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Sneyd Papers

Calendar of correspondence to Ralph Sneyd from Elizabeth Sneyd

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U N I V E R S I T Y O F K E E L E

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CORRESPONDENCE

To Ralph Sneyd (d.1870) from Elizabeth Sneyd (d.1869)

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|----|--|--|
| 1. | Keele.
Sunday.
[Between c.1813
and c.1816] ¹ | Elizabeth [Sneyd] to Ralph [Sneyd],
at Blithfield.

Thought it was high time to send him
a few words, '& now that I do, I hope
they will puzzle you.' Expounds a
riddle. Was 'in despair' at not
hearing from the Count, '& I am afraid
you have not either. Give my very
best love to Louisa & Agnes - I hope
Harry is better - Good bye my dear
Ralph, & believe me ever your very
affectionate, Elizabeth de Frizzlegig.' |
| | | [1. The writer was born 20 October,
1806. The letter is in the hand
of a child of between about 7
and 10 years old]. |
| 2. | Keele.
Wednesday.
[22 July,
1818] | The same, and Harriet Sneyd, to the
same.

Intended to have written to him long
ago, 'but I could not.' Mama seemed
much better that day. Elizabeth
Carnegie was to come on Monday,
and they hoped John and Anne too.
On Saturday Harriet and she had
driven in the pony carriage to |

Wolstanton. Lewis had dined there [at Keele] that day. To-morrow was Walter's birthday 'of nine'. It really was shocking how they put off their journey to Paris. Thought they never should go. The post was come and Harriet, who had just received his letter, wanted her to leave her some room.

[Letter completed by Harriet Sneyd]: A thousand thanks for his letter, which she had just received. Mama was certainly much better that day. Prayed and besought him to resist Mr Ellis's tempting offer. 'Consider how much we want you now¹ - & besides if you go to the Sea now², you will tire of it before our expedition. And really if you do not come to us now³, nor go with us to Scarborough, we never shall be together, & our acquaintance must cease!' Mama had got a long letter from the Duchess of Gloucester, 'who mentions having introduced you to the D[uche]ss of Kent the night of Carlton House. - But I expect to hear all about that night from you.' Had heaps to say but the post wouldn't wait. Expected Elizabeth Carnegie with Anne and John on Friday. Prayed him remember her to the Lady Somersets and to Miss Stewart. Adds a postscript, that they heard Scarborough was all the fashion that year, 'full of genteel company! The D[owage]r D[uche]ss of Rutland always goes there. We hear Mrs FitzHerbert & Miss Seymour are coming to Trentham.'

[1,2,3 - numbers inserted by the writer].

3. Audley Square.
Tuesday.
[? April, or
May, ? 1830]

The same to the same.

Thought she might say 'decidedly better', as her account of Mama that day. As Sir Henry had been out of town all the day before, they had sent for Hollings, 'who I think has been of great use.' The Bishop had looked in on them the night before, and was coming to dine with them, with Lady Harriet, that day, 'w[hi]ch is very dear of them.' Sir John Sebright had called. It was so very fine, they thought it would do for the little open carriage, 'so Fanny & I are going to drive to L[ad]y Ponsonby's at Earl's Court.'

4. Drawing-room.
Sunday.
[1831 or
later]

The same to the same, at Keele.

Her knee was improving rapidly. Believed Mr Berlin could hardly believe his eyes. Had just been carried down on Walter's chaise-longue. Had not the least pain and was as well as possible, so she thought she had been let off very easily. Prayed him thank Harriet for her letter, '& tell I am sorry to have given her such a fidget about you, but then our staying at home was much better for Fred - He is very shy, poor lad, & hardly dares to speak.' Mama had had a few lines from Fanny that morning, from London, 'where she found Mr Mildmay in great uneasiness about L[ad]y Mildmay, who is very ill. Mr Mildmay had just taken Dr Paris down to Dogmersfield to her.'

5. Cheverells.
22 July,
[? 1832]

The same to the same, at Keele.

