

## Letter 1 July 1878 Writing across page and at 90 degrees

Plymouth  
Sunday July

My dear S.J., Sam & Mr Burns

I'll just write to you all in one as I have only the same news for all.

When I got up to the Greenore Station I had a good little time to wait but that was better than being too late. When the train reached Greenore the boat soon started. I was very sure I watched my luggage closely to see that it was put on.

When I was crossing the connecting bridge onto the boat my ticket was taken by a man and he passed some jokes. He was very kind to me but I had no idea but that he was only one of the sailors when who did he turn out to be but the captain. He told me I might go where I liked either off or on only to not leave so that I would miss the boat. He also told me he would look after me while on the boat. I was not very thankful **or** social. At first for fear of him but I might not be so only I do not want to trust strangers very far.

Then I saw my baggage on board. I went over on the decks took a seat on coil of rope. I saw a young man of decent appearance watching me very closely & I thought perhaps it might be Mr Duff & so he turned out to be. I resolved to keep him in sight & when I got an opportunity to ask him if he was Mr. D. but I had not that chance (? missing) for when he got an opportunity he asked me if I were Miss H.

We got on the coils of rope for a long time, then the captain came round & asked me if I like to go downstairs. I told him it was too nice on deck. After a while Mr. D. & I thought we would like to sleep & we began to get cold. We went downstairs but I would not stay. The people were lying about everywhere such as I don't know what.

We went up again & before long the captain came round again & asked us would we like to have a view from the bridge of the vessel. We said we would & round we went. We were there on forbidden ground as no person is allowed there only 1<sup>st</sup> cabin passengers. It is there the engines & wheels are. We got a nice seat convenient to one of the flues and you might say we were comfortable all alone only when the captain or mate would come round.

One time we went over to the steerage deck again to see the passengers. I never saw people so miserable. Some were lying around on the wet deck, some rocking to & fro with their teeth chattering & them scarcely able to speak. I could scarcely resist telling them to go over & warm themselves but I was afraid to do so.

I thought some of them mad they were so cross with one another. One woman accused amused me for a while. She lay down and rolled and rolled about & every now & then she would get up & strike some people who were lying sleeping a little over from her with her clenched fist as hard as she could.

No person treated me wickedly. I suppose when they saw the captain so attentive to us they thought we were some aristocrats. We landed in Holyhead about half past four in the morning &

got our luggage off & into the train which was to bring us to Birmingham. We had no time to go to our breakfast so I went & got some sandwiches & Mr. D. looked after the luggage.

We started for Birmingham about a quarter till five & were constant training till half past one last night. The trains here run fearful quick past each other & past stations like lightening. They don't call at every station. We passed through a great many tunnels miles long. This is a beautiful country. It was very much unlike Ireland. It is one continuous town from Birmingham to Exeter. You can't have no idea of it.

I passed through **Wales** (missing) saw a mountain range and some grand (missing) castles. I saw Hawor (missing) Mr Gladstone's seat. I can't remember all the places I passed through but if you get a railway map you can tell my route. I travelled by the London Great North Western. I was in Mold. The whole country seems to be one network of railway. The English people think nothing of travelling.

When I got to Birmingham I took a ticket to Exeter & from there to Plymouth. I wasn't in **from** when I left you till after two o'clock last night. Poor Mr. D. he was worse off for sleep than me. He lost one of his boxes at Birmingham. It was left behind but the railway officials say they will have it here in time for him. He is gone away to the ship to see all about our sailing as when he comes in I'll be able to tell you that too.

When we came to Plymouth an old man up to (missing) and asked me if I needed lodging. I said yes & he said to come with him. I said we would have a look at his rooms when we saw about our luggage. We came & got two good beds for 1/6 each & our breakfast for 1s each. We have been very fortunate for so far only Mr D lost his box. They thought him and I were married (missing) Whenever any of you come (missing) you'll know something (missing) **more** you get this letter?

I felt awfully lonely last night. Many a time I thought yesterday evening if you were home yet or what had happened. When you write tell me all. I'll tell you where to write when I know myself. It was Jessy told Duff I was going to Mother told him the evening he left but ?No. ?Mo how does not know yet. How did Sam amuse himself while you were away?

What did my Uncle say or What will he say! I hope you had not a severe row when you got home. How did you go? When you write you might send me your likenesses but you need not the first letter for fear of them going astray. I can never realize but that I'm in Ireland still. Mr. D. is in and we have (missing) dinner. He did not see a (missing) officer of the ship. There (missing) young man here & they were out together at the dock. The other fellow is an officer on a ship. He told me if you send your letters to me addressed as passenger by ship Waitangi Canterbury emigrant depot N.Z. I'll get them when I land.

Do now write me good long letters as I'll be anxious to hear from you all. We are to go on board tomorrow just before the ship sails. I'll have a letter written to S.J. which I'll send. I'll send it into the house so that all can see it. Be sure you burn this when you read it. I intend to write to none now only this.

I hope you all got safe home and that you have not a (missing) to stand.

Goodbye now from your loving sister & friend  
Dollie

I saw the ruins of Conway Castle in North Wales & other ruins one fortified Castle I saw too but I don't remember where.

## **Letter 2 Fragment of a letter from Sarah Jane Hamilton to her Uncle John Rainey Written between July 1878 and October 1878**

Indeed Uncle you are not to blame. What could you do if you were to talk forever it would make not one bit of difference. And for helping what more could you do indeed it is a shame of us getting so much but I hope there is a good day in store for all.

