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Sneyd Papers

Calendar of correspondence to Ralph Sneyd from Frances Sneyd

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CORRESPONDENCE

To Ralph Sneyd (d.1870) from Frances Sneyd¹ (d.1884)

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|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Keele.
29 Aug.
[? 1815] | [Frances Sneyd] to Ralph [Sneyd].
Mama had just had a very good-natured letter from Lady Bathurst, who had detained somebody for a few days from going to Florence, that they might have an opportunity of writing to him. Would not tell him what a delight his last letter had been, because he must be well aware of that. Grandmamma had left them that day to go to Uncle Dick's, where she would find Uncle Charles and Mrs Bagot, who were staying there for some time. They had not been able to sail when they had intended, as their frigate was not ready for them. There was nobody there [at Keele] but Lewis, who, she was afraid, talked of leaving them next week. Papa had had a letter from Col. (?) Disbrowe, which had made them all very low, for she was afraid they would not come into Staffordshire that autumn, for they were expecting Edward and George home. 'Hardy' wanted to write at the end of her letter '& she is scolding me so that I don't let her |
|----|-------------------------------|---|

[1. Married, 8 Feb.1831, Arundell Bouverie].

come & write, that I must have done,...'

With, postscript, from Harriet Sneyd.

Fanny had kept the paper so long that she had not a moment to scribble to him. Perhaps that was a mercy for him, as they must all have pretty nearly the same thing to say. How she would like to know where he was at that moment. They all longed for his letters, as he might guess. Had stayed nearly three weeks at Uncle Dick's, after they had parted, the last week with Lady Haddy alone. Had enjoyed it very much indeed. There was a kind of snug calm which seemed to reign there perpetually. Was sorry to say that Lady Harriet had suffered a good deal with the pain in her face lately. Uncle John had been there [at Keele] last week, in his way to Pool Park, 'in high force & fun.' He had come from Beaudesert. 'What a piece of work they made with Lord Anglesea at Lichfield, in his way down.' They had begun to make up the packet, so must cease.

2. Keele.
18 July,
[? 1818]

The same to the same, at Longleat.

Trusted Mama was really better that day, though still very uncomfortable. His letter was a great delight to her. 'Write often, for every thing that amuses her does her good, she is so low.' Their going to Blithfield was now out of the question. Supposed that Harriet had told him that they were expecting Elizabeth Carnegie there. 'How glad you must be to be got out of London, & out of the way of tavern dinners.' Lord Gower and Lady Elizabeth had ridden there that morning.

3. Audley Square.
Thursday.
[? Aug.
1820]

The same to the same, at Longleat.

Knew he would be anxious to hear how Mama was before she set out on her journey. Though she had had an indifferent night, the writer felt more comfortable about her than she did a few days ago. Mama had desired her to tell him that she had had a letter from Uncle Charles the day before. Mama had seen Lady Bathurst the day before, as well as Lady Granville, who had gone home expecting to find the Duchess of Beaufort arrived, but she was not coming up at all. Lewis was now there, giving Mama her dinner. He had come from Chatsworth last night and was going to Headley that day. 'I hear the Queen is gone to the house, in a black gown & long white veil, with all her rouge washed off; how interesting she must look! It is impossible for any thing to be quieter or duller than this end of the town.' Dr Warren had just been and given Mama leave to set out.

4. Towcester.
Tuesday,
2 o'clock.
[? Aug.
1820]

The same to the same, at Longleat.

There they were, having performed their journey hitherto most prosperously. Was quite delighted to see how much better Mama had borne it than she had expected. They had accomplished getting to

Brickhill the day before, '& though she was a good deal tired when we got in, she slept very well after it, & seems quite rested this morning. I think she is already stronger for change of air.' They were going on to Daventry, when they should sleep. Was it not too provoking to have such November weather as one got into the country?

5. Elithfield.
Saturday.
[? Sept.
1824]

The same to the same.

