

Letters from the Doody family

PRONI Reference: D1384/12

[Note: As far as possible, original spelling and punctuation have been retained, alterations being made only to facilitate understanding.]

Transcript:

Date 22 July 1843

Please to write me at your earliest convenience how your mother's health has been since I saw you and how you get along, as they say in America.

Bye the bye, your sister's husband (Stewart) passed through this town yesterday on his way to Belfast. He came to Warrenpoint by the steamer from Liverpool to which port he had wrought his passage home from New York. He gives a most wretched account of America and is much vexed that he ever went out. After being shipwrecked (no lives lost) going up to Quebec, where he could get no work he travelled 300 or 400 miles ultimately to New York where even in that large city he could get nothing to do though offering to work for victuals alone they would tell him that thousands could be got for half that.

Since I returned I have been kept even beyond measure hurried with so much to do, the clerk we had having gone off without notice the time I was with you and no one since has been got to assist in the office, together with assize times which are always busy here.

Please remember me kindly to Mrs Anderson and with best regards to [your] better half and yourself with my poor sister I remain, in haste, affectionately yours

[signed] Arthur Maphett.

P.S. We have got 2 letters from Margaret Maphett since she went to Liverpool; she does not like it at all and William, can make but little, still working through the brokers.

31 May 1844 William Edmiston, Armagh, to John.

[Letter encouraging him to visit Armagh where he would introduce him to 'a newly invented art' which would be of service to him. He sends a pound note for his relief.]

I am very sorry for disappointing you but the carman did not call on Wednesday nor the Wednesday before. I promised to write but neglected to do so. However I trust I am not too late. I send you a one pound note trusting it may relieve you this time.

I expected you up to Armagh as I think I could let you see something that would be of service to you in a newly invented art and as for me to write all I know about it you could not understand it as in work- (?) you could see all as I would explain it to you and if I was to go down it would take me a fortnight to put in operation what I could demonstrate in half an hour at Armagh but I would not instruct you in one of the fine arts without you were perfectly prepared to be sober as one misplaced word might, or deed might destroy what might be a future independence for by experience and practice it is impossible to think what the result may be. At my leisure moments I am always finding out new modes by a simple experience (?) that a man could make a comfortable living and be surprised how easy it could be done. Please write by return of post and let me know all the particulars as I will say more in my next.....

[signed]

P.S. N.B. Please give my love to Eliza and little William[']s] mother.

11 October 1845

[Arthur Maphett, Telegraph Office, Newry, to his nephew John. Letter apologising for delay in replying to his letter.]

... the truth is that at the time of its receipt and up till lately I fully expected to have been down with you accompanied by our aunt, when week after week somewhat unexpected occurred in the office business till I had to give up the thought altogether for his season - and you will please let James White know that the same cause prevented me from replying to his kind letter. Give Eliza and my best regards and kind wishes to him and his better half.

Write to me in course of post how you all are; hope to have better accounts of your dear mother's health and when you write I shall send a P.O. order for 25s. or so that she may be made comfortable or the coming winter.

Say what you know about your brother William. Is not his partner Gribben dead?

When I hear from you [I] shall immediately write more fully ever your affectionate uncle

[signed]Arthur Maphett.

P.S. Excuse haste.

9 December 1846

[Arthur Maphett, Telegraph Office, Newry, to his nephew John Edny(?) Letter noting that in his 70th year he is worse off than ever because of losses due to loans and standing security for unprincipled people. He sends a Post Office order for 25s. to help pay for John's mother's burial expenses.]

I duly received your letter to me after your mother's death and interment and intended at the time to have remitted you a Post Office order for 25s. but extreme hurry of business and other matters have caused the postponement till now, and will be happy to learn that the enclosed answers your purpose these hard times. You will please to acknowledge the receipt of this in course of post as otherwise I would be uneasy lest it might not have reached your hands and please give best regards to Mrs Anderson and Mr White.

To enumerate the losses I have sustained by unprincipled people from time to time borrowing my hard earned savings would exceed the bounds of any letter to enumerate. Suffice it to state that now in my seventieth year am left worse than nothing having incautiously given security for perhaps more than I will be able to save as long as I live though subsisting on little more than the half of my salary.

