INTRODUCTION

I have home and children and family and blessings innumerable, but I never leave off thinking of the past.

During the period 1879–1900 Anne Thackeray Ritchie confirmed the reputation she had established during the 1860s and 1870s. She published six books, including the best of her novels, Mrs. Dymond. But the majority of her publications were reminiscences of the past, and portraits of people she had known in her youth. She brought to this work a double vision: her youthful memories and her mature insights. In regard to her father, her work reached its zenith with the publication of the biographical introductions to the thirteen volumes of the Works of William Makepeace Thackeray. But Anny did not dwell in the past. Her letters from this period show her sustaining old friendships and winning the affection and admiration of new acquaintances, including that of Henry James.

On a personal level, Anny delighted in her family, especially in her two children. Like Thackeray, Anny was extremely fond of children. Embracing motherhood wholeheartedly, she filled her letters with loving references to her daughter and her son. It was preordained that her son would be named William Thackeray Denis. He was the completion of her father’s arrested Denis Duval. When Billy was a year old she wrote that “Billy opened his eyes and laughed and looked like his Grandfather for a moment . . . like a shadow in the past.” Later, when Billy was at Sedburgh, “she was struck . . . by how he looked like Papa [Thackeray] with high shoulders and well set up.” Just as she had tried
to read Thackeray into Richmond Ritchie when she married him, so now she saw her father in her son. In 1880, a year after her son’s birth, Anny wrote to a childhood friend, “I daresay you may have heard of me & of my deep blessings coming after so much sorrow.”

Anny completed the last of her novels during this time of happiness. *Mrs. Dymond* was published in 1885. Of all her fiction, *Mrs. Dymond* is the most sound structurally. It is a well-made story, with a solid plotline, the most adult and psychologically convincing of her fiction, and especially interesting because its subject matter shows a striking development.

Similar in structure to *The Village on the Cliff*, *Mrs. Dymond* veers from the sentimental ending of *The Village* to narrate the awakening of its heroine. Not a story of female emancipation, it is a tale of a Victorian woman with an overwhelming desire to change her life. Poor little Catherine of *The Village* embraces the role of guilty widow of an elderly husband she never loved. Susanna (Mrs. Dymond), on the other hand, sheds her widow’s weeds to accept the love of a young and spirited man. Catherine remains the more than human Victorian heroine, altruistic to the end; Susanna leaves behind altruism, passivity, and the stereotype of the quiescent widow. That she finds happiness in a second marriage is not a new theme in Anny’s fiction; *To Esther* and *Miss Angel* both end in happy second marriages. *Mrs. Dymond* is revolutionary because the hero holds the heroine in his arms and each feels a sexual attraction for the other. In stark contrast, Colonel Dymond’s proposal of marriage is quiet, inhibited, and bloodless. Like a well-brought-up Victorian young woman, Susy is helpless. She marries her “good friend” because she and her family need someone to care for them. Throughout her marriage to the Colonel, Susy tries to live up to her conception of what he wants in a wife:

> She was not insincere, but she was not outspoken; she did not say all she felt, she put a force and a constraint upon herself, crushed her own natural instincts, lived as she thought he expected her to live, was silent where she could not agree, obliged herself to think as he did, and suffered under this mental suicide.

Never subjected to “mental suicide” of her own, Anny endowed her heroine with a sensibility to save herself. She marries a second time for love. The emotion of a young woman who finds herself in love for the first time rings true to human nature.
To introduce her novel *Mrs. Dymond*, Anny quotes the opening three lines of Shakespeare's Sonnet CVII:

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control.

On the dedication page of *Mrs. Dymond* a triangle appears with the letters R, h, and d at its angles. For Anny, the love of her husband and her children (Richmond, Hester, and William Denis) was the secret that made life worth living. This “secret”—that love is best—her heroine embraces in the end. “True love” will not be controlled and Susy no longer tries to do so.

At the beginning of *Vanity Fair* Thackeray assumes the persona of “the Manager of the Performance” of a vast puppet show. At the end, he returns, elegantly, to his opening metaphor and admonishes, “Come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out.” The panoramic view of the world of *Vanity Fair* affords Thackeray the opportunity to be its ringmaster, its manager—sophisticated, knowledgeable, and psychologically astute.

Anny begins *Mrs. Dymond* with a chess game:

Before the game of chess begins to be played, the heroes and heroines of the coming catastrophe are to be seen in orderly array. There is nothing to tell in which direction the fortunes of the board will drift. And so in story telling, when the performance begins, the characters are to be seen, quietly drawn up in their places, and calmly resting before the battle. (5)

Thackeray enters the world of *Vanity Fair* as its manager, its puller of strings, its energizer; Anny compares her storytelling to a game of chess, one in which she is the observer, not a participant. Yet, she is as intensely involved in the lives of her characters as Thackeray is. She never uses her chess metaphor again; her novel ends with a cautionary French nursery rhyme:

Promenons-nous dans les bois
Pendant que le loup n’y est pas,

sing the little voices, taking up in their turn that song of childhood and innocent joy which reaches from generation to generation, which no sorrow, no disaster, will ever silence while this world rolls on. (274)

The children may walk in the woods—but only when the wolf is not there; yet there is hope in “the joy which reaches from generation to
generation.” For Thackeray, the husband of an insane wife, the world was not a playground. For Anny, the world had at last divulged its possibilities to her. After much sorrow, her husband and her children—her new “blessings”—reassured her that the world could be, at times, a place where “le loup n’y est pas.”

Richmond Ritchie always enjoyed the companionship of beautiful, energetic women. Ironically, it was Anny herself who sent her husband to help the woman to whom he later lost his heart. Long a friend of Anny’s, Lionel Tennyson, the poet’s second son, was taken ill in India. Returning to England, he died at sea on 20 April 1886. His beautiful young widow was distraught, and Anny asked Richmond to help Eleanor Tennyson with her affairs.

Afflicted with sciatica, Anny went to Aix-les-Bains for the baths. Richmond was thirty-two years old and handsome; Anny was forty-nine and ill. Eleanor Tennyson was in need not only of counseling but of a man. Inevitably, she and Richmond fell in love. When he confessed to his wife, she sent him off to Brighton to decide which of the two women he wanted—Eleanor Tennyson or Anne Ritchie. Given the society in which they lived, he had little choice. Divorce was almost impossible and his position at the India Office was at risk. Within two days Anny received a postcard addressed “Dearest wife”; he had chosen Anne Ritchie.

The relationship between Mary and Michael Marney in Mrs. Dymond leads one to believe that Anny had a great understanding and a special empathy for loving older wives and wayward younger husbands. However, the novel was published in 1885; Richmond Ritchie became involved with Eleanor Tennyson in 1886. Anny may have already sensed that Richmond was susceptible to the charms of other women. Her acute, insightful delineation of the relationship between Mary and Michael Marney supports this assumption. While Thackeray avenged himself on Mrs. Brookfield by changing their relationship into one in which Lady Castlewood is older than Esmond, and in love with him long before he loves her, Anny modeled the Marneys on her own circumstances, an older wife in love with a younger, handsome husband. That Marney was a womanizer may have been part of the pattern of Anny’s own marriage, or of her unconscious fears.

Richmond Ritchie’s personality is elusive. A great deal can be inferred from Anny’s letters to him and from the people who became his friends. What is revealing about the family, and in particular, about
Richmond Ritchie, is that his private family name is Wizz. With this nickname, the weight, the seriousness, of the India Office slip from his shoulders. At what was he a wizard? The lighter side of his nature is confirmed by Anny in her letter to Mrs. Savile Clarke (Letter 82) in which she describes her husband’s reaction to the performance of *The Rose and the Ring*. Not only did Wizz attend a children’s play (albeit based on a story by his father-in-law), but he “began breakfast this morning with the ode to Kedgeree.” This lends credence to an elegiac eulogy of Richmond Ritchie.

But for all his accessibility and genial humour at the Office, he was a most formidable person—six foot three inches tall and heavily built, with a glance at once humorous, sardonic, and shattering, a rich voice, sober but expressive gestures, and sharp and mordant wit ready to flay the self-complacent and blast the sentimental.\(^9\)

This picture is quite different from Henry James’s description of the “infantile husband” of Miss Thackeray.

Certainly Richmond was successful in the India Office and knighted for his work there. But he seemed to live on the periphery of Anny’s life. Perhaps because of their estrangements, they went their separate ways. Never a typical Victorian housewife, Anny filled her days with writing. They both loved and enjoyed music, but aside from this shared experience, they seemed to have little in common. Emulating Thackeray in his frenetic traveling, Anny ranged over England and the Continent. When she was stricken with sciatica, she sought spas, hoping for a cure.