Though she had no material for an entertaining letter she must express her joy at the good news she had heard that day from Keele. 'It has cheered up one's prospects for the winter most exceedingly...' Dick had had a letter from Uncle Charles that day, the last they should have from Petersburg. He was to sail on the 4th and was looking forward with no small degree of joy to eating his Michaelmas goose in England. Young Daniel Finch and his colleague Mr Warren had come there that day. Lady Dartmouth had also returned from Astley Castle that day. Lady Suffield had been brought to bed of a dead child, since which she had had a paralytic stroke and was not expected to live.¹ The two Mr Buckners were making some beautiful drawings of the church. 'My lord' had been very busy planting shrubs on the lawn before the house, 'which by the bye, I advise them all to notice & admire on Tuesday.'

[1. Georgiana, first wife of Edward (Harbord) Baron Suffield, died 30 September, 1824].

6. Keele.
11 Dec.
[1825]

The same to the same, in Paris.

Since she found she could now send her letters free, she felt less compunction in inflicting 'one of my stupid epistles upon you ,...'. If Mama or Harriet had told him of the very suffering attack she [the writer] had had in her face, she knew he would be glad to hear that she had quite recovered, '& am left with a whole & sound face, which is more than I expected considering the remedies that were necessary to alleviate the pain (which was beyond what I could have conceived) viz. leeches inside my nose & mouth, hot laudanum fomentations, & poltice for three days & nights all over my nose & cheek - I think myself very fortunate in having got out of the scrape as I have done.' Bess and Haddy had come safe to hand the day before, '& I am rejoicing in having nothing to do with Soby Dod's wedding, as Mama & sisters have received a summons to be at Edge tomorrow, as the marriage may take place the next day or not till Thursday, if certain Irish papers do not arrive in time.' Asks him to go and see Fanche in Paris, who lived at No. 8 Rue de Hanovre, for whom she was concerned, 'it would be very great satisfaction to us all to hear that she seems comfortable.' Enclosed was a letter from Papa to her. Before the latter had left England, the writer had purchased her Dictionnaire Universal, in 20 octavo volumes, a

delightful addition to her library, 'though it has rather ruined me.' Had got Papa to send her a draft upon Fry for £13, but was much afraid she had not received it before she had set out, in which case it would have followed her to Paris, where it would be no use to her, unless he could transact it for her, which would be very kind. Felt as if the only news she could send him would be stale. Lady Elizabeth Howard was to marry Lord Sherbourne's eldest son, and Miss Blacker was to marry a Mr Onslow, a clergyman. Dick and Lady Harriet had been meeting the Duke of Wellington at Teddesley, ' & L[ad]y Har[rie]t writes Harriet word that after the ladies were gone up to their rooms, Mr Croker (who had arrived in the evening) upon hearing Lord Crewe's name mentioned, turned round to Mr Cunliffe & asked him whether he could tell him who L[ad]y Crewe's daughter had married!' Was not without hopes that [her] sisters might persuade Jack to return with them from Edge, as it would break his journey. He would find a good deal to interest him in the painting-room, 'for Char[lo]tte is making an admirable copy of the Collins from Trentham, & Harriet has also succeeded very well in that very difficult head of Georgioni's. I have been quite unable to attempt any thing in the painting line lately, my eyes have been so troublesome; I hope before I go to town I shall be able to do the view for Lord Stafford, which I made a sketch of long ago.'

With, postscript, by Harriet Sneyd.

Felt as if Mama had not said nearly enough upon the subject of the Dictionnaires. Did he really intend to make her a present of those two large vols. of the Dic. de l'Academie in his room? Because if so, she was quite delighted, more obliged than she had words to express. The post had just brought them another marriage, viz. Catherine Drummond (Mr Andrew's youngest daughter) to Mr Henry Perceval, her cousin.

The same to the same, [in Florence].