Hoping that your wife and you and child are well and happy, remain your affectionate uncle

[signed] Arthur Maphett.

14 June 1850

[[Mrs] Margaret Fuller, [Surt (?) Hotel], Adelaide, South Australia, to her sister Betty. Letter referring to her husband's illness, the loss of their friend Richard Scandrett and his brother-in-law William in a shipwreck off Port Adelaide. She repeats her exhortation that Betty and her family should come out to Australia along with their sister Ann Jane and she would pay the fares.]

My dear sister, you will think I have forgotten you. I have received two letters from you and one from William and have answered neither until now but dear Betty I have been in great trouble since on account of my husband's health. It will be two years next August since he took ill and he has been given up two or three times since. He is very bad still but I am in hopes he will get round a little but I am afraid he will never be strong again. It has been very much against us as we had to give up business last February. He was not able to attend to anything. We had taken a hotel for 19 years but was obliged to let it at four pounds per week profit. We have been going from place to place ever since for change of air.

Sarah was living with me for 10 months at 11s. per week but left me in November last and got married to a man named Ingram that kept our stables. She has behaved very ill to me if she never told me she was going to marry but I cannot tell you (?). I believe if she could injure us she would. She has tried all she could but I do not care now. I have not spoken to her since nor do I think I ever shall. I do not know how she is getting on. She is all self.

Will you write to William and tell him the reason I did not write to him as he wished me to write that he would get it by July. I am sorry he did not go out to Sydney and take Ann Jane with him. I would get them over here very soon. If you will not come out here I wish you would try and get Ann Jane out with some respectable family either to Sydney or Adelaide. I would pay them for every trouble and expense. I have

sent so often through Mr Stephens and you have been so neglectful in answering that I do not like to trouble them any more. I should like to see you out on account of your children but Betty you do not exert yourselves or you might [have] been here long ago and doing well. The longer you are coming the worse it will be for you.

Dear Betty

The Scandretts have met with sad trouble. Their son-in-law William, little Jane's husband had a very good situation in the smelting works near Port Adelaide and was just getting comfortable settled when about the beginning of May 1830 he had to go over to Port Lincoln about twelve(?) hours sail to set some men to burn charcoal for the Company and took Richard Scandrett with him. He was to return as soon as he set the men to work but they were fated never to reach there. They set sail in the evening and in the night it came on a terrible gale and the next morning the ship was seen beating towards the shore with her broadside stove in and not a soul in her out of eighteen. It is supposed that they were washed overboard at first and the sea been so rough they had not a chance of saving them. There have not even been a body cast on shore. Poor Jane is left with two fine little boys one seven years and the other five and a half and she expects to be confined in September. She was held very well provided for but the smelting company has been very kind to her. They have subscribed about two hundred pounds to set her up business and she is likely to get on very well. Both her and her poor husband was very much respected. He came out in the same ship as us. Poor Mrs Scandrett was in a dreadful state about Richard but she is getting a little calm now. She received a letter the week after poor Richard's death from her son John that went to California in January last. He expects to come back in twelve months. He does not like the place. He is very much disappointed. The rest of the family are all well.

You might send word to the Miss Rays in Gracehill in case they have not heard it.

John joins me in love to you and the children and Ann Jane and God bless is the prayer of your affectionate sister.

P.S. Be sure and write to William and write to me as soon as you receive this. Direct John Fuller, Surt Hotel, Adelaide, South Australia.

11 September 1851

[William Doody, Liverpool, to his sister Betty. Letter referring to his illness and the attack and robbery that he suffered in one of the most public streets of Liverpool. He asks for the address of their sister Margaret in Australia.]

Being intend[ing] to write to Margaret in a week or so I would feel obliged to you if you would send me her address as I forgot to write it down when [brother] John had her letter and neither of us as mind of it. I think it very strange she has not wrote before his time as she said she would whether she would come or not.

I have been very ill all summer, I may say these last twelve months with pains. I was off work a long time in winter and I am afraid I will have to give up again if I do not get better soon.

I was out in the country here one evening about six weeks ago with a young man that used to work in Dunlop's and coming home at night after I had parted with him I was attacked in one of the most public streets of Liverpool and robbed of a silver lever watch and chain and what money I had on me at the time and I have never heard any account of her since and I suppose never will now.