It was not from having much to say that she was writing to him, 'but because you will soon begin to call us all very lazy - & perhaps have some right to do so.' Walter had left them on Wednesday and sailed from the Tower yesterday morning. Saw he had not persuaded Bob Curzon to go to Heidelberg and Stuttgart instead of Nuremberg. 'He tells us to write this week to him at Frankfort, & in another week to Munich - & that about the end of August he supposes they shall be at Geneva, where he shall hope to find some letters.' He had engaged a German servant that 'old Bob' had heard of & had advised him to take, who could speak Italian and French besides his own language. They expected the Stanhopes to come there next Sunday. They had had a visit from Lady Clarendon, who was going to Ashridge. She was very busy patronizing a fete that was to be given at the new infirmary. Fanny wrote word that she was going the next day with Mr Bouverie and the Mildmays to Southampton, and from thence to Cowes. 'My Lord is as happy as a King in having got Bodicum at Pool Park - but I think it will make a funny mixture when he gets Lady Lyndhurst too, w[hi]ch he writes word he is going to do.' Of course, he knew that Maria Copley was going to marry Lord Howick.¹ Mama had had a bad night and was but poorly that day - 'perhaps it may only be the effect of the weather, w[hi]ch is so very severe.' Wondered whether he was going to Scotland. Supposed he would be sure to visit the Lothians if he did, and should long to hear what he thought of their place. Was sure he wouldn't care to know on which day the Miss Sebrights were to come to Beechwood, '& as that is the only thing I c[oul]d have to tell you I may as well end with Mama & sister's love -'.

[1. Viscount Howick, later Earl Grey, married Maria Copley 9 August, 1832].

6. Cheverells.
Thursday,
12 Jan.
[? 1837]

The same to the same.

Thanks him for his letter. Did not feel very certain where this letter would find him, 'but shall make bold to enclose it to L[or]d Clare, as I think he is sure to know where you are, if you are not together.' There were no great events stirring there. Charlotte and she were not at all glad to be going to dine and sleep at Ashridge that day, to meet Miss Grimstone and Lady Katherine Barham. This was 'no sign of a reconciliation with the Verulams, but L[ad]y Bridgewater never included L[ad]y Katherine amongst the offenders, & she never took up the quarrel. Harriet has got a cold so I am to go in her place.' Walter wrote word that he was well again. He had been very poorly indeed ever since he got into Staffordshire, had been laid up in bed the two days he was at Brereton, with influenza, and had been very unwell with other things at Blithfield, where he still was. Was afraid they had not much chance of a visit from

Lord Clare before he went to town, but they were still in hopes of seeing him [Ralph Sneyd]. They were in despair to hear of the Ash tree. Lady Harriet had written word that the king wanted to give the governorship of Chelsea to Sir Edward Paget, '& that the Ministers want to suppress it altogether - I do hope he will not let them have their own stingy way!' The newspapers made them quite unhappy about the Duchess of Gloucester. News of other friends and relatives. It had begun to snow and to blow, '& looks very odious, & Char[lo]tte declares she will send her excuse to L[ad]y Bridgwater & not run the chance of being snowed up there - it is not quite bad enough yet, for that - but a sore pity to be turning out!' Hopes his cough was gone.

7. Wednesday morning.
[? mid-19th cent.]

The same to the same.

Was very sorry to have been out when he had come the day before, and was afraid there was no more chance of seeing him before he went away. 'To say how shocked & touched I feel at the magnificently generous present you bought us w[oul]d really be impossible! - It is a great deal too kind - & I can't bear to think of y[ou]r having spent so much upon us just now when you are needing more than you have to spare, to make yourself comfortable - but it is just like you to do so! It is such beautiful plate - & so much of it...' etc.

8. Colamore.
Monday,
28 [Sept.
? 1863]¹

The same to the same.

