen” and “The Crimea was the autumn after our winter in Rome. It must have been the following summer that the still more wretched news of the Indian Mutiny came to us in beautiful sunshiny weather.” She took note of these great historical events as they affected her life; they were signposts for personal occasions.

Although she changed facts of the incident in the coach to Paris, she usually did try to be scrupulously honest. However, she did not wholly trust her memory. In 1869, she wrote from Rome, “Yesterday was like one of the days one remembers, but the thing is one doesn’t remember it!” Aware as she is of this, she tries in the 1878 journal to verify facts. “I must get my dates into order for I find I cannot quite remember when everything happened.” And at a later time someone, probably Anny herself, inserted dates and clarifications in the journal.

How important getting things right was to her in the 1878 journal is evidenced by the changes made in the manuscript. In the 1864 journal three deletions occur: two are grammatical and only one is a suppression of fact, probably made at a much later date: “The little Ritchies were with us.” In the later journal there is a conscious groping after the factual truth, while in the earlier journal Anny searched through her feelings for verities. In the 1878 journal “our governess was now called Miss Trulock” is crossed out and in its place is “We had a governess called Miss Alexander.” This change and others like it are not important in themselves, but they show how consciously and honestly Anny was trying to re-create her life with Minny; she was also the artist writing a unified and logical piece of work. All of her work from this time forth is that of a writer of integrity, conscious of her craft.

Because this journal was written by a writer, not by an unhappy daughter as the earlier journal was, Anny included lyrical descriptions of occurrences, places, and people. Of her first tour of the Continent with Thackeray, Anny wrote:
We went to Vienna & to Venice & to Milan & we lost our shoes & our shifts & our collars & I think we came home with very little besides a chessboard in our trunk. But it was all so lovely & so wonderful the things we didn't lose were the pictures & the places I can see them now after all these long years & years when I look for them.

Another domestic account deals with her first sight of Rome where the Thackerays spent the winter of 1853.

It seemed all golden like the great picture at Venice when we landed at Civita Vecchia. I daresay it all looks just the same blue sky & beggars in the sun & shadows & lovely old sloping ruins & arched palaces. As we got to Rome it was evening & papa said Look out there is St. Peters. & we looked out & a great dark living sort of dome seemed to hunch up its shoulders as we drove under the stars.

When Anny revisited Rome in 1869 she wrote that Rome is "a great deal bigger, grander, Romer than we remember it even. I find one of the odd effects of Rome is to set one longing, I don't know for what exactly." The vistas of Rome, both physical and psychological, were more accessible to the adult than to the young girl. The Eternal City also weighed heavily on a spinster with no one to follow her in the historical continuum, which was so palpable in Rome. But in the 1878 journal, none of this complicated adult feeling surfaces in Anny's remembrance of Rome, where all has become light and beauty.

In addition to providing descriptions of events and places, Anny displays her skill in presenting portrayals of people. One of the many governesses who cared for her and Minny was "a funny little short long nosed punch like woman." A fascinating example of how Anny reworked idiosyncrasies of real people she knew into characters for her fiction starts with some thumbnail descriptions of friends in Mennecy when she lived there with the Carmichael-Smyths. Of an actual acquaintance Anny wrote, "There was M. le Maire who used to come in & squint & sing till one couldn't help laughing." This profile prefigures the character of the mayor, Fontaine, in The Village on the Cliff, but instead of singing badly, Anny's hero plays the cornet badly. In her novel, Anny takes this mere suggestion of a character and builds him into a sympathetic, vulnerable human being. In "Across the Peat-Fields," a short story published in 1881, Anny uses the same basic Frenchman, also called Fontaine, but here he becomes a fussier, more comic secondary character who plays the fiddle, also badly.

Her stay in Mennecy furnished her with the embryos of other char-
acters: Major Carmichael-Smyth evolved into the narrator’s granduncle in “Across the Peat-Fields”; and a neighboring playmate became her heroine Pauline. In the 1878 journal the passages referring to these people she knew read like sketches for her fictional portraits. In the opening paragraph of “Across the Peat-Fields,” Anny writes that it is a story in which some true things were told with others that were not true, all blended together in that same curious way in which, when we are asleep, we dream out allegories, and remembrances, and indications that we scarcely recognize when we are awake. Story-telling is, in truth, a sort of dreaming, from which the writer only quite awakes when the last proof is corrected. (145)

This is the technique that Anny uses to record the story of her life in her journal of 1878.

At the end of the journal, Anny describes her life with Minny until the famous housewarming of Palace Green in 1862. This event, with its glowing fires, opulent food, and distinguished guests, went on for two days. It was the high point of Anny’s life and centered on the production on both nights of Thackeray’s play The Wolves and the Lamb. “I suppose this is the summit. I shall never feel so jubilant so grand so wildly important & happy again.” Surrounded by the beauties of the new house Thackeray had built, Anny was virtually its mistress: “it seemed too delightful to think that we were really & truly going to live in this beautiful place & be young ladies & have fun & society & see life.” Her memories of the housewarming and her part in it are so happy that she is able to praise Minny and her performance in the play with only slight jealousy.