With her need for movement, and Richmond Ritchie’s position, which kept him tied to a desk in London, the only solution for her was to go off on her own. Her husband’s preferences were not hers. He liked to fish, to play golf, and to take long walks. He preferred quiet and solitude after his hectic days of government business. She preferred people and socializing after a day of writing in solitude. Although he may have been beguiled by her accomplishments and worldliness when he married her, living with a legend and “a woman of genius” was, no doubt, trying for the introverted Richmond Ritchie. On the surface it may have appeared to him as if his wife had no need of him. The women to whom he was attracted were young, beautiful, and in need of him. Although Richmond’s love for his wife faltered, his devotion to his home and to his children did not.
Richmond and Anny may have been an ill-assorted couple; they had their problems, but in the balance, their marriage worked.

Like Thackeray before her, Anny (and Richmond as well) anchored their lives in their family. Born in India and sent to relatives in England at an early age, Thackeray and Richmond shared a common heritage of displacement, while Anny herself lost her home at the same early age owing to her mother’s insanity. For all three, home and family were of inordinate importance. Anny and Richmond were purposeful people, dedicated to the jobs they had chosen. Husband and wife worked hard; they needed the money to support the extravagance of their Thackerayan way of life.

After Thackeray’s death, Anny took over many of his responsibilities, one of which was the care of Isabella. Not only did she visit her mother but she later brought her children with her. Whether it was Anny’s own need for a feeling of continuity, or whether she wanted Isabella to remain part of her family, Hester and Billy knew their grandmother, went to her funeral, and “were very sad, poor darlings, and cried and cried.”

Anny’s letters to family members reveal different aspects of her life. In Anny’s three letters to Isabella in the last years of her life, mother and daughter reveal reversed roles, Anny writing to her mother as though she were a bright ten year old. In a letter from Aix-les-Bains, Anny enclosed a picture postcard “to show you the way people come home from the baths here” (Letter 74). In Letter 84 Anny described her garden and the children playing in it, drawing a sketch of them. The tone of all three letters is lighthearted, even when she or her children are ill. Isabella must be shielded from all unpleasantness and only “[t]he air [which] is delicious sleepy soothing fattening” (Letter 85), or similar topics are discussed.

Lovingly, Anny signs the letters with the childhood nickname “Nanny.” This is the person Isabella knows, not Mrs. Richmond Ritchie. Perhaps, too, Anny wanted to be Nanny again, if only briefly for Isabella. When Isabella died in 1894 Anny wrote: “My dearest mother did not suffer; Dear Mama, so silent, so undemanding, so loving, so contented. I shall miss her day after day. my kind, sweet, patient mother.” To the sorrow she felt for Thackeray’s loneliness, the sadness of Isabella’s life was added. Her own hostility mitigated, Anny acknowledged the tragedy that was her mother’s. Isabella’s family had been broken up by her insanity, but she survived
for fifty years. If Thackeray died a weary, sickened man at fifty-two, Isabella, barely having lived, died in her seventies, isolated from her family.

By the time William Ritchie entered Trinity College he was her "Bill of Bills" (Letters 92, 94, 98). In describing a letter from Colonel Richmond Webb to his son in college, which she intended to use in her biographical introductions, she wrote to William that "it says all the things one feels now my beloved Bill tho' parents don't say them so much" (Letter 90). In his explicit statement of his feeling for his son, Webb's Polonius-like instructions are yet sincere and loving. Not reticent about her feelings, Anny nevertheless used Webb's letter of a parent writing to a son newly launched in college to express her love for William.

By discussing her work freely, she made it part of the fabric of her life; she lived the time she was writing about by incorporating it into everything she did, even in her correspondence. In other letters to William there are overt declarations of love, concern, and caring. For example: "After all Mothers & sons are more made up of all the things they dont say than the things they do say & you know all the things I think & feel & wish for my darling boy" (Letter 93). And, "Beloved I havent written much but I constantly pay you little inside visits" (Letter 94). Even though the connection between mother and son was extraordinarily close, this did not preclude good family relationships all around. Anny had a genius for friendship and a vast capacity for love.

Always the letters, particularly those to William, speak of a closely knit family. Hester advises her mother to send Billy more money at college (Letter 90); Anny has received "a telegram from y'Father . & a delightful long letter from Hester" (Letter 90); Wizz said your river expedition put him in mind of his own youth & expeditions" (Letter 89). Anny never woos one family member at the expense of another. Essentially Anny's letters to Billy are those of a loving mother to her son. They are informative, warm, and reassuring, bringing home a little closer. Written during 1898–99, they reveal the pattern of her life. She entertained, she traveled, and she was finishing the biographical introductions to Thackeray's Works. Despite all these activities, she was plagued by illness. In a footnote to a published letter which Anny wrote in 1898, Hester added, "My mother's letters give no impression of the constant ill health from which she suffered; she never dwelt
upon this, not did she allow it to interfere with the ordinary course of her life.”12 “[T]he ordinary course of her life” was not that of a sixty-year-old, ailing, Victorian woman.

Anny was not an ordinary woman. She was the famous daughter of a famous father. Her correspondents were attached to her for many different reasons, among them her generosity. Occupied as she was, Anny nevertheless answered even strangers. One of the reasons that Thackeray’s manuscripts were cannibalized was Anny’s generosity in sending pieces of his handwritten work to readers who made the request. Later on, she would learn to refuse.

In Letter 67 she solicited a review in the Saturday Review for an unknown poet. She asked another friend to permit “a very nice little millionaire called Carnegie [who] is the owner of a great iron foundry in America” to call on her (Letter 72). In both of these requests—the review for the unknown poet and the interview with the nice little millionaire—Anny asked favors for each of them with the same sense of generosity, without any consideration of how important the person was. As openhanded as Thackeray, like him also she was generous of her own spirit.

Many people were drawn to Anny because she was exceptional. Letter 77 is of particular interest because the recipient was Elizabeth Robins (1862–1952). Born in Kentucky, she was an actress, novelist, and active feminist. Twenty-five years younger than Anny, Robins became her friend. Although the letter has little value in itself, it is extraordinary when considered in the light of the friendship between these two very different women. And yet, they had a great deal in common. Both lost their mothers to insanity; both worked and earned their own livings; both felt that women were the equals of men. Strong, assertive, and productive, they flouted the stereotype of the dependent Victorian lady.

Even in her business letters, Anny’s unique qualities are apparent. She researched whatever she was writing about by going, wherever possible, directly to the source. For example, she queried Octavia Hill about her business relationship with Ruskin (Letter 73). Her dealings with her publishers were friendly, but she asked for what she wanted without equivocation or hesitation, executing all of her own business arrangements. In Letters 84 and 85 she put forth her demands to Savile Clarke for the copyright to The Rose and the Ring. In Letter 70 to Mr. Payn, the new editor of the Cornhill, she discussed her ongoing
series in an informal manner, but on her terms. In Letter 69 she greeted Baron von Tauchnitz as a friend, which no doubt he was. These are really quasi-business letters; Anny was always herself, charming and effectual.

Anny’s charm was not always appreciated immediately. It is hard to fix the date of the beginning of her friendship with Henry James; it is simple to trace the rising line of his admiration, respect, and finally his love for her. In 1869 James wrote to his sister, “(I forgot to say just now by the way, a propos of the Stephens, that Miss Thackeray is absent on the Continent—else I should have seen her).” From being an aside in a parenthetical phrase, Anny works her personal magic and, despite his reservations, James capitulates to her real worth. In 1877 he wrote:

I lunched yesterday with poor Leslie Stephen, whom, however, rendered more inarticulate than ever by his wife’s death, I find an impossible companion. I had but a glimpse of Miss Thackeray, who has likewise been greatly knocked up by her sister’s death, and is ill and little visible. She inspired me with a kindly feeling. (II, 101)

In the next year, after Anny’s marriage, James’s kind feeling appears to be sorely taxed. He wrote:

Present were poor Miss Thackeray and her juvenile husband (one Ritchie)—the latter even out-silencing Stephen: and Miss T. herself the very foolishest talker (as well as most perfectly amiable, and plainest, woman) I have lately encountered. Compared with her conversation, Miss Angel is Baconian! (II, 157)

In a stunningly Jamesian sentence he destroys at once both Anny and her novel. She further outraged James’s sensibilities by going to a dinner party while she was visibly pregnant:

I went in with poor Miss Thackeray—further advanced toward confinement (though I believe it has not yet come off) than I have ever seen a lady at a dinner party. This is a thoroughly good, gentle creature; but exquisitely irrational. But I believe she is very happy with her infantile husband Richmond Ritchie. (II, 160)

Though pregnant, Anny is still “poor Miss Thackeray”; however, her “infantile husband” is now acknowledged by his full name. In the following year, 1879, James expanded on both Anny’s faults and her virtues:
I took in the *ci-devant* Miss Thackeray, with whom I had already considerable acquaintance, and in whose extreme good nature and erratic spontaneity I find something lovable and even touching. She has the minimum of common sense, but quite the maximum of good-feeling. Miss Thackeray is at any rate very happy and satisfied in her queer little marriage. Her husband is, superficially, an ill-mannered and taciturn youth; but he improves on acquaintance.\(^15\)

Again in 1879 James referred to "a dinner party given by the Thackeray-Ritchies" and to Richmond Ritchie as "Miss Thackeray's boy-husband."\(^16\) Although he cannot manage, as yet, to call them "The Ritchies," he does acknowledge that there is a connection between them—referring to them as "the Thackeray-Ritchies."