Though she was quite sure she had nothing to say worth sending to Florence, yet could not help slipping a few lines into Mama's packet. Frederick Douglas's letter had made them more anxious than ever to hear whether he had recovered all his sea-sickness, ' & indeed, I think I may add, alarms.' Harriet had lengthened her stay a little at Blithfield, 'on Lady Haddy's account, who has been very poorly, & not at all fit to be left alone,...' Was happy to say that they were both to come there on Thursday, as was Jack. They expected Lewis on Saturday. Had been riding the new pony constantly and it had carried her very nicely 'till the other day, when it took it into it's head, to run away with me, & I should think, that I must inevitably have been killed, if I had not, after having gone on for some time, fortunately met a goodnatured man with a cart,

7.

Keele.
Sunday,
12 Aug.
[? 1st quarter
of the 19th
cent.]

who stopt it for me.'

8. Keele.
Monday.
[? 1st quarter
of 19th century]

The same to the same.

One line, to tell him that they had had a good account of 'My lady' that night. Mama said she had had a very good night. At the same time she had lost all hopes of seeing her mind restored. Papa had just had a letter from Frank, who would come there with Polly Parker either on Saturday or Monday. Mama had accepted Mr Wilbraham's invitation to (?) Boathaven Lodge. Should like to know whether he had been dreadfully starved that day, and how his cold did.

9. Keele.
5 Mar.
[? 1826]

The same to the same, in Paris.

Would no longer delay telling him what pleasure it gave her finding a letter from him on her return from Elford. Had taken advantage of her eyes being tolerably well to commence the drawing he wished for. 'I am sorry to hear that we are not to exchange P. Esterhazy for the Apponies, as I have always had a great wish both to see & hear her. The latter perhaps I should not have done in any case.' Had he heard what immense wealth Mrs Verhon was come in for by the death of Lady Bulkeley? Discusses the details. They were reading 'Brambletye House' aloud of an evening. 'There does not seem to be much story in it, but it gives an interesting & good account of the times, which are those of Pepys' & Evelyn's memoirs.' Harriet bade her tell him that she was going to send him [the] two last volumes of Mme. de Genlis to be bound, '& wishes to know whether you would not also like to have Matilda bound, as she wants it much.' Lady Essex's protegee, Miss Pugh, was going to be married to Mr D'Anchald, the secretary to the French embassy, '& I hear L[ad]y Essex is [de]lighted at it though he is a catholic, & she but sixteen. They are to live nine months in the year with L[ad]y Essex, & to spend the other three in France.' Dick and Harriet were to go to town on the 10th, for a week before their Windsor residence, to see the Ponsonbys, whom they had been expecting at Blithfield every day for the last two months. Papa stayed a week longer at Bath. 'Your story of Mrs Davenport amused me not a little[,] it was so thoroughly characteristic.'

10. Pool Park.
Thursday morning.
[? Aug.
1828]

The same to the same.

Thanks him for his dear and good-natured letter. 'Would that I were my own mistress & could put on my return to Keel a few days - but alas, alas, the 29th. is the very day that My lord has fixed for our all dispersing, & for Munny, Eleanor & myself going Keel ways.' Hated to be the cause of any 'derangement' in his plans, yet could not find in her heart to say 'don't put off going to Heaton', for she longed to see him again. News of

friends and their plans. Could not help feeling that poor Lady Dartmouth was much broken by the many shocks she had had that year. 'We still remain in ignorance in this part of the world as to why the Lord High Admiral resigned, & should much like to be enlightened. Has Mama heard from Princess Sophia on the subject?' Heard the Duke of Sussex had signified his intention of attending the Eisteddfod. It was impossible to be made to feel more thoroughly comfortable and at home than they made her do there, and the pleasure of having some pretty new view to see every day was very great. 'You will be disappointed though if you expect to see some good sketches, for they are most of them done in such a hurry that they are only comprehensible to myself. I have however a stock of subjects to paint from, sufficient to last me for some years.'

11. Blithfield.
Tuesday.
[12 Jan.
1830]

The same to the same, at Keele.