Anny “ordered the supper” and received the company, which meant that she greeted the guests, most likely standing by Thackeray’s side. For Anny at that time, this was the “summit.” This tableau then, is the ending Anny chose for her life with Thackeray—a happy ending rather than one culminating in death, as in reality it did. Anny describes their life at Palace Green for another page and then abruptly ends with an unfinished sentence, “Cousin Emmy came to stay with me while [Minny] was away. & y’” The journal proper ends here with an unfinished sentence but with a completed idea. The journal is a unified whole, beginning in 1840 and ending in 1862, which was exactly the time span Anny chose for her narrative.

Descriptions of two additional scenes written on the same loose paper, but perhaps written by Anny at a later date, are folded with the
pages of Anny’s journals. The first relates to a memory from when Anny was a very young girl, a story of sorrow becoming relief. One autumn, Anny, Minny, and Amy Crowe were enjoying a holiday in Wales; Thackeray was on the Continent; the Carmichael-Smyths were in Scotland.

When one day about three o’clock I saw a little telegraph boy coming along the path. I thought it was bad news of my Papa & I hardly could open the paper. But the telegram was from Grannie in Scotland: dear kind old GP had died quite suddenly. & so we packed up & set off that evening. It was a long, long tiring journey & we were very sad & still very frightened about our Father. Then we went to the inn still very frightened... & we said our name was Thackeray, the waiter said there is a gentleman of that name in bed upstairs. Then we rushed into Papas room & there he was quite well & sound asleep.

A journey such as this—to attend a funeral—for two Victorian women, alone, aged twenty-one and eighteen, was a frightening experience. Of the major’s death Anny writes that “the first break that came in our home was when our kind old Grandpapa died.” Anny insists that “the first break” to the Thackeray family was her grandfather’s death and not Isabella’s illness, which necessitated the dismantling of their home in London and Anny’s virtual loss of her mother. Even in retrospect, so many years later, Anny cannot recognize Isabella’s insanity for the tragedy it was. And despite the sadness of losing their much loved GP, the trip ended happily because Thackeray, well and sound asleep, was waiting for them.

A final, fragmentary page of writing, in Anny’s hand, depicts a beautiful scene of Anny looking out a window and watching Minny dance; Minny “would turn round & round as quick as she could go & then her hair would seem like a burning bush.” Anny describes her own position as an observer and a recorder of life—as a mature author examining her past and creating art out of her life.

Unlike the 1864 journal, the 1878 journal is consciously planned and executed. The writing is smoother, and the feelings are more refined and artfully conceived. Despite this deceptive outer crust, the underlayers of the journal are meaningful and substantial. The journal is remarkable for its presentation of a woman who, though happy, still needs to justify herself to her dead sister and father. Able at last to cope with her guilt, Anny enters into a new life; the 1878 journal is a fitting epilogue to the old.
Part I

The first time I saw y'. Mommee she was all wrapped in flannel & lying on our old nurses' knee. My nurse said Come here Missy & look at y'. little sister. And I said but I cant see her Brodie & Brodie said look at her kicking her little feet. Then I can remember her as a little baby with a long green veil because her eyes used to be sore. We were in Ireland up on a hill — There were sloping fields leading to a great wide river & ships were floating, & in one of the fields some beautiful buttercups were growing. & somehow I used to run away by myself & play with some other little children in the field & a kind old gentleman used to come up with his pockets full of apples. One day the nurse let me tie the babys green veil on my hat & as I ran along it floated beautifully in the air. Your Grandpapa was quite young in those days & in great trouble but he always laughed & made the best of his great deep sorrow. The next thing I can remember is being in the dark in a diligence & the baby was crying & I began to cry & my Father struck a light to cheer me up. There was a sick man in the corner moaning & then the dawn came. My Papa has told me since that it was a most weary terrible night. Then we got to Paris to our Grandmama & Grandpapa & to a young lady with long black hair we called Aunt Mary. They all lived in an old house w' has long since been pulled down nr. the Arc. My Grandmama was quite young too & very beautiful & tall & kind. We called her Grannie & her mother also came to live with us & we called her Grandmama. She had a brown face & bright dark eyes. I used to go out walking with my little sister who still wore her green veil & who used to wake me up at night & in the morning by crying piteously. Our Papa went away & we stayed with our Grandmothers. Grannie was very kind & Grandmama was very unkind & always scolded me but she could not help loving the poor darling little baby. One night I dreamt somebody had cut the
babys two little feet off & I scrambled out of bed & went to look at her & O I was so glad to see her warm & sound asleep. I had never loved her till then but then I loved her. We went into the country that year & we used to spend the day in a big forest under the trees & pick tiny little blue deep flowers that I made into wreaths & y. Mommee used to wear a tiny little pink frock. One day when we had just done some luncheon someone said look look at Baby, & baby was beginning to walk & holding on to the chairs. I was very naughty that day & I had refused to say grace, but my Grannie was so pleased with Baby for beginning to walk that I was forgiven I used to be naughty every day like naughty Lucy. Once I picked some cherries off a tree once I kicked a gentleman's legs once I was shut up in a cupboard. I also ran away three times