As James grew fonder of Anny, his view of Richmond mellowed as well. However, in his references to the Ritchies early in their friendship, James drew a caricature of the couple. With distaste, he protested Anny's marriage, and in a footnote added to her letter to him, he mocked her (Letter 66). James sent her letter on for someone else to read with the following notations: "(Could anything be More Miss Thackerayan?) Please destroy." If Anny's letter in its artlessness, love of nature, and concern for friends appears typically Miss Thackerayan, then James's addition to it is typically Jamesian in its sense of superiority and ambiguity. By asking for the letter to be destroyed, he (supposedly) covered his tracks.

By 1895 James's attitude toward her had changed. He addressed her as "Mrs. Ritchie" (Letter 88); and by 1897, she became "My dear Anne Ritchie."\(^17\) In Letter 88 he accepted a dinner invitation graciously and offered her seats for his short-lived play *Guy Domville*. By 1900 James addressed her as "Dearest Anne Ritchie!" (Letter 96). He is playful, charming, and thoroughly at ease in his role as friend of the family. His attitude to Richmond Ritchie is one of complete acceptance. That Anny considered James her friend is apparent in a letter she wrote describing a visit to the home of Leslie Stephen and his second wife:

Last night we dined at Leslie and Julia's. I felt as sad and strange as I always do at first, but I made a push and got happy and joking with Henry James, who devotedly jumped into the cab with us, and drove back half-way to Putney, for the sake of a little more talk.\(^18\)

However foolish Anny's dinner party conversation appeared to James at first, he was beginning to understand and appreciate the woman herself.
At the beginning of their friendship, James considered Anny an exotic creature with her enthusiasm, her spontaneity, and her superficial vagueness. In time, James held to much the same view of her as Leslie Stephen expressed in the *Mausoleum Book*.

She generally came to sound conclusions. She had really sound abilities. Her mind was a little too active in jumping from one topic to another. But she was exceedingly popular and everyone who could appreciate kindness and sympathy and simplicity combined with real brilliancy sought for her company. (14–15)

Stephen’s accolade of “real brilliancy” is praise indeed; of whatever the brilliancy consisted, James also recognized it, and for her depiction of the home of a French Protestant minister in *The Story of Elizabeth*, he referred to her as “a woman of genius.” He wrote:

Above all, however, she was blessed with the faculty which when you give it an inch takes an ell. The power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life in general so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it. (389)

The friendship between Anne Ritchie and Henry James deepened, and continued until his death.

Once Anny acquired friends, she had the art of keeping them. Anny’s friendship with Browning was ongoing. Her letters to him disclose the informality of their relationship and her willingness to ask favors of him. In the habit of being indulged by Thackeray, she acted in like manner with Browning. In Letter 79, she struck a more personal note: “I cannot help writing just this one more word which is dear Friend. thankyou for your goodness.” There is no hint of what Browning’s benevolence consisted, yet the note conveys honest emotion.

In a letter to Browning’s sister, Anny asked for biographical information on Elizabeth Barrett Browning for her article about the poet. She also inquired as to “where I may send you the proofs of my little paper” (Letter 71). With sensitivity and delicacy she made her request, not of Browning himself, but of his sister. Modest about her work, Anny referred to this article for the *Dictionary of National Biography* as “my little paper” and revealed with good humor Leslie Stephen’s treatment of it.

I sent it to Leslie who has sent me my shorn lamb without any tempered winds but I see that for a Dictionary it is necessary to be ruthless. Leslie
was very compunctious about the shearing & said it was a relief to him that I should be able to use what I had written elsewhere. (Letter 71)

Anny desired to employ all her "little rigmarolles which are at least genuine and mean the loving & grateful remembrance of some thirty years." Her reminiscences gave Anny an opportunity to use all of her memories.

As her life with her husband became difficult, Anny sought refuge in memories of her father and of their shared past. The past acted as a restorative for her. She found steadfastness in Thackeray, both in his relationship with Isabella and in his love for Anny herself. Just as she had never disappointed Thackeray, so he had never disappointed her. Her biographical introductions were an escape from her unhappiness and at the same time the tribute of her love for her father. Through her work on the introductions and the production of Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, the past became part of the present.

In her recitation of quotidian events Anny unpretentiously discussed her work. In one letter she wrote, "I am putting in little farewell notes to the Edition — an american paper says it has been such a success that all the other authors daughters are writing notes & introductions." For someone who dashed off letters to friends on the front of apothecary statements (Letter 68), and who composed her work on any paper available, she was meticulous in her editing. In a letter to her editor, she enclosed the original manuscript of Thackeray's lecture on Swift, explaining that it was "partly in my Fathers writing (about 25 p. & partly in mine as a girl) — you will see his corrections here & there" (Letter 87). Correspondence for her biographical introductions of Thackeray's *Works* illustrates the minute discussions (including punctuation marks) which she carried on with the editor.

The biographical introductions are important for several reasons. In the 1890s, Anny's reminiscential writing reached its highest level of artistry. The introductions were preceded in 1894 by *Chapters from Some Memoirs*, and *Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, and Robert and Elizabeth Browning* (1892). Anny's memories are insightful, brooding, and sharp. Yet, she remains tender and tolerant. If she peruses the past through rose-colored glasses, she is never myopic.

As Anny matured, her reminiscences took on greater authority and more depth. She held to a double perspective—that of the child she was in the past as well as that of the woman she was in the present. Because she looked at her childhood through the eyes of an honest and
sensitive adult, her writing is never sentimental or banal. In Chapters, she wrote: "my memory is a sort of Witches' Caldron, from which rise one by one these figures of the past. Now perhaps looking back, one can tell their worth better than at the time" (54). As an adult she could evaluate people and events, but she never dismissed her childhood feelings as foolish or inappropriate for the time. Her remarkable memory, combined with her novelist's eye and ear, gave her introductions and all her reminiscent writing endearing and enduring qualities.

Another and equally important reason for the popularity of the introductions was their wealth of unpublished Thackeray correspondence and drawings. Scrupulously, Anny had followed her father's dictum that she not participate in any biography about him. Following no chronological sequence, she wrote, as she called them, "notes and introductions," to each of the volumes. Making use of Thackeray's letters, journals, drawings, and her own diaries as well as the correspondence from friends and relatives, she fortified her actual memories. This episodic mode was particularly well suited to her talents.

She brought fresh insight into Thackeray's method of creation and illuminated not only his work habits but his meaning as well. By describing his personal life at the time of a particular work, she shed light on his feelings and his state of mind. She uncovered motives and identified causes; Thackeray was humanized.

These introductions helped to put her life with Thackeray into perspective for her. She had been examining and analyzing this past since Thackeray's death. In Chapters, she wrote:

There is often a great deal more of the past in the future than there was in the past itself at the time. We go back to meet our old selves, more tolerant, forgiving our own mistakes, understanding it all better, appreciating its simple joys and realities. (191)

When still "a hobbledehoy," she spent time with Mrs. Kemble in Rome. Later Anny wrote, "I only half understood her; but when I, too, was an elder woman the scales fell from my eyes" (197). Each time she discussed her childhood, she faced the demons that haunted her. In her fiction, she reshuffled her early life, sifted through her experiences, sometimes knowingly, and often unconsciously, for the solid facts of her work.