As Harriet was dining at the parsonage and would probably not be able to write to him as she had intended, she would take the opportunity of doing so. Lewis the Warden had come that day, '& Dick & Har[rie]t being gone over to Sandon when he arrived, he came down to visit us, & had a very snug coze with us in Mama's room.' Chig had come there that day from Woburn, and William Bagot had gone to King's Bromley. Whether the Lanes came the next day or not seemed doubtful, 'as he has a cold, which I should recommend their nursing at home.' Harriet had had a letter from Anne Chester that day, who had been most good-naturedly active in doing all she could to secure the situation at Castle-Ashby for Mary Thornton, 'for whom she always had a great affection.' Mama was well, except having a little cold. Charles was to have gone to Beaudesert that day but had put off till Thursday on account of Lord Anglesey's 'attack of tique'. 'Oh Ralph, does not it make you very very melancholy, whenever Sir Tho[ma]s Lawrence's death comes across you! Happy they who possess a picture of his - O dear, he is a dreadful loss - '. Mr Styche had come that day.

12. Audley Square.
Thursday.
29 [Mar.
1830]

The same to the same, c/o York Post Office.

Though Harriet's letter yesterday would have made him feel comfortable about Mama, she would write one line to tell him that she had had a good night and was better that morning. Hollings managed her well, she thought, and had quite consoled them for Sir Henry [Halford's] being detained at Windsor. Could tell him nothing more about the king than what he saw in the newspaper, 'for it would be useless to retail the contradictory lies which are hourly invented about him.' Harriet had dined the day before with the Granville Howards, where Lewis the Warden was expected that day. Harriet and Charlotte were to dine early at the Fortescues that

day, 'but I do not feel as if any of us would muster resolution to go with Lady Harriet to Lady Wrottesley's ball tonight.' They had promised Mrs Cunliffe that one of them would go to one she was to give the following night, for her nieces the Miss Brookes, who were with her that year. There had been no answer received yet from the Burghershes about 'My lord's' house. The house in Tilney Street would not do for Dick and Harriet. Lewis was going on well. Mortimer had written to tell Mama that he had at last had an interview with Sir John Sebright, who had been very shy of telling him who was his solicitor, but on Mortimer's informing him that it was impossible that he should act on Mama's behalf without communication with his man of business, Sir John had named Messrs Grover and Smith of Hemel Hempstead. They had not heard from Walter lately, 'which I suppose is a sign that he is reading hard.'

13. Brighton.
31 Jan.
[? between 1832
and 1834]

The same to the same.

A few lines written that day would, she thought, find him at Gorhambury. First, she wished to tell him that the very day he left Brighton an invitation had been sent to him from the Pavilion. The Duchess of Gloucester, 'with whom I sat some time yesterday, expressed many regrets at the shortness of your stay as she wished so much to have seen you. The Queen is better, but not yet able to dine below, which makes me regret much less not being asked there. Poor dear P[rince]ss Augusta shocked Lady Stafford not a little two days [ago] by desiring the footman when she came out from dinner to "send Mary" meaning the Duchess of Gloucester.' The Sheffield's would not be able to receive them next week, therefore they would remain till Friday '(our wedding day)' and then go straight to London. Had dined at two largish dinners that week without being the worse for it. Was looking forward with pleasure to dining with the Dovers on Saturday. 'L[or]d Dover is in despair at L[ad]y D:'s perpetual invitations to the Pavilion, as he neither fancies going or being left alone.' Gives her special love to her mother and sisters when he should see them.

14. Rectory,
West Tytherley.
16 Nov.
[? 1832]

The same to the same.

It might be kinder not to write to him then, but her thoughts had been so continually with him, ever since she had read the sad event in the paper, which had deprived him of a friend to whom he was so warmly and affectionately attached. Mr Wall had come from town on Wednesday and had dined with them that day, and from him she had learned what she dreaded to hear, that poor Lady Frances had not arrived in time to be with her mother in her last moments. The same post which had brought his letter had brought one from Walter from Venice, 'but as he speaks of himself as confined to his couch with rheumatism & a bilious bout for which he has put himself in the hands of