Margie & Annies mama was a little girl in those days but she was much older than I & their Uncle George was a baby & they were all in this country place. They lived in a delightful old house with a round hole in the wall through which I could climb backwards & forwards. There was also a boy called Frank Hankey who used to twist my arm round & round. One summers day a little girl in the house died & all the little children came dressed in white and carried her away. When we went back to Paris our Grannie bought a nice little green cart for Minnie to go out in. Sometimes as a great treat I was allowed to get in too. We used to have big bits of bread given to us & a penny each & our nurse used to drag us to a little shop where they sold milk & we used to breakfast in the little shop & then go on to a green shady terrace & spend long mornings out of doors. Minnie drank her milk but never would eat much. She used to run away from the table & sometimes my Grannie used to give her her dinner under the table. She never liked Rhubarb or vegetables or puddings. Our good old Brodie had gone away to England & was living with M. & M. Darwin who had a little girl of my own age called Annie too. We had a new nurse a funny little short long nosed punch like woman called Justine who was very very fond of y. Mommee & took great care of her. Our Aunt Mary was married by this time & we were all living in the Champs Elysees in a big house called the Maison Valin. One day Aunt Mary went to India, but about a week after she left our Grandmama told us to go upstairs one morning & when we went up with the maid she took us into a room we had never seen before & there was a little boy in his bath. It was our little cousin, Aunt Mary's little boy who had fallen ill on the way to Marseilles & been sent back
to live with us. We were so enchanted we thought he would melt away &
become a dream. Our Papa used to come & see us from time to time &
I thought he was Jesus Christ. Once he went to Jerusalem & when he
came back he had funny little mustachios & y' Mommee cried & would
only kiss him through a newspaper so he went into his room & shaved
them off & came out quite smoothe & gave her a kiss. I liked seeing
him shave very much he used to go so quick & so straight. Sometimes
when he was dressing & we were there he would tear out long paper
pictures with little pigs all trotting after one another. We always went
away in the summer. One year we went to Montmorency where I was
very unhappy & naughty & shut up in my room for a long time & I was
whipped. Another year we went to Chaudfontaine in Belgium & then
y' Mommee was a little girl about four years old. She & I used to dance
together & little Charles Carmichael used to sit & kick on the floor. One
day Grannie told me a great secret. We were to go over to England to
pay our Papa a visit and all night long we were sick in a ship & in the
morning it was England & we went to a dear little village called Fareham
n' Southampton to an old aunt in an old house with blue china pots
& old pictures. One of them was the gentleman in the red coat that
poppee will show you. He was our Grannie's papa & the husband of
the old brown lady & he was the brother of Aunt Becher with whom
we went to stay. It was very rainy weather when we were at Fareham &
our Grannie bought us each a little pair of pattens. There was a little girl
there of my own age called Mariana & her Aunt Miss Pooke & Mommee
went to see some of the old ladies & I went to see some of the others &
then we paid a visit to some friends in a country home on a hill & we
put on our best india frocks & blue sashes every day Magdalene will show you the picture of Mrs Barlow the lady with whom we stayed.

Then we went to London. Our Father was living in London in
chambers opposite St James Palace & he came to meet us at the station
& immediately gave us each 2 wax dolls. & at breakfast he gave us bigger helps of jam than we had ever had in our lives & after breakfast he
took us to feed the ducks in St James Park, & then he bought us picture
books the Arabian Nights & Grimms Fairy Tales & then he took us to a
diorama & to the Colosseum. I thought he would spend all the money
he had in the world when I saw how much he had to pay for us. One day
he took us in our flapping straw hats to see Aunt JOB who was quite a
young lady with curls & who gave us a book
I cannot remember going back to Paris, but I think I then went to
do my lessons every morning with a little girl called Laura Colmache
& Mommee & I used to go & play round & round the statues in the
Tuileries in the afternoon & then Aunt Mary came back fm. India &
in the summer we all went to Normandy. And I used to read the books
Papa had bought us, at my bed room window & look out & see all the
Normandy men & women dancing on the green.

And Mommee liked finding pretty little shells & sea-weeds & we
made friends with a little boy called O'Farrell & his sister Fanny &
we used to dig deep holes in the sand & line them with oyster shells & sit in
them & look at the sea.

One of the nicest things that ever happened to us when we were
children at Paris was the arrival of a huge parcel, w/b my Grannie cut
open and inside there were piles & piles of the most beautiful delightful
wonderful fairy tale books all painted with pictures — I thought they
would never come to an end but alas! in a week we had read them all.
They were called the Felix Summerly series & on the first page was writ­
ten — To my three daughters Letetia Henrietta & Mary I dedicate these
volumes. I used to think that they must be the happiest little girls in
the world but I never thought we should ever know them.

We had some other books — The one about little Willy & his Mama
was y! Mommees favourite. Years afterwards she found it in a shop &
asked me to buy it for Margie & Annie & now it is you who read out of it

There were a great many nice little french books, too that I used to
read & read our kind cousin Charlotte Ritchie used to give them to
us, Chanoine Schmidt & l'Ami des Enfants, & the Journal des desmoi­
selles. Our Grandpapa who we used to call GP used to wear a short
cloak he called a poncho & a straw hat & to buy Almanachs full of pic­
tures w/b he gave us to play with. He was a dear old man & we always
thought it a treat to be with him. He was quite bald with kind blue eyes
& he had a room full of chemical experiments barrels of beer, bottles,
boots, old German dictionaries & medical works.