Remember me to John and Ann Jane and do not neglect Margaret's address
[signed]

P.S. William Doody c/o Mr Richard Taylor, Flower Dealer, 41 Bond Street, Liverpool.

15 October 1853

[[Mrs Margaret Fuller], North Adelaide, Australia, to her sister [Betty, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Part of a letter referring to her husband's death and the arrangements that she has made for the emigration of brother William sister Ann Jane and John to Australia. She urges her to get Ann Jane 'respectfully fitted out for her voyage' with the help of £20 sent from Australia by sister Sarah. She also urges her and her family to come out to Australia.]

My dear sister, I had almost given up all thoughts of writing to you again as you never thought it worth your while to answer my last letters particularly the one of my poor husband's death. There have so many things happened since that I cannot take up time to tell you all but I am quite a loser of four hundred pounds.

I received a letter from William on the fourth of this month and have got him and Ann Jane and John a passage and Sarah sends twenty pounds to fit them out. Of that they are to lay out five pounds on clothing for you and the children.

Now dear Betty if you would send me the ages of yourself and John and all your children with Ann Jane, that is if you would wish to come out here, I would try if I could do anything in getting you out but you must be [?] in everything you say. They are very particular in everything. I think you could do well here and your children well, never have the opportunity at home of bettering themselves as they would have here. If you should think of coming out prepare yourselves all you can. I may not have it in my power to do more than get your passages if I can do so much but I flatter myself that I can if things go on as they do at present.

Now dear Betty I hope you will do all you can in getting Ann Jane respectfully fitted out for her voyage. William will furnish the means.

Dear Betty,

It would be too much to ask you to let your eldest son I think you call him William come out to us. You might rest satisfied we would do better for him than ever you can besides it would be easier for you again to come if you would. I have not mentioned it to William but I will the next letter I write as it will be some days 'ere I get all settled and sends the money

19 January [1853?]

[John Doody, Liverpool, to Betty [near Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. As requested he encloses their sister Margaret's letter from Australia with critical comment. He notes that he would have gone to America before now but for the fact that £4 that he loaned to a young emigrant has been delayed in repayment.]

I received yours on last Saturday and as you requested I enclose Margaret's letter and by tomorrow's post I will send the order for one pound that I promised.

I would have been gone to America before this only in August last I lent £4 to a young man going to New York and was to have got it by November last but since I wrote to you I have received a letter from him saying that he could not send it to me before June so want of cash prevented me.

William is still working with Taylor. He is sometimes very bad with the pains but I think he'll get clear of them if the summer was come.

This is the first letter of Margaret's that I have either seen or heard word of for a number of years and if you look over it you'll find that I am forgot. If she wanted anything of me perhaps she would have a better memory

[signed] John Doody.

4 August [1853?] William Doody, Liverpool, to [his brother-in-law] John [at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter complaining that their sister Ann should be seeking help from himself and John; it was 'still more unfair in her to expect it' from John and his wife Betty. He regrets that he cannot send any money because he has been out of work through illness.

Dear John,

I received your letter this morning and I am sorry I cannot answer it according to your wishes as we are both idle. John has been walking about waiting upon a situation eleven weeks and he cannot tell even now when it will be ready for him. He has run a great deal behind during that time and it will take him some time to clear what debts he has contracted when he does begin to work.

I had to give up my situation three weeks ago in consequence of another attack of rheumatism. I was bedfast a fortnight and I am not able to go about the house without the help of a stick and when I shall be able to work or when I shall get work I cannot tell for I am worse today than I was a week since. Indeed I am afraid the best of my days are gone.

I do not think it fair in Ann to expect either John or I to support her and still more unfair in her to expect it off you. I thought the last two or three letters I wrote to you would help to raise her pride a little but it appears she has not got such a thing about her. She is as able to work as I have been for the last two years, I am certain of that.

I have got 12s. in the house at the present time and out of that there is 16s. of doctor's expenses and perhaps five or six weeks idle time to support so I am afraid I shall come short enough at the last yours etc.

[signed] William Doody.

5 November [1853] William Doody, Liverpool, to John []. Letter reporting that his brother John Doody had sailed yesterday for Melbourne and Sydney in the steamship The Golden Age. He would have gone with him but for illness.