a doctor, I did not send his letter on to Mama, as I should otherwise have done.' His intention had been to leave Venice the 5th of that month and to proceed by Bologna to Florence, where he hoped to find the Percies. Was afraid that Charles's name being first on the list of sheriffs next year would decide them to lengthen their stay abroad. Was sadly afraid that Mr Wall would have left Norman Court before he could reach those parts, and as few things gave Arundell and her as much pleasure as a visit from him, she had no scruple in saying they should not be affronted if he changed the time of his visit to them. Believed Mr Wall expected the Jerseys about the 2nd of December and hoped to get Lord and Lady Stuart to meet them. After their visit she fancied he would be electioneering. Their own plans were unsettled, 'but as the new church will be ready to open at Easter, our visits at Cheverells & in Edward Street will probably take place before.'

15. Critchill.
18 Sept.
[1833]

The same to the same, at Cheverells.

By a letter which she had received from Harriet that morning, she found that one written that day would just catch him before he left Cheverells, and was desirous not only to thank him for his last, which she had received at Walton, but also to tell him of their visit to Motcombe on their way to Critchill. Would not touch upon Longleat, as she would not have time or room in one sheet of paper to write upon any other subject. It was a glorious place. Was very glad they had stopped at Motcombe. Critchill was in a beautiful country and would be a very nice place. They were working hard to get things in order for the Duchess of Sutherland, who was going to them very shortly. Had found the Sturts alone, with the exception of a cousin. Lady Charlotte looked fearfully delicate and was very weak, 'but it does not affect her spirits & she is great fun.' They should get home Friday sennight. Could not tell him how sorry she was to hear that the Bishop was going to make so short a stay at Cuddesdon. 'It is very foolish (to say the least of it) in these days, when the attention of the country is directed so much towards the conduct of the clergy & especially of the Bishops, & I fear that it is making him less popular in his diocese.' Should like very much to hear how he was struck with Mama's looks.

16. W[est] Tytherley
Rect[or]y.
8 Jan.
1834

The same to the same.

Should now take him at his word and write him a line, just to say that they were alive. They were very happy in the prospect of a visit from the Paulet Mildmays in their way out of Somersetshire. Mr Wall was at home and dined with them very frequently. The beginning of next week he was to go to Critchill for a day or two. Walter had told her that he [Ralph Sneyd] had

undertaken to pay £5 for her to Mrs Timmis. They were all but drowned there. When he wrote next, 'do mention what you hear of Lady Dover from the D[uche]ss of Sutherland.' Was glad to see by the paper that the vacant stall at Canterbury had been given to poor Mr Wood, 'as he must be glad to leave Fulham which has been the scene of such heavy afflictions to him.'

17. [Blithfield].
Wednesday morning.
'2 o'clock'.
[? 7 May,
1834]

The same to the same.

A spasm had come on at 8 o'clock that evening - 'Sweeney came immediately & has been by her [the writer's mother's] bed side ever since, but he says the pulse is sinking rapidly - I see he has no hopes of its lasting many hours - I write this unknown to my Sisters, with the hopes of its being able to be sent by some coach which will convey it to you speedily.'

18. W[est] Tytherley
Rect[or]y.
15 Aug.
[1834]

The same to the same.

Had learned from Mrs Arthur (?) Perecoat '(alias Charlotte Legge)', that Mr Duncombe and Lady Louisa were in search of a place at no great distance from London, and from the writer's description of it she had thought that Cheverells would be very likely to suit them, but wished the writer to tell her to whom she should refer them for all particulars. Had been glad to find from Harriet's last letter that they were thinking of going to Walter for a bit, before Charlotte returned, as she thought it high time that Harriet and Lizzy had a little change of air and scene. Mr Wall had arrived on Wednesday and had dined with them yesterday. His mother had sold her house at Lymington for £8,000, within £500 of what she had first asked for it. She had determined on renting the house the Stanhopes had at Brompton. They [the writer and her husband] talked of going to the Paulet Mildmays in Somersetshire, 'that we may have another sight of dear Mr Bouverie before he leaves them,...' Should be really glad to take Arundell from home, 'for he has had so much lately to worry & annoy him at home, from the way that the parish has been beset lately by Ranters & preachers of all descriptions, that his comfort has been quite destroyed by it.' If Charles Percy was with him, prays their kindest love to him.