Our Mama was ill & she used to live with a Doctor in a big house
with a great garden full of little paths & we used to go & spend the
day with her & run after her down the long slopes of the garden. She
was quite young with beautiful red-golden hair, one day when we came
we found her sitting on the terrace with all her hair tumbling about
her shoulders & somebody combing it out. Then the Doctor said it was
better we should not go & see her anymore & we came away to England to live with our Papa.\textsuperscript{37} He lived in an old brown house in\textsuperscript{38} Young Street Kensington opposite to the house where Richmond & I are going to live.\textsuperscript{39}

We came one evening in the autumn. There were raging fires lighted & volumes of punch were put out on the round drawingroom table & also beautiful red silk books that I was never tired of reading afterwards when I had had time to value it all. Upstairs was a dear little room with two little beds & some pictures. One was of a good boy doing a sum & another of a sleepy boy yawning on his way to bed, & then over the drawers hung Daniel O'Connel\textsuperscript{40} who used to make the most horrible faces at us.\textsuperscript{41} Your Mommee was six & she had dear little feet & such pretty blue eyes & long curls & she used to play by herself at all sorts of little games — How bitterly she cried when our Grannie went away & left us. An old friend called Bess came to take care of us.\textsuperscript{42} I think I must have been a very discontented child for it seems to me now that I was always in disgrace & that Bess used to call me a Viper. But with our Papa we were always happy & we used to go into his room & see him every morning before he got up, & our Grannie taught us to love him with all our hearts. After Bess went away we had a pretty young governess called Miss Drury. We used to go out to childrens parties in white muslin frocks, to Mr. Dickens & Mr. Macreadys.\textsuperscript{43} One day our Papa told us to put on our hats & we walked with him up Kensington gravel pits to a house where we found a gentleman\textsuperscript{44} at breakfast with a tea pot at which he was looking. He told our Papa that this was a tea-pot he had had made himself, & he said his children would be home next day & that we must come & see them & that their names were Letitia Henrietta & Mary. They were the very same little girls I had thought about so much at Paris. Your Mamma used to be always happy in the garden feeding the cats digging deep holes with which she meant to reach the centre of the earth. She had a doll she loved dearly with long eyelashes & a wax neck, she used to like dressing up too very much & we used to put on some spangled veils out of an old trunk & a Turkish dressinggown our Papa had brought back & sometimes he used to call us to sit for the pictures of Vanity Fair.\textsuperscript{45} One day we were the two naughty children rolling over & over on the ground, & there is a little picture of your Mommee sitting building cards upon a little three legged stool our Grannie had given us\textsuperscript{46}
One day we could not find your Mommee anywhere — not in the house not in the garden. My Papa was dreadfully frightened & thought somebody had stolen her. He called for his horse & he galloped away to the park & I cried & the governess was so frightened she began to pack her box for fear our Papa should send her to prison, & at last I went up to our little bed room because I was so miserable, & I heard a little voice out of the cupboard which said Ainy! Ainy! — it was your own Mommee who peeped out & she said she had hidden herself for fun, & then when Papa called & everybody looked for her she was afraid to come out.

Besides Mr. Brookfield we had another great friend. Lady Cole she is now, the mother of Tishy Hennie & Mary — We used to go to tea there once a week & play in the garden with the children & pretend we were Kings & Queens & fairies & all sorts of things. We used to act a great deal & at Christmas we used to get up little plays: & we used to walk out in Kensington Gardens together. On May day we went off into the lanes & gathered may, all that part of our lives I have written about in Old Kensington —

About twice a year we used to go over to Paris to see our Grannie. She was beautiful & good & she loved my papa tenderly but she used to make him unhappy by her reproofs & she always treated him as if he was a little boy. Then he would get indignant & my Grannie used to cry & Minnie & I did not know what to think or to do. My brown Grandmama died when I was about twelve & Mommee was nine. Mommee slept in her room & in the night she heard poor Grandmama moaning & she got up & took her some water, & poor Grandmama began to cry & blessed her & thanked her & next day we went to spend the day with Laura Colmache & when we came back our Grannie told us that poor Grandmama was dead. Minnie was very sorry for she had always been fond of her & Mommee & I lived with y'. Grandpapa who used to write like poppee in his study. He used to breakfast with us when he was well, but the days he was ill, & that was a great many days I am sorry to say he had his breakfast upstairs in his room & we used to go in & pour out his tea & look at his dear face.

He had such a kind face with grey hair all waving & brown eyes like Richmonds. Mommee was very like him. She had a wide open look which brought him back to me & thin blue veins across her temples like his. On Sunday mornings we had no lessons & we used to sit with him
in his study & help him with his wood blocks. We used to rub them out & very soon he began to make use of us as his secretaries & to dictate his books to us.