I received your letter in acknowledgement of the order I sent to Ann Jane. I must say it was near time. You did not mention if she [Ann Jane?] had got a situation but I suppose she did not look for one.

John Doody sailed yesterday for Melbourne and Sydney in a Steamship The Golden Age. He is gone out baker of her. The agents are not sure whether she will come back here or not. She is intended for the Sydney and Panama station. I would have went along with him but I was not able. I have been laid up again with rheumatism for the last fortnight. Today is the first I have been out of bed. I am not able to get downstairs yet and God knows when I will. I have no power in my right side at all.

I have not seen John Lemon since. If you write again direct to No. 3 Rawsthorn's (?) Square, Limekiln Lane, Liverpool.

24 November 1853

[Mrs Margaret Fuller], North Adelaide, Australia, to her sister [Mrs Betty] [], Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland. Part of a letter noting that she has arranged for a free passage to Australia for William and John and their sister Ann Jane. She, trusts that Ann Jane 'would appear here respectable clothes and that she should keep herself very circumspect on board of ship'.

I am just in the humour for writing to you now. I have just sent two letters up to the diggings one to Ingram and one to a friend of mine so I thought I would finish off with one to you as I had to one at any rate to you being the most stationery of all friends.

I have sent to William on the 6th of this month and sent the certificate of a free passage for himself and John Doody and Ann . I trust they will not neglect what I have said to them about being punctual. I also mentioned to William if you were willing, to let little Willie come out for them to do all they could to get him and I would pay the expenses. It might be easier you to get out when he is here.

I mentioned to you in my last letter to send me the names and ages of all your family and at the same time send me some reference to some respectable person that I can give as I am so long from home and hearing so little I know nobody. You will not neglect this. But if you can get out yourselves do not delay. I know you could if you would only exert yourselves.

I sent to William twenty pounds. He is to lay out five pound on you and your children and five on Ann Jane and the other ten pounds is to pay their expenses. If you would tell them to write to me as soon as they receive the money as it is unpleasant for me to ask at the bank.

Now dear Betty will you see that Ann Jane has comfortable underclothing as she will want nothing else for the time she arrives here. I need not tell you I should be glad she would appear here respectable clothed and that she should keep herself very circumspect on board of ship. Make no acquaintance with anyone and as her brothers is on board she will be so much better off. I hope you will impress this on her mind as it is dreadful the tales that is told here of girls behaviour on board of ship.

I shall not write again until I hear from home.

6 December 1853

Mrs Margaret Fuller, c/o Mr W. Ingram, North Adelaide, South Australia, to her sister Betty [Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter repeating the information in her letter of 24th November.

I also wish William to try and get your eldest boy out with him and would pay all reasonable expenses that is if you and John are willing to let him come. I think you could trust to me to do him justice. I also send word to you to send me the names and ages of all your family that I might try and get you out. You must be particular in sending me good reference as I have had a great deal of trouble with the others not knowing any person at home to refer to.

I have sent all letters and references to Mr R. Taylor, flour dealer, 41 Bond Street, Liverpool. You will please write to John or William if you have not heard from them before this and till them to look after this as I may never have it in my power to assist them again. You will not neglect this.

If Ann Jane comes be sure and go to the Miss "Rues"[Rays in Gracehill?] and tell them Mr Scandrett's family are all well.

I am just come from spending one week with Mrs Little. Her children are very dear to me.

Now dear Betty you will not neglect anything I have told you to do for me. If Mr Scandrett's relations should wish to send any letters or parcels tell Ann Jane to be very careful of them.

I think I wrote to you that Ingram was gone to the gold diggings and Sarah was staying with me until his return. We expect him home to spend the Christmas holidays with us and there is another that I expect home that will give me great pleasure if he comes. I need not tell you his name as you would not know him if I did.

Dear Betty be sure and write to me as soon as you receive this as I will be very anxious until I hear from you. We have not kept up the correspondence we ought to have done. It would have been better for all parties if there had been more. I have nothing more to say.

Sarah joins me in love to John and yourself and all your dear children, I remain dear sister your affectionate sister

[signed] M. Fuller.