With, letter from Arundell Bouverie to the same, about the sale of Cheverells.

19. Longford Castle.
28 Oct.
1835

The same to the same, in Boconnoc, Cornwall.

Thought she could not employ herself better that day '(i.e. more agreeably)' than in scribbling to him. Had been very glad to find a letter from Anna Maria on their return from Coleshill on Saturday, telling her that after all he had been at Haslegrove, and was longing for one from himself to tell her whether he had had any return of ear-ache, and whether he had seen Montacute, and whether he thought her admiration of it

greater than it deserved. They had come there on Monday and found Lord and Lady Lansdowne with a son and daughter, Lady Glengall, and the Buckleys. The former were just returned from Ireland and the writer did not like their account of Lord Clare, who looked 'dreadfully yellow, much more so than when he first came from India.' Was somewhat bored at being obliged to come there without a maid. Lady Radnor had however been so full of little attentions that she had missed her less than she expected. They were to go home the next day. Lord Lansdowne had begged her to urge his visiting Bowood. They had been to visit Old Sarum, 'a great fun Lady Glengall was there with L[or]d Radnor & L[or]d Lansdowne.'

20. Ashtead Park.
14 July,
[1866 or later]

The same to the same.

Thought he would like to hear that they had performed their journey prosperously the day before, though it had been a very long and very tiring one. The train had been a quarter of an hour late at Stoke, so that they had had a long time to wait there. The heat on the train had been intense, 'but the puddles on the side of the road between Epsom & this place would have excited your envy. The thunder storm here on Saturday night (of which there was a second edition on Sunday evening) was from all accounts a very awful one,...' and Mrs Howard was rather feeling the effects of the sleepless nights it caused her, but was otherwise well and had given them a most kind welcome. 'I was dead tired, but a great deal of Champagne & a good night have quite recruited me.' Had found only Eleanor and Mary Phillimore there, but Edward Paget was to come that day and the Charles Bagots to-morrow. The bunch of roses which Mrs Eason had put into her hand on leaving Keele were now on her table, looking very fresh.

21. 9 June,
1868

The same to the same.

It had been indeed tantalizing to see his writing instead of himself. Should live on the hopes of finding herself at Keele in the course of the year. Arundell was commencing his visitation that day, '& I feel anxious to hear how he gets through the fatigue of the first day, as he was feeling less up to it than usual.' Was glad to find his sisters so comfortably housed, and both of them looking so well. Nothing could be prettier and nicer than their house. Should be glad when the one in Eaton Square was parted with. 'You have so lately experienced the same, dear R. that you can understand better than I can describe what the first return to London was without her, who is always uppermost in my thoughts!'

22. 4, Chester Square.
16 June,
[18]68

The same to the same.

Would it suit him to receive her at the same time as Walter and his &c.? The writer was to go

to Denton that day sennight, and they had agreed that it would be very pleasant to travel to Keele together, and Arundell would join her on the 6th at Keele. He was obliged to return to Norfolk for another week of visitation and then to come down to London for the meeting of Convocation, '& it would be a very pleasant prospect to come to Keele when that is over.' The weather must be very charming there, but in London it was dreadful. Was trying to muster courage to join Arundell at 5 o'clock, that they might go together to the exhibition, but it would be a great effort. Wished dear Lady Harriet was anywhere else, for the heat was very trying to her, but she did not seem willing to move.

23. 11, St James's
Place.
Monday.
[? Mar.
2nd half of
19th cent.]

The same to the same.

A few lines from her would, she thought, be a comfort to him. Thank God! the operation had been performed that morning successfully, '& dear A. bore it well & is going on they assure me quite satisfactorily...' [Dr] Miller was close at hand. 'He & Mr A. Cooper will both see him again tonight, & in the mean time Miller will look in once in the afternoon.' He would understand her not being able to write on any other subject.