My mama was ill & away & my Papa was very lonely at times for we were only little girls after all & we could not quite understand all that he thought & felt but a great deal we could understand & we liked nothing so much as when he talked to us & told us all that he was doing. Aunt Job was a dear kind beautiful young Lady then & our Papa used to go & see her & talk to her & we too used to go & spend long days with her. This we liked almost better than anything else. She used to tell us stories & lend us books & one day she told me she came in & saw yf Mommee peeping over the great stair case & — throwing her shoe at the housemaid whom we did not like. We had a maid called Eliza Jordan who used to be very kind to us & of whom we were very fond, but we could not bear the manservant whose name was Samuel James. He was very clever & very fond of Papa & he was always thinking what he could do for him, & Mommee & I were afraid that Papa would like him better than us. Were not we silly little girls? We had a governess called Miss Alexander whose father & mother lived in an old house at Twickenham & when our Papa used to go away for a little Miss Alexander used to take us to her home take us to her home. In 1848 there was a revolution in France & people were afraid that in England too all sorts of terrible things w'd happen. The gentlemen all became policemen to keep order & we looked out of window & saw our papa cross the street & go past the house w'! Richmond & I are going to live in & he stopped at the Greyhound & went in & when he came out he was carrying a great purple staff with a lion & unicorn painted on it.

That evening we were sent to Chapel House Twickenham to Miss Alexanders home. It was a beautiful old house with an oak staircase & a great many nice little wooden rooms there was a carved Bishop on the stair case with his hands out & a great many little girls a pretty one called Vittoria, a curly headed girl called Kathleen, a little dark eyed girl called Josephine they all came to look at us & we were all told to go to bed in our clothes because a chalk cross had been found marked upon the door. I believe one of the boys of the house had done it but we all hoped it was the revolution coming to set us on fire. It was very uncomfortable sleeping in our clothes & we were very glad to go to bed really the next night when the danger was supposed to be over.
We went to pay a second visit to the Alexanders in the course of the summer. They had left Chapel House & moved into a smaller one and Mr & Mrs Tennyson had come to live with the carved Bishop. Our papa rode over one summers evening to say goodbye to us he carried a little basket of cakes before him, on his brown cob, he told us he was going to Germany next day. I cried & cried & made Minnie cry too & Mrs. Alexander was very angry with us. I dont know why we were so unhappy there I think I was out of temper & jealous & suspicious. Minnie was very happy & one day Henry Alexander said to me as we were all sitting in the garden What a pretty little girl your sister is: & I looked at her & thought why what a pretty little girl she is. Miss Alexander our governess was engaged to be married & we were very much left to our own devices, we played in the garden took long walks squabbled & made it up with the other children. Sometimes we used to cut ferns in Windsor Park & one fact is very vividly impressed upon my mind is that the Alexanders being a Norfolk family had pudding before their meat.

One happy morning our maid Eliza Jordan appeared to fetch us home again. Papa was back in his study — oh how happy we were. I think it was this summer soon after Grannie came to us that we went to Wales with our Grannie & GP to a little seaside place near Caernarven called Langharne — This was a great era in our lives. We were all night in a steamer & GP covered us with his 'poncho.' The end of the journey was very adventurous, we missed the 2nd steamer & we were nearly wrecked in a little open boat coming by some cross way among the rocks. When we got to Longharne we found some of Grannies old Fareham friends living at the Rectory, & what was most thrilling of all, was a big volume of Martin Chuzzlewit. I used to go & read there every day. Mr Dickens himself had sent it to a Lady from Langharne who wrote to him for his autograph

Then we went to a nice little day school with a long garden sloping to the sea. It used to be so pretty when school was over to come along by the cliff & to look out across the bay wide & sweet & fresh with the evening light upon it — There were some friendly girls there. Harriet who lent me novels Lavinia the half pay Captains daughter who could repeat Milton, the Misses Myers grandest of all from Tenby whose papa with
his own hand pulled down the blinds of every window in the house on Sunday. The surly music master Mr. Ticher the kind little governess, they were all delightfully interesting. Your mama made friends Miss Isabella Myers while I & Miss Fanny the elder exchanged confidences. One day Grannie was crying, & then she & GP told us that our Papa was very very ill & we all travelled back across the country. We came to Breknoch on the day of a great national fast for the cholera I think, & when we came to Gloucester & then Grannie hurried on & GP & Minnie & I followed the next day. On our way back we came to a station called Minniken Station.

Dear Papa was better but so thin & weak & with great eyes when we came home. He was sitting up in his bedroom in the big chair. We were just allowed to see him for a few minutes then he went to Brighton. He didn't know how anxious & unhappy we were. I cannot remember what happened for a long time after this, Miss Trulock came to be our daily governess & we went to Southampton on a visit to Mr. Fanshawe Rosa Fanshawe was my age, & we had acted charades together at Mr. Brookfields & raced about the house. We also acted with the Coles little plays as well as charades.