That day at Greenore I did not know that she was going that way it was by Dublin she was to go that being the most convenient way but then you going home that day she was afraid of meeting you and you preventing her going.

She always said when she had all things settled that she would tell she was going. When it came to the bit she thought she would be prevented from going and asked me not to tell as she could get slipping away when at the Black Book (??Block House)

So then she made up her mind to go on Friday so as you know we started off. I went to Newry with her. What's to lying and her told her the boats by Greenore went down to the Greenore Station. There was just a train after leaving and the next would leave at half past seven so I had to start for Dundalk at half past six. I did not see her away any farther than Newry.

She kept up I m/night say until I was coming away. If she does well she is to be home again in three years. Indeed I did not know how to come back to you again. I knew I was to blame in letting her away the way I did but I could not help it had she been kept at home she would always blame me and say I was the cause that I would not do that much for her.

She was only four hours on the steamer that night, going to Holyhead. She had to pay her fair to Plymouth but they were to pay her when she could get to the ship. The letter we had from her she had been on board of ship and had her served breakfast she got as much beef as she could eat and tea and to her breakfast. The tea was not as good as the other meals. I did my best with her to take some with her but she would not she had heard that people who took things with them only spoiled. They got as much on board of ship as they can eat.

She did not say she was going to her father. She may be with him. I don't know but going away I don't think she intended. She intends to teach. Indeed it would not sway me anything you would ask me about him. I knew very little about him myself, only the people say he is very wealthy. He kept an hotel a while after he went over had some of Andy Hamilton's sons with him so he grew tired of them, gave up the hotel and set it in now living on some land and fobbing in cattle in the country. And for the truth of it I cannot say.

I believe on the whole Dolly will be better away. She will be more content at any how I think perhaps she knew Walt Adair's address.

Letter 3 to John Rainey on arrival at Lyttelton Harbour Christchurch

Ripa Island  
New Zealand  
October 1878

My dear Uncle

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am very sorry for giving you so much pain and had I known you would have felt my leaving so much I certainly would not have come no matter what the circumstances might be.

Dear Uncle you know very well or at least you should know you have never been unkind to me far very far from it. In regard to the school I did not think you wrote unkindly to me. The reason I did not correspond with you from Keady or N Hamilton was I was blamed for telling you stories. You may depend I shall correspond with you for the future.

I felt leaving you more than any other person. I did not know how to come without telling you but I was afraid to do so. If I be spared I shall go home again in some time. You may depend on me neither drinking nor having any connection with drink if it were nothing else but for your sake.

I do not know what I may turn to yet as we are in quarantine on this little island. We had a few cases of scarlet fever on board during the voyage, so we are now in quarantine on that account.

We cast anchor on Sunday (13<sup>th</sup>) evening about 7 o'clock. I would have written immediately only no letter or anything of any description was allowed to be sent any place by any one on board The Waitangi. This evening we were told perhaps we might get letters sent tomorrow and I hope we may.

We had a very nice voyage till we passed the Cape of Good Hope, then it was rather rougher sometimes. In the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> Sepr. we shipped a heavy sea. The water came down the main hatchway and from there in our deck. We were frightened never seeing such a thing before, but we soon got it baled up and all made right again.

No more water came down ever after that. They were better prepared for it. When we got within two hours sailing of anchorage a head wind rose and we had to put to sea again. That was on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>. That headwind continued till Sunday afternoon. We kept cruising about waiting for a favourable wind.

About an hour after we were anchored a little steamer was out with us with a side of beef, four sheep, two bags of potatoes, nice fresh cow's milk & other things. Since then they never ?been tired ?carrying provisions since.

We get plenty of good fresh beef & mutton & potatoes for dinner, bread and butter and tea for breakfast and tea. We have got all our dirty clothes washed today and that was no harm that (one) of the girls gave hers to her cousin to do for her and came and helped me with mine without me ever asking her to do anything for me.

Some of the girls have been exceedingly kind to me. The Irish and English girls are not mixed together only as little as possible, and it is best so as they do not agree very well. The majority are English. The Matron is Irish. She is a Miss Simmons from near ?Cootehill. She was in New Zealand before and is now come back. She favoured her own country women a little more than the others. She and I have been very good friends all through. I assisted her in some writing. She favoured me a good deal.

We had a great deal of sickness during the voyage. Some were sick the whole time and some mostly the whole way. Some were only scheming too in order to get the good things and be attended. One girl at our mess was the worst. There is not one at the table can eat so much as her now that the doctor has withdrawn his supplies. We were very well done for as to diet on board.

We had always plenty to eat only it was very salt and sometimes not nicely boiled. But on the whole we were much better done for than I expected, quite as well as in Mrs Byers. It is a great mistake to suppose that emigrants are badly cared for, especially single women. They are care for in every way possible much better I believe than those ?whigs as passengers in a passenger ship. We had a doctor on board. He was most attentive and during the latter part of the voyage.

Write to N.T.H. I have no more time. They are just calling for the letters. I'll write again as soon as possible, if I am going to take a situation.

Address to the  
Education Depot  
Christchurch.  
New Zealand.  
To be kept till called for.

I have more time. I am quite well. I was sick for about a week during the voyage. I was fortunate. I never had better health.

Dear Uncle, do not grieve for me. I shall surely go home if I do not like this place, but I think I will. Many many thanks for your nice kind letter. I hope your own health is improved. I'll not take time to write any more for fear of missing sending this.

Good bye  
from your loving niece