Comprising thirteen individual essays, Chapters from Some Memoirs forms a loosely connected, episodic autobiography of her childhood
and adolescence. The first essay, “My Poet,” begins: “My father lived in good company, so that even as children we must have seen a good many poets and remarkable people, though we were not always conscious of our privileges” (1). As friends of her father, Tennyson and Browning did not gain the stature of poets for her until she was older. In “Tout Chemin” she describes a trip through France:

I can still see in a sort of mental picture a barge piled with great golden onions floating along one of the quays, guided by a lonely woman in blue rags with a coloured kerchief on her head. There goes the Lady of Shalot said my father; and when we looked at him rather puzzled, for we knew nothing of onions and very little of Tennyson in those days, he explained that a shalot was a species of onion, and after a moment’s reflection we took in his little joke, feeling that nobody ever thought of such droll things as he did. (174-75; see also Letter 30)

Anny’s first knowledge of a poet came when she was twelve. She went out on a cold, rainy Paris night with her grandmother to meet Jasmin, a poet whom she had dreamed about in her French class back in London. When he was pointed out to her, she was horrified.

For suddenly, just under the swinging chandelier, I see a head, like the figure-head of a ship—a jolly, red, shiny, weather-beaten face, with large, round, prominent features, ornamented with little pomatumy wisps of hair, and a massive torso clothed in a magnificent frilled shirt over a pink lining. I falter, gazing at Punchinello, high-shouldered, good-humoured! (10)

Her youthful vision of a poet shattered, she tried to hide her disappointment from her grandmother: “I can’t help laughing even now as I conjure up the absurd little dream of the past and the bitterness of that childish disappointment. Why, I had been in a world of poets!” (12) She has no scorn for her twelve-year-old immaturity; amused by the child she was, at the same time she understands the bitterness, and feels compassion for her younger self.

This double vision recurs in “My Musician.” Again in Paris, this time she was taken by a friend of her grandmother to bring a basket of provisions to an ailing musician. Thanking them, he began to play the piano.

then the music began, and the room was filled with continuous sound, ... The lady sat absorbed and listening and as I looked at her I saw tears in her eyes—great clear tears rolling down her cheeks, while the music poured on and on. I can’t, alas, recall that music! I would give anything to remem-
ber it now; but the truth is, I was so interested in the people that I scarcely listened. (26)

The novelist in Anny observed the scene; she paid little attention to the music. With adult regret she reveals that as they drove away her grandmother’s friend admonished her, “Never forget that you have heard Chopin play” (27). At the time, the scene meant only that she had accompanied an old lady of whom she was afraid on an errand of mercy. Now she responds to the pathos of the dying Chopin, beholden to charity for survival. She regrets her own naïveté and ignorance. Just as she had missed Thackeray’s pun on the Lady of Shalot, so she failed to hear Chopin’s music.

Things certainly strike children oddly, They are so busy in early life with all that is going on on every side, that one person or another person, the visitor in the drawing-room, the tortoise-shell cat on the garden wall, the cook’s little boy who has come in to partake of cold pudding, all seem very nearly as important one as the other. (1)

Exploring her feelings of long ago she accounts for them, and accepts her lack of perception.

In addition to the momentous events of her life, she described the intimate life of her family. Private views of Thackeray abound. Getting into a small boat in Genoa, they are being rowed out to board their ship, when the Italian sailors stop rowing. They demand more money than the agreed upon price and refuse to move.

Then the steamer sent up two more rockets, which rose through the twilight, bidding us hurry; and then suddenly my father rose up in the stern of the boat where he was sitting, and, standing tall and erect and in an anger such as I had never seen him in before or after in all my life, he shouted out in loud and indignant English, D——n you, go on! a simple malediction which carried more force than all the Italian polysyllables and expostulations of our companions. (180–81)

Filled with realistic details, these essays show a tolerant understanding for the child she was. All of her life she examined not only her own actions but those of the people around her. She viewed events as a writer, even before she had become one. Trying to decipher her own feelings, she analyzed the traumatic events in her life. Like a narrative, Chapters embodies motive, action, reaction. The book was an immediate success and like the biographical introductions is important for a better understanding of both Thackerays—father and daughter.
In the biographical introductions Anny wrote, “But I think the realities, and even many of the disappointments of life have been better than ever were the childish dreams of those early days.” At the same time that Anny enjoyed what she could of the present, she savored her past. The period 1879–1900 provided Anny with a wide field on which to consolidate her gains and accept her losses, and to shape, to a great extent, her own fortunes.
Dear Mr. James

Richmond says you are in London to w’l lovely spot I hope very soon to be returning & Blanche Cornish says How delightful it would be of you if you would come & see us here for a few days before I leave. Do think of it. It is most lovely country thym. blown & burning to purple & honeysuckle with sea gulls & Exmoor for a background & now that the weather is fine the steamer brings you straight under our great cliff.

As I walk along I persistently long for my dear Mrs. Satoris to have looked at it all, You would understand what I mean if you saw the place Even before the sad sad news came to me she was constantly in my mind here.

Do think of it if it is at all possible & if the house full of children & babies doesn’t frighten you We should be so very glad — & Hester is looking so splendid she is worth coming to see in her country cheeks.

Yours Sincerely
Anne Ritchie

(Could anything be More Miss Thackeray?) H.J.

Please destroy both of them.
To Mr. Walter

Letter 67
Fales

27, Young Street
Kensington Square, W.
Sunday [c. 1880–81]

Dear M'r Walter

I wonder if you could do me a real kindness — An American friend of mine, Virginia Vaughan by name has written a book called "The New Era" — a sort of philosophical poem abt a new world & angels & liberty. There is a great deal that is very good in it — Do you think you could be so very kind as to help her to a review not a complimentary but a real review in the Saturday. She is publishing it at her own expense & modestly hopes that if she is reviewed her next book may be taken by a publisher.

If it could be possible I should think it very kind of you but I know how difficult things are — With my love to y' wife.

Yours sincerely

Anne Ritchie

She has had Reviews in strange papers w'th she sends me did you ever hear of Fact?

To W. W. F. Synge

Letter 68
Fales

Dear London
M — Synge Esq 27 Young St
Dr' to F. Wright
Chemist & Dentist
High Street
Kensington, W

May 25
27

Draught

Sedative Mixture

8

1.6

2.2
Sorry am I to read on so unpleasant a missive in return for you kind delightful Xs gifts wh are the joy of the children. Mrs. Bob came looking realy very Hennee to see us just as I was starting for the station — I might have stayed & talked to her for I missed my train. We spent Sunday with Darwin to our great pride & delight. Much love as usual fmr.

Yrs aff

ATR

Mrs. Bob was so nice & pretty & most beautifully dressed.

To Baron Von Tauchnitz

Letter 69
Fales
65.6.6-6. 2288

New Years day 1882
27. Young Street
Kensington

Dear Baron I must write & thankyou for your kind & delightful present. Oh! that I had known & had taken my best pen when I last wrote to you. I value the book very much & wish you very cordially — & gratefully too — a happy New Year (wh must please include your family as well as for yourself) & believe me always

Yours very truly
Anne Ritchie

To James Payn

Letter 70
Moray Lodge
Kew Gardens Road
March 8 [1883]

Dear M' Payn

Thankyou for your very kind letter which has set me speculating — are you going to make some eventful phoenix change in the beloved old CHM

I shall go on with my story & send it in — It may run longer than
I meant to three parts or even four but I write so badly that I never can quite tell. I daresay you will be able kindly to make arrangements for it & also for one more Literary lady to make up my volume

Yours very truly
Anne Ritchie

To Miss Browning

Letter 71
Yale
Wimbledon
Sunday
13 9 1885

My dear Miss Browning

I was so glad to hear from Mrs Corkran that you were well — both of you — & that Pen was to join you somewhere in some calm holiday place. We are just packing up to leave Wimbledon where we have all revived after our trying experiences of the spring and early summer. I want you please dear Miss Browning to help me once more and I know you will forgive me for asking you to take the trouble of writing me a letter to tell me where I may send you the proofs of my little paper. I sent it to Leslie who has sent me my shorn lamb without any tempered winds but I see that for a Dictionary it is necessary to be ruthless. I have a hope that I shall be able to reprint my article somewhere with all my little rigmaroles which are at least genuine and mean the loving & grateful remembrance of some thirty years. Leslie was very compunctious about the shearing & said it was a relief to him that I should be able to use what I had written elsewhere. I want you also please to be so good as to send me Mrs Brownings birthday and the day in June when you lost her.

I have just [sic] finished my story which is a load off my mind & we are now going away for a little holliday beginning with the Lockers — the Lampsons as they have now to be called but first we shall be at Mrs Ritchies Southmead Wimbledon Park till the 23d & after that any letter directed to 36 a Rosary Gardens will
reach us. I hope we may have a few days at Paris in 8br & hear everybody talk french again. Pinkie has been in Cottonnightcap Country\(^5\) tell M'r Browning & also in Switzerland with M't\(^3\) Kemble who is come back — people seem to wake up one by one out of their summer rest. The Lionel Tennysons\(^6\) are in town preparing for India. I am taking the children up to see those dear little boys next week.