Your Mommee always said that she was sure she had been an actress at some time or other & that she could remember the great dark theatre empty, while she rehearsed to it in a white dress. She acted better than any of us. She never seemed to do loud things or stamp or shout but she would say a little word or move a hand & somehow it meant more than all the rest of us together. When she was about eleven & I about fourteen our Papa took us abroad & we went for a long long journey to Antwerp to Germany & the Rhine. We met Mr. Kingsley on board the Rhine steamer in a garibaldi hat & many more people than I can remember. We went to Vienna & to Venice & to Milan & we lost our shoes & our shifts & our collars & I think we came home with very little besides a chessboard in our trunk. But it was all so lovely & so wonderful the things we didn't lose were the pictures & the places I can see them now after all these long years & years when I look for them. The Austrians were in Italy then, & I remember their white uniforms & their lovely music & I can remember your grandpapa standing before the great picture of the Virgin in Venice stamping on the ground because it was so beautiful, & then when we came to Dresden, there was another Virgin with her little boy in her arms. Sometimes I think of your Mommee.
looking like one of these beautiful good Virgins. With her sweet eyes & peaceful wondering face — only she was funnier & cleverer than any of them, & made little jokes. She was thirteen & I was sixteen when we went to Paris one autumn with Papa & from Paris to Rome where we spent the winter. It seemed all golden like the great picture at Venice when we landed at Civita Vecchia, I have never been there again nor to Pisa but I daresay it all looks just the same blue sky & beggars in the sun & shadows & lovely old sloping ruins & arched palaces. As we got to Rome it was evening & papa said Look out there is S Peter's. & we looked out & a great dark living sort of dome seemed to hunch up its shoulders as we drove under the stars, then a sentry stopped us & then we rattled along the streets to our hotel in the Condotti It had yellow paper on the walls & next morning when I looked out I saw a bandit & an Italian woman with a red bodice & white sleeves walk by the window & all the bells were jangling. Our Father took a lodging in a great Palazzo & hired an old cook called Octavia & Papas servant Charles waited upon us & used to fetch us from the tea parties & friends houses who asked us the two people we liked best in Rome were M. Browning & M. Sartoris Walter Scotts son in law Mf Lockhart was there & next to them Mary Brotherton & a kind Mf Creyke & Mf Bean too was very kind & lent me all Bulwers novels & a great many of Disreals & in the lodging shelf was a library where I read the Sorrows of Werther. Your Mommee & I used to write for yf grandpapa sometimes, & it was here at Rome when we gave a childrens party that he drew us all the funny pretty pictures for the Rose & the Ring. My Miss Meme knows Mf Bulbo & prince Giglio & Mf Gruffanuff. All the little children for whom he first drew the pictures are grown up married people now & Pen Browning can make pictures for himself.

Our Papa was very ill in Rome & then we went to Naples & one evening we were out late in a beautiful sunset & the next day I awoke with a sore throat & a headache & all day long it got worse & worse & the Doctor came & said it was Scarlatina, & Mommee jumped up in the night & gave me water. Nobody was such a good nurse as Mommee. Her little hands always seemed to send pain away — once when her little kitten was ill she stroked it quite well, & once she kept a little fly in a dolls tea pot for two days with roseleaves. We told her it was dead, but she would not hear of it the second day she took up the lid to put some sugar crumbs in, & out flew the little fly. We were ill some weeks at Naples,
but after our throats were better we liked lying in bed & looking out of window at the chiaja & all the long strings of carriages & listening to the singing of the musicians. Every night a man used to come & tinkle a guitar & sing Ah! li voglio ben assai w[h] means something like I hope you are very well — When we were better we went out for a drive in the beautiful streaming light to a blue [?] grotto & then we went on board a ship & sailed back to Marsailles & saw Corsica in the distance & then we came to Paris to our Grannie again and stayed with her. But everybody else ran away from us. When we got back to London all y[!] Mommee's pretty curls fell off & one day our Papa took her to Mr. Trufitts & had her head shaved, I think I cried. She thought it great fun & used to take off her wig & pop her dear little bald head into the room thro' the door. One day she dressed herself up like a little Turk with a turban. I was very easily alarmed for I screamed loudly & didn't know her a bit. I thought she was Prince Cameralzeaman out of the Arabian Nights. Our Papa took a pretty old country house at Boulogne that autumn & we went to stay there with our Grannie. All the place was full of soldiers, we had a long garden & from the wall at the end we could see them living in their tents cooking their pots dancing & singing. Mr. Dickens was at Boulogne that year whose books Mommee read so often when she was a little girl.