As they should like very much to have a line to tell them when Harriet had arrived, 'after the blow voyage w[hi]ch seems probable, I must write & tell you that we are to be here till Friday...' When she had come from Ireland it had been a violent wind the day before, and calm and fine when she had crossed, 'but H[arrie]t wrote last, doubtful whether she sh[oul]d cross in the morn[ing] or the afternoon, only determined not to go in a storm of wind, so it remains to be proved what day she gets to Keele, I suppose.' Lady Isabella was better, and had taken a walk on the Common with them yesterday. Adds a postscript, that a letter had come from Harriet that day, who was not going to sail until Wednesday. 'She seems to be very gay at Dublin with George.'

[1. C/f. S[RS/HS]/66. Between 1863 and 1865 the 28 Sept. fell on a Monday in 1863].

9. 4, Chester Square.
Saturday.
[? 1865]

The same to the same.

Miller had just been. He had said what Charlotte thought herself, that though she was much better her liver was not yet by any means acting rightly, '& must have a certain course of discipline, under his eye.' In the meantime it might be convenient for him to know that it would not be sooner than the middle of the week after next [before they were ready to visit Keele]. Charlotte had been a little

walk that morning and was going to drive that afternoon, '& is rejoicing in a very cool grey day - I'm afraid however that the grey means smoke more than rain.' Octavia Sebright had just been there, 'she is just returned from Cheverells where she had been spending a week - Spary, the Beechwood gardener, & nearly all his family, including the son who was at Keele, have died of consumption, in a very short time - The new Lady Sebright orders all things in a very queer way at Beechwood, & Sir John goes for nothing at all -'. Feared the constant offers they had of Lady Isabella's carriage were a very bad sign of her own health, 'tho' good for C.'s first goings out.'

10. 4, Chester Square.
Wednesday.
[? 1865]

The same to the same.

He was perhaps thinking her rather slack about writing, 'that is because tho' Charlotte is got to the point of much better, the progress to quite well is rather slow & several days have seemed much the same - I think she is rather got on today f[ro]m yesterday - but she is not to think of going out till after Miller's next visit...' As Charlotte could not go to the rose show, the writer had used his ticket to take Newton Lane with her, to the private view - '& very lovely roses these were.' The Lanes were to give up their house that day and all were to go out of town except Agnes, who was to stay a week more with William and Lucia. 'The marriage is to be on the 25th of August, at King's Bromley - I was out one day that Edith & Mr James came here - but C. saw them & liked him very much.' The C.Thynnes had left Lady Harriet yesterday. She was much as usual, very weak but not more so. Minnie had written to Lady Harriet that she was very bad with hay fever, '& that the house at Baldersby is surrounded with hay - It must be unlike other places in that respect, I sh[oul]d think, in this dry burnt up season!'

11. 4, Chester Square.
Wednesday.
[? 1865]

The same to the same.

Was ashamed to say that his message to Quebec Street had not yet been delivered, but very soon would be. Hoped the reason was that Charlotte had been very poorly ever since Sunday, 'with an attack such as hot weather is very apt to give her,...' She was quite in bed that day and keeping as quiet as possible, 'with some opiate pills, & tak[in]g only Port wine & potash water, or cool arrowroot & brandy, & not much of those.' Fanny was still there, by way of going to Walter the next day. Minnie &c. had left town that day. Edith Lane's marriage to Sir Walter James's son seemed to give very high satisfaction. George Fortescue had called there the day before yesterday, looking so well. He had spoken of Lord Westminster as being better.