How thankful I was to hear better news of poor Claire Milsand. Please give my love to Pen & his Father & I'm always

Your affectionate
Anne Ritchie

The children are playing cricket with their father. My boy is really a very fair bat already — Hester has got a jackdaw & 2 doves & has been promised a little dog — the jackdaw seems to me almost like a 3\(^d\) child

---

**To Mary Thackeray\(^1\)**

Letter 72  
Fales  
27, Heath St  
Saturday  
[Before 1886]

My dear Mary

I want you & y'r Mother to be so very kind as to forgive the liberty I have taken in telling an American — a very nice little millionaire called Carnegie\(^2\) whom I met at dinner that I thought I might write & ask you to be so good as to let him call.

He had corresponded with L\(^d\) Northesk\(^3\) & is the owner of a great iron foundry in America. He has a mother to whom he is devoted & he crosses the ocean about twice a year. He was so interested & pleased & anxious to make your acquaintance that I felt sure you would forgive the coolness of my proceeding — Being an American you will not be ridden by a [word illegible] acquaintance — & indeed I liked the little man very much indeed. He knows M'r Matt. Arnold.\(^4\)

Your affectionate
Anne Ritchie
I was so sorry to fail that Thursday. I have been behaving quite horribly lately jumbling all my engagements & tho' I really do try to keep them & want to I seem to miss trains lose my way & jumble everything more & more everyday. I do hope my brain isn't (?) softening.

To Octavia Hill

Letter 73
Princeton
AM17414

Southmead
Wimbledon Park
Friday
[c. 1886–87]

Dear Miss Hill

I am trying to write a short article about Ruskin & I have a very great favour to ask of you. I know it was by you & through you that he was able to help so many people. I have a feeling that his example might be more widely followed by less emotional people who have money & taste without genius to battle with & its consequent overwhelming & passing impressionability. A very short sentence such as "this society is now entirely carried on by Miss Hill" — or something to that effect would describe the present state of things without going into any details.

I hope what I ask isn't impertinent. What he did materially & what the results were, it would give a certain heart to the more pictoreal aspect of this Power for good & for mighty complexity.

I remember years ago once asking you something on the subject & your kindness not objecting to my doing so. I had refused two or three times to attempt the article but now for various reasons I have agreed (& indeed it is my duty) to try & write it. I have a sort of feeling that you would not mind my mentioning the useful & all-important fact of your mutual work & I can't help feeling that if I might say something of this my article might be more like the reality than if I only wrote it out of books & reviews & pictures. Knowing you to be yourself I am not afraid of asking, even though it may not be possible or easy for you to agree to my request. But it seems to me that if you would give me even two or three sentences just to the point saying what you originally said to him, when you began to reform the dwellings.

Forgive me if I shouldn't have written!
Do you ever hear from the Schuylers now & do you go on — I’m sure you do — thinking of dear Jeanie Senior as often as I do

Yours sincerely & respectfully.
Anne Ritchie

We now live here together.

From M’s Ritchie daughter of Thackeray

To Isabella Thackeray

Letter 74
Ray/Morgan
Hotel des Thermes
Aix les Bains
France
Friday Evg
[Postmark: 4 Sept. 1886]

My darling Mammy. I was so glad to get your letter to day, & I was just going to send you the enclosed photograph to show you the way people come home from the baths here. You are wrapped up in a blanket & carried right off by two porters who bring you up to your very bedroom. I came here for the waters (How I wish Mr. Thompson could come too & be cured, but she must try Ramsgate which is so much nearer at hand) & I shall be going home in a fortnight or so — I thought coming off very dreadful but it has been much nicer than I expected, & thank God I have had nothing but good news from Richmond & the children. Wasn’t it a pity he couldnt come any bit of the way with me — I luckily found a friend on the road so that I have not been at all lonely. I am in a pleasant little hotel where they give one the most delicious things for dinner I have a pretty room with a lovely view & I pay 10/ everyday for everything. When I came Princess Louise was down stairs but she is now gone.

Goodbye my dearest Mammy
My love to M’s Thompson.
Ever your loving Nanny
To Austin Dobson

Letter 75  
27 Young Street  
U. of London  
Kensington Sq. W  
MS 810/III/154  
1, Heathfield Gardens  
Hampstead. June 11 [1887]

Dear Sir How can I thankyou? — Your most beautiful & touching dedication went to my heart & I can only tell you that I am grateful indeed. As I read your words about my Father I remembered how sympathy such as yours would have cheered & gladdened him & what extraordinary pleasure he always felt in the things which made us to whom he was so tender, happy — & so in all ways & times this most tenderly written & most kindly felt dedication which you have sent us would have made him glad I think.

I need not tell you how proudly I shall put by the lovely, dear little book to show our children some day, when they are old enough to understand how much their parents prize it.

Perhaps some day you would come & see us here, or in London where I should like to show you some of my Fathers drawings & the only remnant of his home that is now left.

And once more thankyou from yours most faithfully — most gratefully

Anne Ritchie

To Robert Browning

Letter 76  
5 Sunnyside  
Yale  
Wimbledon  
1528

My dear M' Browning

I am always asking favours of you! Shall you be at the Athenaeum on Monday — Would you kindly help Frank Cornish of Eton to get in — I daresay they have already asked you & if so please forgive my troublesomeness but it is always good for ones soul to say howdydo to an old friend. — And I hope you wont mind.

We are here for 6 months & enjoy the birds & actually meeting red
breasts & goats & nice fresh things — my Valentine to the children has been a pair of Pigeons

With my love to dear Miss Browning

Yours ever dear
M' Browning
Anne Ritchie

To Elizabeth Robins

Letter 77
Fales

Friday.
Kingsley Lodge,
Lingfield Road,
Wimbledon.
[1889–98]

My dear

I hope you remember your kind promise to come next Sunday to lunch & tea. The Darwins³ are coming to meet you who have long wished to know you & I have asked Grace⁴ & I send you a train paper — Do come by the early train if you can manage it & have a calm sit with me in the arbour before lunch

Y's affect'y

Anne Ritchie

How are you & have you had any more silver tea pots?

To Miss Browning

Letter 78
Fales

Kingsley Lodge,
Lingfield Road,
Wimbledon
[Postmark: My 29, 89]

My dear Miss Browning

I write this in case I dont find you to ask M' Browning thro your kind intercession for I dont want to bore him when he is busy or harassed if
he (who has already written Bily's name) would now be so very very dear & kind as to write

Hester Helena Makepeace Ritchie
& his own name & 1st of June 1889 into the first page of this book for her birthday. We are going to get the whole set bound for her with the later ones, & she reproached me one day for having asked Mr Browning for Billys name only, & I promised when her birth day came I would come begging once more & I know you will forgive me. We are all very happily established in our little Villa & my blessed health really does seem to be returning at last, after a horrid winter & I do hope you you are both well & I love you very much & am your & Mr Brownings grateful & troublesome & always

Affectionate
Anne Ritchie

P.S.
I started with this but I was prevented coming & I now post it & hope to come & fetch the book late on Wednesday or Thursday
Am I grasping Even if I am I think you will forgive me

To Robert Browning

Letter 79
Yale

Kingsley
Monday
22 Jul 1889

My dear Mr Browning
I cannot help writing just this one more word which is dear Friend. thankyou for your goodness Indeed I can appreciate it — & your letters which are just like you both

Ever always
Your affectionate
Anne Ritchie
To Savile Clarke

Letter 80
Kingsley Lodge,
Fales
[1890]

Monday.

Dear M' Savile Clarke

I am so much interested to hear from one or two of my friends that they have heard with interest of the forthcoming matinées — the one special friend I consulted says that as possessor of the copyright of the story w'h furnishes the staple of the entertainment I ought to receive about 3/per cent of the gross receipts — or say £3 for every performance. I suppose that during the run of any successful piece a good deal more than £100 is taken on average & that £3 a performance would be less than 3/p/c. I am of course ignorant on all these matters but I suppose all payments would be made by the manager of the theatre.

Will there be one comprehensive contract to cover all parties interested i.e. yourself, & M' Slaughter for the music and myself, or will there be a separate agreement in each case? Meanwhile quite apart from the advantage to us w'h a success w'd be — I can only tell you again how glad & delighted I shall be for every possible reason, if as I hope & believe your delightful enterprise is a real success. I remember how happy we used to be — when we were sure when things went well —

Please remember me to M' Clarke & y' daughters

& believe me

Yrs very truly

Anne Ritchie

To Savile Clarke

Letter 81
Kingsley Lodge
Fales
[1890]

October

Dear M' Clarke

I was not able to write to you last night w'h I am sorry for & I am anxious not to keep you waiting any longer than I can help. Of course
having written you a business letter I am only obliged to you for sending me a direct business answer, & why should we be ashamed of writing business to one another.