When our Papa went to America we went to live in Paris with our Grannie, & all our life at that time was a little bit like the Story of Elizabeth w[h] perhaps will amuse you to read some day. Mommee told me to write it & said all our life just then would make such a good book — But this was long after & I hope you wont think that Mommee & I were ever quite so naughty as Elizabeth used to be. We did lessons, & music with our friends the Colmaches & never went to the play & once a week we went to a French class at Mf Monod's to prepare for confirmation. A very celebrated man called M. Guizot used to sit in a corner & Mf. Monod used to come in, and look at us & begin his lectures. They were very beautiful & good & he used to call us his children & tell us to be good & unselfish & to be brave & humble. He thought a great many things wrong w[h] our own Papa thought right & a great many things right that our Papa thought untrue: but he was a good man & did his duty & when he preached to us, it was not what he said but his whole heart & life that seemed to reach us. The girls used to sob & shake & I am sure we did (only we wanted) to tell him that we thought there
was no harm in being happy & laughing & in being interested in plays & stories, & that our Papa said this world was as much God's world as that other world for which M. Monod wanted us to live alone. He was very pale with dark cloudy hair & he had kind dark eyes. I think except my own Papa nobody ever talked to me as he did, for tho' I disagreed with him I could feel how good he was & how he was trying to be as good as he probably could and I think that is religion, to be true & good & that is why I love your poppee because he is sincere & so thank God is my Richmond who married me when I was so ill & old & unhappy & who has not loved me a bit the less for that & so was Mommee & so is y'. Godmama & if my Meme lives to be a woman & to marry, it must be somebody good who speaks the truth & who tries to help others. But Mommee & dear Godmama will arrange what is best if I am not there to have a voice in the matter. It was a very hot summer & we went to a funny little country house of my Grandmamas at Mennecy near Corbeil where we used to eat grapes & make friends with the neighbours & walk by the Canals of an evening. In the day time it was too hot to go out.

There was M. le Maire who used to come in & squint & sing till one couldn't help laughing & the paper manufacturer & a lovely romantic M'te Nassuet who used to sing Kradugah! ma bien aimée ééé & so did Pauline Colmache who used to teach us Italian under the vines, & there was the young lady up at the castle, very fat who drank beer & held her tumbler between her knees. One thing made us both very miserable at this time was that our Grannie was so unhappy because we said we were sort of Unitarians.

The first time out Papa came back from America he sent a telegram 'Come home all well' & Grannie & Minnie & I packed up & started off that very day. O how happy we were. He was out for he did not expect us and we went to bed & I remember it seemed as if the bed was flying in the air & then we heard him & jumped out of bed & rushed down in our dressing gowns — and there he was. He himself quite safe.

I must get my dates into order for I find I cannot quite remember when everything happened.

The Crimea was the autumn after our winter in Rome & then Margie & Annie's Mama had come to live with us in Onslow Sq. She & I used to read the horrible papers with the dreadful lists of wounded &
of killed — I remember the foggy Sunday when Balaclava was fought. People were coming & going & full of excitement.

It must have been the following summer that the still more wretched news of the Indian Mutiny came to us in beautiful sunshiny weather. We spent a great deal of time with the Coles this year, they too lived in Onslow Sq & we used to play a sort of lawn tennis in the pretty gardens of Gore House where the Horticultural Brick horrors now stand. In 1856 about the 10th of October Papa who had been coming & going & lecturing in England & Scotland sailed for America a second time. That was a heartache worse than the first time, for he had never been well since that Roman fever & I was old eno' to be anxious now.

We all breakfasted together one morning & he read prayers & his voice broke & he went quite away, as I thought without saying goodbye, & I remember standing still & hearing his voice say 'poor Nan!' & long after when he died & when My darling your Mommee died I heard his voice saying poor Nan but now I think we shall all be together again some day, & if it is not God's will, at least it has once been his will to make us all, & when I think of you my dearest children I don't know how to thank God.

All that winter in Paris seemed a very eventful grown up one — Grannie was very lame after her horrid accident & I read a letter from her to my papa telling him how when there was a crowd Minnie came & stood between her & the people to protect her against them. 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 Ainy that I dont know all the things you think tho you dont say them. One night I was ill in horrible pain & she came & put her arms round me & all the pain went away & I fell asleep. Amy lived with us in Paris in a pretty little apartment next door to our Grannies, & our maid Eliza Jordan waited on us & we used to do a great many amusing things & give tea parties to Gussie & Blanchie & Pinky who were such dear little girls.

We used to go to dine with Auntie Charlotte & Jane & to look at the Pictures in the Louvre & to tea at M's Sartoris' who now lived at Paris in a beautiful old house in the Rue Royale. She used to have music there & pink lamps & beautiful ladies came & grand looking gentlemen & of an evening she used to sing, most wonderfully & the house seemed all full of light & music & quite different from our dear old Grannies.
sleeping apartment with the two candles & the tea & the peat stove. One day I went to dine with Mr. Sartoris and after dinner she took me to the play & while the play was acting she said look & there in a box was a lady with coal black hair & a hard red face & a tight black silk dress & a cameo brooch. “That is George Sand my child” Said Mr. Sartoris — Your Mommee read George Sands life, it was almost the last book she ever read & she admired it & many of her books almost more than any others: and I am very glad to have seen her once tho I did not think she looked very nice or at all like her beautiful thoughts.