12. 4, Chester Square. The same to the same.
Thursday.
[? 1865]
Charlotte was a good deal better that day. Miller was quite satisfied and Frances had gone to Denton 'quite comfortably'. Was going to drive in Lady Isabella's carriage, 'to see about Mrs Woolcock'.
13. 4, Chester Square. The same to the same.
Friday.
[? 1865]
Charlotte was going on quite well. She was very weak and pulled down, but hoped Miller would pull her up a little. 'I did go to call Mrs Woolcock over the coals yes[terda]y & she declared she had written to you, - I'm glad it turns out to be the truth! She said London people cannot knit so the order is being executed in Cornwall! The pattern shoe is there too, but it will come with the other things, as I declined its being sent in a separate parcel by itself - she said they will all be done in a few days - it seems more likely they will be many than few.' Was going to try and find Lady G. Bathurst, as she had promised her an account of Charlotte. Adds a postscript, that she had heard at Lady Georgina's door that 'they had had news by telegraph today of the death in India of Cholera, of L[ad]y Emily's son Arthur Ponsonby - of course her journey is delay[']d - it was a great shock to them[.]'
14. 4, Chester Square. The same to the same.
Friday, '21st',
[1868 or later]
Thanks him for his letter. He thought most truly that she took a twofold interest in the marriage of Hughie Downe and Lady Cecilia. Considers this event. 'Minnie writes as if she was very pleased, & so thankful that he has chosen some one really nice & not a fast young lady!' She was at her aunt's at Stoke Farm, and he at his barracks. Did not like to hear of his having felt a vertigo, however short. Perhaps the thunderstorm had had something to do with it. Hoped he would see Dr Walsh whenever he had any uncomfortable feeling.
15. 4, Chester Square. The same to the same.
Monday.
[? June,
1868 or 1869]
Charlotte was in bed with a bad cold, so could not write. She had had Miller to doctor her and was much better. 'This longest day seems about the dingiest as well, & pouring with rain.' Walter was with them. He saw a good deal of Robert Curzon, who was alone in Arlington Street, Lady Horton being gone to Catton to cure a very bad cold. The account of Arundell was rather better. They had put up a cuckoo clock. They had just heard from Frederick Gooch in rapture at the beauty of Keele and the church.
16. 4, Chester Square. The same to the same.
Wednesday,
[? 27 Jan.
1869]
Was sending by that post a pair of brown slippers she had knitted, '& very clumsy they look!' Thanks him for his letter. Yesterday had been an entirely soaking day, but it had not made that

day warm, though it was fair and bright. They had gone to lunch with Lady Mildred Hope, in spite of the rain. Had no news, except that they were going for a fortnight to Cambridge, at Whitsuntide. Was glad Frederick Gooch was again 'doing' about the organ. Was also glad the D. of S. had been to entertain him with an account of his travels.

17. Denton.
Wednesday.
[? late Apr.
1869]

The same to the same.

Perhaps he would like one more letter from there. They were going back to Chester Square the next day, 'by an after luncheon train'. Walter had been suffering from a bad ear-ache. 'He is much easier now, having had a blister, and some judicious management f[ro]m Dr Stovin. - Nothing can be more blooming than all the children - their being out of doors now a great deal, & exactly regular habits with Miss Prichard make them very well & very happy - She is a most pleasing, nice, little person whose company is never de trop to any one - She & Loulou & [?]/fizzy dine at our luncheon, & she comes down in the even[ing] f[ro]m 9 to 10 - I hope she will like to stay.' Fanny wrote an excellent account of Arundell. Walter was rather expecting a visit from Robert Curzon at Whitsuntide.

18. Baldersby.
Wednesday.
[? 2nd half
of 19th cent.]

The same to the same.

Really was intending to write him that day and now his letter, just received, sent her to the pen and ink in great hurry. Had been waiting for the only piece of news she was likely to have to tell - the day of her return home - but had not been allowed to fix that yet. Had been waiting for Lady Harriet to arrive that week and go at the beginning of the next. Now her [Lady Harriet's] courage had failed and she was going back to London instead, which disappointed Minnie very much. The boys had come home a week ago, Hughie very flourishing, 'Lewis pale & not strong - but nothing to do with the Eton low fever.' They were very nice boys. Mr Whiting their tutor, who had come with them, was of the same opinion. Thought he had the advantage in weather. Mr and Miss Dawnay had come the day before for one night. News of other friends, including the death of Lady Clementina Jersey.