As regards Messrs Smith and Elder¹ you are perfectly right in saying that the copyright is theirs, but as I told you they told me it was to be mine for this occasion & that I was to make my own bargain, so that for all practical present purposes, I am the owner of the copyright: when our present discussion is settled I undertake that there will be no difficulty about a formal letter from Messrs Smith & Elder. As to the terms, my letter was founded on the best advice I could get, but I quite admit I had no grounds on which to form any opinion of any kind. The question seems to be one of the division of author's profits between you & Mr Slaughter on the one hand, who furnish the piece & the music & me on the other as representing my Father who furnishes the characters & the frame-work of the plot. It would not I think be difficult for me to make up my mind, if I knew what sort of proportion of the 1 p/c you mention bears to the total amount to be paid for authors property, but I can quite understand that it may not be possible for you to state this and there may be a thousand good reason why in such cases Managerial Agreements must be kept private, in which case please dismiss my suggestion that I should see the agreement with the Manager without ceremony. The only other suggestion I can make is that instead of the percentage there should be a fixed payment for every performance which certainly would be a simpler plan.

You will think me I am afraid terribly business like, but as I said before why should we not write plainly for I am certainly not afraid of quarrelling with you & I sincerely hope you feel the same about me & believe me

Sincerely yours

Anne Ritchie
To Mrs. Savile Clarke

Letter 82
Kingsley Lodge,
Fales
Lingfield Road,
Wimbledon.
[21 December 1890] 1
Sunday

Dear Mr. Savile Clarke

I am still laughing, and clapping in spirit, & enjoying the remembrance of our happy expedition to Fairy Land last night! — How charming it all was, how pretty how harmonious — I do think Mr. Clarke has seized hold of the Fairys own Blackstick & worked his delightful skills with it — though I must confess that we have untied the Rose & the Ring today & put them into water up to their chins, so as to keep your kind token as long as possible.

My husbands only suggestion which I do think might be effective is that Rosalba should come on in chains at the end of the 2nd act (as she does in the Lion picture), it wd give more prominence to Giglios happy arrival in time to deliver her from the Lions.

How droll the two monks are — we have been raging we are, we are — ever since & my husband began breakfast this morning with the ode to Kedgereee 2 I have written to Mr. George Smith with Mr. Ambrents 3 message about a new cheap edition for the bookstalls, & how I do wish he had been there to see our dear story come to life — Bulbo is quite admirable & Gruffanuff and Giglio whom I had not expected to admire was as good as possible, but that little creature with her little song was altogether pathetic & pretty. My children are both in love with her. I have kept my boy in bed all day today, but is much better & I am so glad he shd have seen the first play of his Grandpapas on such a happy first occasion. I hope you got home not too tired & chilled. The young ladies are sure to have brightened the way for you.

Believe me yours Sincerely with all best X 4 wishes
Anne Ritchie
To Charlotte Yonge

Letter 83
Fales

My dear Miss Yonge

I read ‘that stick’ last night before going to bed & then to my great pleasure found it was the January No. of the Monthly packet that I had stolen from a friends house at Brighton, so that I could get some more chapters at once & then I found my little girl asleep upstairs with the Daisy Chain by her bed side & I then began to think how often I too had had it by my bedside, & then what a pity — oh! what a pity it is that we are all growing old who have had such happy happy times with one another. (I am taking it for granted that an author wd enjoy having made any reader as happy as you have made me in years gone & present too — for indeed that stick seemed to me as good & fresh & interesting as ever) — And then I thought time was passing & I should so like to say howdydo to so old a friend & to tell you once more how very real & delightful a bit of the holiday of my life is yours Another thing in the number touched me inexpressibly — dear dear poor Mrs Oliphants story which cut one somehow knowing how it was written. I had a very sweet note from her as she was starting from Davos — She had liked Sir Walters Diary wh I sent her to read & she had been ill she said — I have not heard any more for some weeks — We are still here at Wimbledon where the children thrive — & I should like to show you my daughter & my boy some day; — if ever we spend a night at Winchester again I shall think you will let me bring them We go on living here the children & my husband like it & I keep well & sit about more or less whereas in London I turn into nothing but a pillow & a bolster & night light Please forgive one for writing this hap-hazard letter, it is not from undue familiarity but the outcome of 52 years or shall I say 42 years — of the affectionate appreciation & sympathy of yours with real affection

Anne Ritchie
To Isabella Thackeray

Letter 84
Ray/Morgan

Saturday
Kingsley Lodge,
Lingfield Road,
Wimbledon.
[Postmark: AP 12/91]

My darling mama

I have been doing something very nice. We had a dreary gap in the hedge at one end of the garden & two bushes running into one another at the other end & I have just given a man 6s to carry the box bush from the place where it wasn't wanted to the place where it was wanted & the moment the job was finished down came a nice shower of rain. We have been having our lawn seen to, it had got into such a horrid muddy condition & all the poor borders had turned to slimy dirt but it is all greatly improved the last few days & the crocusses we planted in the autumn have come up very well indeed. Most of the laurel bushes have been killed this winter & we have also cut down a fusty old tree in front of the dining room window.

these children are all in the window painting _in oil — We gave Billy some for his last birthday but he rather groans over them & says he likes to squirt them & not to paint. A friend reminded me yesterday that when he was a baby he came to see her garden & said Billy may pick de fowers not de pretty rainbows meaning the geraniums which stood in long rows & the daisies in the grass

Tell Mr. Thompson that I am only waiting to hear from M. Fladgate to write to her. I went there to try & hurry matters but nothing seems to have happened

Your loving loving Nanny
My darling Mama.

You will like to hear that we are here all safe & that the change has already done Billy good. He looks different & better & less transparent.

We got down very comfortably on the whole & found a beautiful bay & a lighthouse waiting & better still & a nice comfortable house with beds made & fires lighted. The air is delicious sleepy soothing fattening just what we all need, & the town is so amusing & lively it is almost like a little foreign town. M. Leslie Stephen has arranged everything most beautifully for us.

How glad I shall be of a line to tell me how you are & how M. Thompson is! — how I wish I had a nice delicious place to send you to like this one, where you could throw off your horrid influenza — for Influenza I do believe yours has been. Your cough & tongue & all about you were so exactly like Billy's attack.

I have some writing to do so I mustn't write any more but I just have left off a minute to send my hug & my love to my Mama.

M. Thackeray came to see us looking quite radiant but I didn't ask about her new husband. Bless you. I asked a friend to choose you a chair. I'm afraid you will detest that red dressing gown but it seemed warm and loose [sic].

To Mr. Skeffington

Dear M.

I am interested to hear that you are the purchaser of Philip after all — I meant to have had it put up to auction & then when M. Bain told me there was a purchaser I thought I would settle the matter & have done
with it — I am sure I have no more mss of Philip & as Mf. Walker¹ did the drawings I have no sketches that I know of. When I get home I will look & see if there are any rough suggestions by my Father — but I don't think so. The proof sheets come to nothing at all — just one or two of the Virginians — which I am going to bind up with the mss & keep.

I wont forget if ever I think of selling Boudin⁶ to write to you — I thought of it abt Philip but having given it to Mf. Bain I determined to leave the matter for his decision

Believe me
Yours truly
Anne Ritchie

To ²

Letter 87
Berg

The End House
Berkeley Place,
Wimbledon
[c. 1894-98]¹

Dear²

I am so sorry I am not yet ready to come down — Here is the lecture on Swift³ — partly in my Fathers writing (about 25 p. & partly in mine as a girl) — you will see his corrections here & there. If Mf. Pearson⁴ w⁴ like to change anything will he please do so — Even the Rose and the Ring I sometimes wish back again!⁵

With kind wishes for y⁵ journey
believe me Truly yrs

Anne Ritchie

Would you please take the Hoggarty⁶ picture (It is one of his very best I think) a maid will bring you string & paper
From Henry James to ATR

Letter 88
Harvard

To William Ritchie

Letter 89
U. of London
MS797/1/5832

Dear Mrs. Ritchie.