Mr. Browning was also in Paris this winter, in a little warm sunny shabby happy apartment with a wood fire always burning and a big sofa where she sate, & wrote her books out of her tiny inkstand in her beautiful delicate handwriting. Mr. Browning used to come in & talk & Pen was a little boy with long curls & some of the gentlemen from Mr. Sartoris used to come in & sit round the fire. Mr. Browning said that he & Mr. Browning always wrote poetry every morning till 2 or 3 o’clock. That was the year when I first remember hearing about Richmond in India. Guzzie & Pinkie Nely Blanchie were little bits of girls living with dear Auntie Charlotte & Janie & Felicie their Grandmama had died when we were in Rome, & they will tell you about y. Mommee & how she could draw for them & tell them stories, & she could always remember things, what had happened what people had said nobody can ever remember for me as she used to do because we had lived just the same life together like the married & even then we were not much parted. One day our Papa came back from America & we sat expecting him in the twilight, & we heard the tinkle of the door bell. My heart beat so I couldn’t move & then the bell rang again, & then we rushed to open it. We went back & lived in London after this & after a time Grannie went to pay some visits & we used to go to parties & to dine out & people used to come & dine with us & then Papa took a house in Kensington & finding it w’d not do, as it was he had it knocked down & a new one built. It took a long time & we used to think of little else from morning to night. It was a beautiful airy house with windows over looking the garden & at last — it was finished, & fires were lighted in all the rooms & then we thought we should like to give a housewarming & to act a play that our Father had written. We had made great friends with a young man called Herman Merivale & he kept us up to the idea & so did his sisters, & we acted & rehearsed & acted & it was very great fun & excitement. The night of the first rehearsal I remember so well, the
great new house full of shadows & corners the people coming & going the unaccustomed doors & arches & passages, it seemed too delightful to think that we were really & truly going to live in this beautiful place & be young ladies & have fun & society & see life. Our life had been very quiet always for papa was often ill & we could not have many people to the house. We had a great many pets, a dear dear little dog called Brownie We used to sit in the balcony of an evening & talk to the Marochettis. & I had begun to write a good deal — It was when we were leaving Onslow Sq. that I began Elizabeth & scrawled away in the window to the sound of the Church bells that used to fill the green drawingroom — The back room was almost the nicest for it had an avenue of trees at the back. Minnie y' Mommee said write about our life at Paris Annie (as I have already told you) & so I wrote my first novel as hard as I could write on all sorts of untidy scraps of paper & then I stuffed it away & did not think any more of it, in the great events of the play & the move and so the wonderful night came & your Mommee acted so wonderfully that people could hardly believe it was her. She acted the part of an old lady so that I hardly knew her & then she acted a sweet young peasant in a white cap & she looked quite lovely all of a sudden.

Even now after years & years people talk about her acting at that time. She could do things suddenly all unexpectedly — On this occasion she arranged her own dress & managed it all quite alone Margie's Mama arranged the play & all the things that were wanted & I rec'd the company & ordered the supper. In a little green book in my room w' I will keep for you my Meme you will find the play bill & the Epilogue and all the names of the people who acted in the W-(Em)-Ty House theatricals. I remember writing to ask Godmama whom I had never seen then but she w't not come.

I think this was the year of the Exhibition & Gussie & Blanchie came to stay with us after their papa died & so did their mama who was very very sad & pale & changed & then Tishy & Gerald & Richmond came & I remember it tho' Richmond doesn't & then Margie & Annies papa proposed to Amy & first she said no & then she said yes. I had never thought about it but y' Mommee did & wanted it very much & one day dear Amy was married & went away to India. All of a sudden y' Mama had become quite grown up & so pretty & beautiful that people hardly recognized her. That was the first year we went to live in Palace Green. She went to the Exhibition one day & looked at a
statue & changed her hair. She turned it up in pretty loose wavy loops instead of the little tight plats she had always worn & her cheeks became pink and I felt very proud of her. Then after a little while she began to droop somehow — I could not think of what was amiss, & I begged our Papa to let her go away to Scotland & the kind Lows asked her to go with them. You will like to read some of her dear funny letters. That was when she was photographed knitting her stocking. Cousin Emmy came to stay with me while she was away. & y.'

The first break that came in our home was when our kind old Grandpapa died. Y' Mommee, & Margies & Annies Mama & I were all in Wales one autumn, & our Papa was abroad & we had not heard from him for sometimes tho we knew that he was ill. When one day about 3 o'c. in the afternoon I saw a little telegraph boy coming along the path that led to the door — I thought it was bad news of my Papa & I hardly could open the paper. But the telegram was from Grannie in Scotland dear kind old GP had died quite suddenly. & so we we packed up & set off that evening. It was a long long tiring journey & we were very sad & still very frightened about our Father & when we got to Ayr it was the next evening very late & we went to a house & someone said Go quietly to bed, all is at peace here & your Grandmama is in bed. Good night. Good night & then we went to the inn still very frightened & tired out & we said our name was Thackeray & we wanted some rooms & the waiter said There is a gentleman of that name in bed upstairs. He arrived today & then we rushed into Papas room & there he was quite well & sound asleep.

Next day dear GP was buried & the sun shone & we came away & Grannie came with us & lived in Onslow Sq. I can remember her walking holding Papas arm. She looked so tall & beautiful in her black & he too looked so big & so noble taking care of her.

I was 9 & Mommee was 6 when we came to live in Young Street with our Papa. It was winter-time & a nice fire was burning in the drawingroom & all the Punch books were out upon the table & someday you must come over the old house & see the room, Mommee lived in I think she liked the garden best of all. She used to dance about on the little green lawn & her long thick curls used to shine so, that I used to look out of window at them sometimes she would turn round & round as quick as she could go & then her hair would seem like a burning bush.