P.S. Please direct to Mrs Margaret Fuller, c/o Mr W. Ingram, Adelaide, South Australia.

Tell William to write to me as soon as he has got his passage the name of the ship he comes on.

18 February [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to his sister Betty [Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. He acknowledges receipt of two letters yesterday morning from their sister Mrs Margaret Fuller in Australia with a draft for £20 and a certificate for a passage for their sister Ann Jane, John and himself.

She has entered our ages as follows: John 36 years, Ann Jane 28 and me 26. Now what I require from Ballymena is a certificate of the day and year I was born. Ann Jane must have the same and also a surgeon's certificate that she is in sound health and free from any infectious disease, that she is neither lunatic, idiotic, deaf, dumb, blind or otherwise infirm and she must also have a moral character from either a minister or magistrate of the parish she in now. Be sure either you or John looks after this as I cannot fill up the papers until I get what I have stated.

I have not got the draft cash yet but I expect by the time I receive a letter from you with the papers I have mentioned ∴ I shall have the money and will send an order for it on Ballymena post office. I will send you the letters and you will see what he says but you must return them by next post.

I have not had any news from John since he sailed. He went out baker of the Golden Age but they do not know if she will come back again or not.

I have been working three weeks. I was nine weeks off work and that threw me back. When I get an answer from you I will write again. Lose no time and oblige your brother

[signed] William Doody.

26 February [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to his sister Betty [Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter acknowledging receipt of her letter yesterday morning.

... you did not send the register of our ages. Now that is the very thing I want as I cannot write to London until I get that and you can send William's as well. I expect to get the money tomorrow. Now do not neglect to answer this as soon as possible
yours

[signed] William Doody.

10 March [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to [his brother-in-law] John [at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter noting that there is no time to lose in making preparations for their emigration to Australia.

Dear John, I will send you a post office order tomorrow for £10 five for yourself and five for Ann [Jane]. I will write to you as soon as I get an answer from London. You must make Ann Jane prepare herself soon for I do not know how soon we might have to go. I seen Government advertisement in a newspaper on Friday last for two ships one for Adelaide and one for Sydney both to be ready by the 14th April so if we would have to go by them we would have no time to lose. Be sure and answer this as soon as you receive the order yours etc.

[signed] William Doody.

17 June [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to his sister Betty [Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter noting that he and their sister Am Jane will sail for Australia from Birkenhead next Friday.

I have received an order from London for a passage to Adelaide for Ann Jane and myself. It is made out for next Friday. We sail from a place called Birkenhead on the other side of the river from Liverpool. I am not sure yet how soon the ship will sail after that but we shall have to live in the depot until she is ready for sea.

I should have came over to Ireland before I sailed but I have been idle for the last seven weeks and I have just barely what money will carry us out of Liverpool. I will send you an order for 10s. to pay Ann's passage. It is all the money I can spare and she must sail from Belfast on Wednesday night and I will meet her at the boat next morning.

I will write to you again before I sail. Remember me to John yours etc.

[signed] William Doody.
End Hawthorn Square.

23 November [1854]

Mrs Margaret Fuller, Adelaide, to her sister [Betty [] at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland] Letter reporting the arrival in Australia of their brother William.

My dear sister, I have just returned from bringing William off the Virigo (?) ship and as the overland mail is hourly expected I thought I would catch it in time. I am not in a very fit state to write after travelling 17 miles by land and 20 by water to fetch him but thank God he has arrived safe. I will give you the particulars of poor Ann's death the next letter I send. Sarah is dreadfully cut up about her. I was at first but I am quite reconciled now. I think the Lord took her for his own in mercy. You cannot think the misery happens to poor unfortunate girls here if they have no man to depend on.

I send you five pounds. It is all I can spare as I have laid out £200 in getting John a business that it might be ready when poor Ann and William arrived. They must do the best they can. I have given them a fair start.

I am afraid I cannot get John E[dny?] out without paying his passage and the children and that I an not able to do at present.

I shall be writing shortly again and will have more time to tell you all. Sarah will send you a little money in a few months but when you answer this say nothing about it. We both send it for the express purpose of paying for your children's schooling and a little clothing. If you do not do that you will be very wrong.