You wrote me a benevolent note some time ago which I have too much delayed to thank you for. I have been immersed in correspondence—that is flooded with letters, for the last 15 days—and have left my old friends confidently alone for the sake,—as it were,—of my new, who have most made me nervous.—Should you care to see, some afternoon, my little play at the St. James's? I say afternoon, because I haven't the assurance to suggest to you an evening struggle. Would next Saturday afternoon p.m.—i.e. afternoon—be possible to you if I should send you 2 or 3 seats—or a box? I will do this with joy if I hear from you affirmatively.—And about my coming out to you some evening, as I so much desire to do. Would either Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday of next week suit you—at 7.30—or the hour you may be so good as to designate I shall be delighted to come; & I am yours forever

Henry James

To William Ritchie

My darling Bill Annie is just gone & the post is just gone & the sun is set, but it has been a most amusing day First we went to Roedean for Annie to see the school & the Lawrences that was a sort of heaven — Then we went & had tea in a Metropole Limbo—I never saw anything so horrible & yet so amusing. It looked like all the Theatres boiled into one with the villains standing twirling their wicked mustaches by every pillar & doorways & in every arm chair a sprawling millionaire: & Ladies my gracious! what ladies! Gamblers with lofty plumes & spangles Italian desperadoes flashing under sorts of helmets & curls & then icy snakey ladies wriggling — I had never seen anything more out of the common than a clergyman there before but this was the most sur-
prising assemblage. Annie & I sat transfixed. I wonder if anybody took us for gamblers our tea was very nasty but cheap at a shilling. I then came back in Lady Louises Loders\textsuperscript{5} chair, & finally dispatched Nancy in a street fly to the station. She said she wished for you last Sunday when they had Uncle Leslie & Henry Sidgwick.\textsuperscript{6} She said fortunately Albert\textsuperscript{7} is very deaf & everybody shouted & Leslie could hear quite well.

She is staying with her Papa till they go. Her papa is bringing out a book,\textsuperscript{8} but nobody is ever to know what it is called. Reginald is to publish it. Codgie\textsuperscript{9} has decided in favour of my favourite lodging — a large square Harrogate\textsuperscript{10} like horror but cheap & well drained & our address will be Holmrook/Tunbridge Wells. I shall first think of the Trinity Raven & then of a rook, but Holm is beyond me. I think it the most difficult word in the English Language to remember. I shall have a solitary week wh I am not sorry for, & on Friday I shall take leave of M\textsuperscript{5} Brown.\textsuperscript{11} Her family have come down for the day & make a most tremendous noise, & smoke in the drawingroom &tc. They have a dashing friend who has a Pullman car return ticket. The rabbit is to have a treat before we leave & go to the Devils Dyke\textsuperscript{12} & I am going round to take leave of all my old ladies. We asked for Uncle Willie & Artie\textsuperscript{13} at the Metropole today but they hadn't come so I had to sit in the porch without him. Send me back her nice letter. I'm sure he practices drawing those plaid trowsers.

Goodnight my darling boy. Wizz\textsuperscript{14} said your river expedition put him in mind of his own youth & expeditions.

Goodnight mon cher fils bienaimé

\textit{To William Ritchie}

Letter 90 October 14, 1898
U. of London
MS 797/I/5830

My dearest darling Bill

My first letter must be for you & I had almost dated it from Trinity College for I certainly have been there this morning tho it is only 7 o'c
or so — Are you awake & unpacking — Did you arrive pretty early last night & dine in hall? I had a telegram from y' Father saying he was going to Paris & a delightful long letter from Hester about linen, dressing cases & packing telling me all the things I wanted to know. She says I am to send you some more money. Let me know if this isn't enough. by an odd chance I dived into a mass of papers last night & pulled out a most charming letter from Colonel Richmond Webb to his son who was just going to College. You will see it in the Edition. it says all the things one feels now my beloved Bill tho' parents don't say them so much & then other things belonging to the times "Learn to wield your sword and your pen" is one thing the Colonel recommends & then (not very complimentary) "I must dispose somehow of all your sisters & you & I and Mama will spend the winter in London."? — One sister must have gone to India & become y' great great grandmama

Tell Hugo with my love I am expecting his mother to lunch today which is very delightful — We have got a pheasant & some grapes in her honour Codgie & Char come on Monday & Miss Anderson stays til Thursday if there is room, but the Lodgers seem unending. my good little Bessie is going today. She weeps because of her departing nurse & says won't I be her nurse. I go on enjoying the nice top room. Minnie & Miss A are both on this floor — the Doctor has sold his horses whereat he is very jubilant — I never saw anything at the circus like the jumps & bumps of a horse I met on the common he went up right into the air the rider sat like a cucumber quite cool & firm. Darling boy write as soon as ever you can are your rooms tolerable can you keep y' window open — Im so glad the linen was all right

Y' loving loving
Mama

I'm pretty well.
To William Ritchie

Letter 91
U. of London
MS 797/1/5833

Thursday/Brighton
[c. Feb. 1899]

My Bill I went for the books yesterday after one of my tiresome cracks. I looked at them yesterday eve they are perfectly delightful I think — & I shall pack them and send them off tomorrow after I have shown them to Arty I hope he is coming to lunch, but I am not sure. Uncle Willy I have seen a good deal He has been most charming & kind. He talks more interestingly than almost anybody I know when he will talk once in a hundred years or so like an aloe. He has gone into Herbert Spencer who luckily for me called but left word he wouldnt come in & couldnt unbutton his coat so that he was not able to leave a card — This amused Uncle Willy who began lecturing me abt his books. He says he writes extraordinarily eloquently & conclusively but he sometimes starts on quite wrong premises wt if they were true w’d be most convincing. He advises me to read Sociology.

Tell me when you write if you have the 2d blue bound volume of Lamb’s letters I will send the 1st w’h is here (moping alone) with the Bewick but the other may be in London. I blush for the way I have written y’f name I took immense pains & it looks like a cooks handwriting

If Arthur comes I shall take him — or them — to lunch at the Crescent as it will be more cheerful than the little back dining room here. In after years I believe he will be General Sir Arthur Field Marshal Lord Ritchie of Lexham but it is horrid seeing him go. He certainly ought to be all those things even if he isn’t. W’h is better still than getting them when you dont deserve them

Y’r loving loving loving platitudinizing Mama
My Bill of Bills

I was just sending this idiotic picture off when Arty & Uncle Willy drove up in an open fly. It was very very nice having him to lunch dear boy. Uncle Willy looked on. We went to the Hotel & I boldly ordered half a bottle of Champagne Roederer & a nice pudding & then (I confess it was Uncle Willys suggestion) beckoned the waiter & bought a cigar. Im so glad you can get away Satdy.

I'm afraid Wizz will be gone if he comes to T.W but that you must settle. It makes one very choky & cheerful too to see Arty he looks happy & well & is so dear.

I saw Uncle Willy walking away taking his arm & felt very near crying.

M' Wright has bought him a parting present an abomination like a watch hung to a massive chain it is a case for sovereigns. I can hardly imagine any thing more useless. It holds 5 wd go into a waistcoat pocket & take up about as much room as a bun. As Arty gets 5/2 a day it will take some time to fill. I went to the Metropole & sat in state in the gorgeous halls between Uncle Willy & Master Arty

Good night my dearest son
God bless thee.
coming back that day Arthur does not yet know if it is Wednesday or Wednesday week he sails

We are wishing you luck and wondering about yf Exm. All the amusing things I can imagine perfectly the instructive things are much less easy to think of. I am plodding on thro' the Oxford book of the Colleges w1 is really very interesting tho immensely long & I find there was a time when Trinity looked down upon Balliol. The master of B. finding his yg men didn't get on called them together & warned them against that hellish liquor cald ale; but immediately after Dr Bathurst, of Trinity1 who was Vice Chancellor having given leave to drink it the old master said he wd also give leave soe that now they might be sots by authoritie with this choice anecdote I shall finish my birthday letter. After all Mothers & sons are more made up of all the things they dont say than the things they do say & you know all the things I think & feel & wish for my darling boy. I am just going to write to Mr1 Hart.2 I shall tell her that she mustnt keep anything for you & Hester but that you wd write if you found you could go for Hester thinks it wd be a long way Adieu mon cher cher cher fils. Ta Maman

To William Ritchie

Letter 94  U. of London
MS/797/I/5841  9.15 a.m Diningroom
My Bill of Bills Codge has gone off to ride on Wimbledon Common. She got very yellow & lost her appetite & instead of a doctor I said I would give her £2 worth of rides so she went yesterday & came back blooming (She did look so beautiful going off to dine at the Lawrences) & she is gone today to ride & I am up early expecting Wizz & I have been reading of the triumphs of Kruger2 If I were the ‘Gov’ I should give him an enthusiastic Reception over here too too & have done with it. Why dont they make him transparencies & Knight him & a crown of honor & send him about his stupid old business

Beloved I havent written much but I constantly pay you little inside visits. I devotedly went off to call on Miss Johnson in yf honour

Mf J. was extremely angry with us because some formality about
Arthur Shawe hadn't be [sic] carried out. I had been begging y' Papa to do it for years but he didn't believe me till this most alarming letter arrived. However it is all right & Miss J. is coming to lunch & M' C.P. Johnson I trust is forgiving I had a most interesting visit from Edward Morice who is, it turns out, the bosom friend of M' Merivale & f[m] him he had heard of our vague plans. He says if you will go & see him some time when you are up or down (w. is it — he will tell you every detail so that you should be able to judge. He says he was most miserable when he first left Oxford & went into the business & hated it for some years. Now, (I happened to ask him if he would leave it if he could he says that he has had a fortune left him, & could retire but that he is going on & that is the best answer to my question

He says if the Johnson is a real offer you couldn't have a better opening but that without some such chance he would not have advised you to take it up as he is convinced the civil service wd suit you better in every way.

Perhaps if you take a pretty good degree & if you go hard to Scoones when you leave Oxford you may after all get into the C.S. You c'd always go back to the Solicitorship if you didn't like it. If you get in — ever so low — you can be fished up remember.

Here comes the CB He has been writing a most diplomatic kind clever letter about some office business I feel quite elated over it.

We are going to have a dinner party on Thursday

Mom Wizz
Codge Alfred Tennyson unknown gent
Mag M' Pelham
Imogen George Booth
Nem Alick

wish you were going to be the U. G.7

Bless thee
Thy Mama
To William Ritchie

Letter 95
U. of London
MS 797/I/5844

Saturday. Rain cats dogs &c.
[c. 1900]

My Bill of Bills. I hope you have recovered from y' fightings. What a nuisance that Trinity didn't win, but you have won so much that it makes it less monotonous, I prefer monotony however when things go right. It is still raining & we are going to drive to Scotland Yard to ask for H's umbrella. I am rather collapsy a mixture of Aunt Blanche & the concert proved too much for my digestion & I retired all yesterday & still feel rather squeamish: however a drive will get me up & Codge will be glad to recover her parapluie. Everyone ought to have 2 umbrellas one in each hand such weather as this —

Wizz has started for Kidbrooke¹ on Monday with exquisitely packed luggage. I have had rather fun with the Dicys² writing them a papyrus letter of thanks w'h was approved of [word illegible] also I sent a copy of Cranford.³ There sits Codge bolt upright & sound asleep in her chair —

Lunch is over — She has had her Italian lesson — poor Will Royse⁴ said the weather was repulsive & revolting I dont know if he wasnt even too damp to weep over Dante today h-ache & all I took a note to Desmond MacCarthy⁵ to ask him to lunch tomorrow to meet Hester Adeline⁶ Charles Wm. & M's and M's Simon⁷ — you know him I think f'm Biali, but D. M. is going to Cambridge to the Greek play. He lives in a nice little house with a charming old mother Char is now quite established with pictures & visitors Aunt Nelly is home P.⁸ came yesterday

We are going to have a concert alas before y' return for Mf. McInnes⁹ leaves on the 10th or 11 & our concert is to be the 7 also a dinner party to w'h we are going to ask young Mf. Pelham Codge is producing various balls for you & her when you come back with a different disease I blush for my stupid letter & feel as if nothing ever happened worth writing or ever would happen, except in the papers — The Pollocks¹⁰ were giving a quiet little luncheon party when a friend came in saying "I'm sure you wont mind my having brought the Chinese Ambassador" & a little old horrible man with a pigtail walked in He tells them he is sure to be
executed on his return for his English tendencies so if the English cut him & the Chinese execute him he wont have a very good time I went to the old Simons. He asked abt you very kindly but he was very dull & depressed Boo is always drunk now w. adds to the dear old peoples melancholy happily Max\textsuperscript{11} is established to keep his eye upon her

Bless you my dearest darling How we do still enjoy our luncheon & our tea. That was so comfortable. This sofa that I am lying on is as comfortable as yours only you arnt here but when you come it will be delightful & you shall make tea for w\textsuperscript{h} you have a special gift — Bless you again

We have been asked to the Darwin wedding

Codge still sounder asleep

---

*From Henry James to ATR*

Letter 96
Harvard
Reform Club
Pall Mall, S. W.
January
4th
1900

Dearest Anne Ritchie!

Your kind letter is a great balm—for I did wander forth yesterday into the fog & the dim distances, broken & desperate. Mary\textsuperscript{1} was so invidious—that was the cruel thing. She so freely admitted you were at home—"but she's engaged with a Gentleman!"—much italicized. Dear Leslie is a gentleman if there ever was one,—but he's a a gentleman whom—well, whom, also, I should have been delighted to see. But all's well that end's well & I congratulate you on your gallant little Sentinel. If ever need be, she will perish at her post. On Friday next 11th at 8, I will dine with great joy! I'm so sorry you've had the trouble of a letter—which as I told Mademoiselle, was exactly what I wished to save you. "Yes, Sir," she slowly [?], heartedly replied—but closing the bright portal a little further. —I rejoice Richmond finds fine weather at
Rye,² & wish I could have helped him to other things. But I fled the other day, incapable after too long a continuity, incapable of another hour of it. May Brighton be blest to you.

Yours always Henry James

To William Ritchie

Letter 97
U. of London
MS 797/1/5840

[Carte Postale, postmarked Paris and Oxford Fe 20/00]¹
Sf Romain. Monday

My Bill — We did wait for you & Wizz all yesterday. This morning is calm grey rainy grave & businesslike Codge is out taking a walk & I am looking out of window & neatly dressed there I looked for company for you That is the shoemaker opposite on steps in the street dusting the walls in front of his house & his shop with a feather broom in the rain. There is a cook carrying home all the dinner in a big basket — then 2 policemen I cant draw them with hoods & military shako² The wind & rain make people bend. The heroic Codge is facing it all in her waterproof & little fur cap We are preparing for our journey tonight — Yesterday we enjoyed our place immensely — Everybody was noble but they did do it so well so pat, so altogether, just like a fine bit of music. After the play we had tea at the fashionable tea-rooms americans with such hats & pearls & furs — hardly any English except a couple of weedy widows who seem to be having a good time I'll write a letter f° Chateau Rendel dont forget Chateau de Thorene [?] (Rene) Cannes France Then Pension Bellini Lungarno Florence Bless you f° y° Mama Codge is quite well & so am I
To William Ritchie

Letter 98
6 Embankment Gardens/Saturday
U. of London
[late fall, 1900]
MS 797/I/5842

My Bill of Bills of Bills

It is agreeable to reflect that I shan't write next Saturday & now when we make plans we say O but Billy will be here & then we grin. I am going to call on the lovely Miss Opp to invite her to lunch on Sunday, to meet You

This is rather Saturday than Saturday — moisty chilly foggy crawly grubby revolting & when I think of Brighton it seems a blaze of light, joys, jews, waves clouds & gleams along the horizon.

I came back in tearing condition for the dinner — Has Hester described it? Mr Pelham is as nice as a young man can be & wants to come & meet you. & talk things over. I said dont get into fistycuffs for he thinks of nothing but Bariol except for football. He said earnestly “Trinity is very good indeed you know & when I went to Cambridge they were speaking of a match between the two Trinities & with the greatest respect of our Trinity.” Then we had Mag who was so pretty & nice & helped to do the table & Mr. Thompson who has a passion for Egytology so I trotted out Mr Grefell & the papyrus — Nem Alick & the Booths came. Poor poor George is so ill still. I do feel so sorry for him he had a dull evening between Nem & Mag Not so Imogen the sprightly one who sat between Wizz & Mr. Pelham & looked very nice. So did Codge. I didnt look nice but I talked 19 to the dozen & made myself most agreeable & everybody murmured thanks when they went away for their delightful eveg. Codge had made a mistake & only ordered eno' vol-au-vent for one side of the table so ½ the people had a delicious dinner the other half had to put up with a hasty mince up; but that didnt matter in the least.

Here comes poor Codgie from the bank. She says it is horrid out of doors & neuralgic as well.

My darling Boy what more shall I tell you? — Hervey Fisher is all but well. They are going to Lymington for the winter to escape Brighton fierceness. Claude Montefiore came in while I was there, also looking the picture of health & jollity Wizz lives on bread & milk but
he is quite well. I steadily eat my dinner with Codge & Wizz looking on I feel just like an Ogress — but I cannot help it, & I shall trust you to keep me company & set the fashion of eating again. Pinkie is coming tonight — last night Hester went to an Eve in Airlie w. is more crammed with choice objects than ever Olivia is very nice & Eleanor in an exquisite hat feathers  
Now I will post this with my blessing I have come out in the C. H. M.