When William and Nancy can write to me I shall send them a present. Then I shall be able to judge how they are getting on. Send me a lock of all three hair. Send me word about the Barrs and Percevals and all my old friends.

With love to John and self and all your dear children your affectionate sister

[signed] M. Fuller.

29 January 1855

Mrs Margaret Fuller, Adelaide, to her sister [Mrs Betty [] at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter reporting the death of their brother John and the serious illness of sister Sarah.

My dear sister, you will feel grieved to hear I have just returned from seeing poor John laid beside my dear husband. I was afraid to put it off writing in case I might not be able to write to you again. I am so thoroughly ill I can scarce keep up.

John was with me on Saturday night. He said he felt very ill but nothing to think of. I wanted him to have some advice. He said he would be better if he had a sleep. I thought nothing more of it until next morning. He went down to Sarah and had a dose of castor oil and was able to go and see to the people bringing the dinners at eleven o'clock though William was there. He was talking quite cheerful. He and William were sitting together when he said "I wish you would go down to Sarah. She will send

Dr Byers to me. I need not let it run so long.; it may be more serious than I think" He asked to give him a little spirits and water. I would revive him. He had no sooner drank it than he went raving man and did not last above twenty minutes.

Poor William he has seen enough of trouble this last year. Sarah is very ill. I do not think she will last the summer through them My cup will be filled as much as I can bear if I am spared until I hear from you I will give you all the particulars.

We have had a most dreadful summer of heat never anything since I came here. There were 2 women dropped dead yesterday from the sun.

Excuse all spelling [] as you can well fancy how I feel. With love to all your little ones and yourself and John I remain your affectionate sister

[signed] Margaret Fuller.

P.S. I sent you five pounds nine weeks since. I hope you have received it. Write soon. I may be able to send you more when I hear from you.

26 June [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to [his brother-in-law] John [at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland].

I go over to Birkenhead today to stop in the depot until the ship is ready for sea and that will be about the beginning of the week. Ann seems to be in good spirits and as for myself I intend to come back to Liverpool the first opportunity.

I have not time to say any more at present but give my love to Betty and the children I remain your brother.

[Signed] William Doody.

19 July [1854]

William Doody, Liverpool, to [his brother-in-law] John [at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Letter reporting on the disastrous start to the voyage from Birkenhead to Australia. 43 passengers including Ann Jane died of cholera, and the boat turned back at Cork. His former employer Mr Taylor, flour dealer of Liverpool had already sent them the unfortunate news.

Dear John, I saw a letter this evening that Mr Taylor received from Betty. I do not think you would have heard of our misfortune so soon or I should have wrote sooner.

We sailed from the river Mersey on Thursday evening after laying off Birkenhead 9 days and on Friday the cholera broke out amongst the passengers. We we're in tow of a steam boat which took us into Cork harbour on Saturday morning and just after we got in the third person died. We lay there until 7 o'clock in the evening when the Cork and Liverpool steamer took us in tow for to return. During that time there was 18

deaths and I do not know how many cases. On Saturday morning about 8 o'clock Ann Jane took very ill and on Sunday morning at four she breathed her last. I attended upon her with several young women all the day and night but we could not save her.

From we sailed until we came back there was 43 died. We arrived about ten on Monday morning but could not get ashore until Wednesday. I have been in Birkenhead all day to see if I could get any of our luggage but it will not come out of the ship until Saturday. You must write to me and let me know where I shall send Ann's box to as her clothes will be of use to Betty and it is no use to let them go to loss but I expect there will be a good many of them lost as I have lost some things myself and hers I would not know as they are not marked.. I will write again as soon as you send an answer I remain yours etc.

[signed] William Doody.

23 May 1855

Margaret Fuller, Adelaide, Australia, to her sister [Mrs Betty [] at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland].

Letter reporting the death of their sister Sarah, making a total of three deaths in the family in a period of ten months (John in Australia and Ann Jane of cholera on board ship between Birkenhead and Cork).

My dear sister, it is to my sorrow I have to write to you of the death of poor Sarah. She died on the 12th of this month after a severe illness of better than three months of most acute suffering but it was a blessing, She was sensible to the last and quite resigned to die. I had been at my cottage the last fortnight as I was not able to stop at her own place any longer. I was seven weeks night and day. The doctor had to give stimulants to keep me until all was over. Then I sunk. I could stand no longer. I took a kind of fits. I had 13 fits in six hours and kept on occasionally for four days. They all thought I must die but I am thankful the Lord has ordered it otherwise and I think all danger is over for the present.

Poor William was nearly distracted. He was with Sarah when she died. Poor fellow he has not had much comfort since he left home. He took John's death very much to heart and Ann Jane. Our family has suffered dreadful, three out of six in ten months. God knows who will be the next but. God's will be done. It is for some wise purpose we are not aware of.

I am very thankful Sarah has left no children behind her. She never had but one live child and that died at the age of fourteen weeks; she is buried with it.

There will no one miss her like me. We never took up with anyone but kept by ourselves. I am that nervous I start if a pin drops on the floor.

William is in the place John was in when he died. He is just getting a living and that is all and I am not able to help him as I lost so much by poor John, better than two

hundred pounds and then it cost twenty pounds to bury him and every kind of provision is almost famine price. Never anything like it since I came here and emigrants pouring into the Colony every day and no employment for them. God only knows what will be the result for I cannot think.

I suppose you have heard of the death of poor Mrs Scandrett. I was with her night and day for six days before her death. I have had my share of trouble. Jane her daughter that was the widow was married again it will be twelve month tomorrow. She has got a fine little daughter eight weeks old but she has made a bad choice. He is one of the worst tempered men I think that ever breathed. He has almost killed her at times without any cause. I am certain he will go deranged for he has more the look of a maniac than anything else when he is in a passion but do not let her poor aunts know anything of this as it hastened her poor mother's death. I have her little girl by her first husband staying with me. She goes to school. She is better than four years old.

I send you a little bit of Sarah's hair and also a bit of John's. I often wonder if I shall be permitted to see you and your dear children. Give my love to them and Betty give them as much schooling as lies in your power for they cannot get on without that.

I am daily expectation of a letter from you. I hope I shall not be disappointed. Write as soon as you receive this and do not be so dilatory as you have been. Send me all the news you can as William was able to tell me nothing of Ballymena. I should like to hear of the Barrs and Percevals and the Crawford Burn people and the Thompsons, (?) and all that you can.

Send me a lock of all the children's hair and I shall get it put in a brooch. I wish little William had come out with his uncle. It would have been something for me to have done to have educated him and put him in a respectable way of getting his living. If ever you have a chance of getting him out let him come. I will do for him as if he was my own.

With love to John and all your dear children and may the Lord watch over and protect you all is the sincere prayer of your affectionate sister

[signed] M. Fuller.

P.S. Remember to all enquiring friends if I have not grown out of all their memories. They are all quite fresh in mine. It seems but yesterday I left home. I think trouble makes us cling more to home good-by God bless you M.F.

When you write direct Mrs M. Fuller, post office, Adelaide, South Australia.

I am living by myself in a very neat cottage with only a servant and little Mary Little. As soon as I receive a letter from you I shall answer it immediately.

13 January 1857

[Mrs Margaret Fuller], Adelaide, to her sister [Mrs Betty [] at Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Ireland]. Part of a letter noting that their brother William has gone to Melbourne. She has lost nearly £300 since John and William came to Australia and about fifteen months ago she nearly lost all her possessions by fire.

My dear sister, I received your letter three weeks ago and should have answered it sooner but William went to Melbourne two weeks before that and I wished to hear how he was likely to get on before writing to you.

Your letter could not have come to me at a worse time for ready money. I really could not spare any at present as I have spent all my savings for years. I have lost about £300 since John and W[illiam] came out and about 15 month age I nearly lost all I was possessed of by fire. As it was it took six hundred pounds to replace what was burnt so that I must look out for myself as nothing is sure in this world and I am not able to work as I used.

I am very stout about eleven stone and a half so you will think I am not so light of foot as I used.

I had to lend William £15 to go to Melbourne and he has not been fortunate. He may not be able to send me any money for some months but as soon as he sends me five pounds I shall send it to you. I can do no more.

I think it a great pity you do not send your boy to a stranger to get his trade as while his father stays in Ballymena I cannot see what work there is to give him a proper insight into the trade.

The exchange of letters ends at this point.

