

The letters of Sarah Goulter (nee Davis)



Sarah GOULTER in about 1910 - photo courtesy Brian Wates

Sarah Goulter, nee Davis, was my Great Great Grandmother. Born at 21 Thomas Street, Bath, England on 7th March 1839 she was educated at a Miss Elliott's Ladies' Seminary in St Mary's Street Chippenham and also at a school run by a Mrs. Collins.

She married Ezra Goulter on 28th March 1860 at Somerset Chapel, Bath, having just turned 21.

They sailed for Australia that same year, departing Liverpool on the 6th June 1860 on the ship *Champion Of The Seas*, arriving in Hobson's Bay (Melbourne) almost three months later on Saturday 1st September.

She was a prolific letter writer as told in the *Bath Chronicle* of Saturday April 22, 1916:

This lady went out to Australia 56 years ago, and without a single break she has written to her relatives in Bath by every mail since the year 1860!

These letters range from when she was a thirteen year old school girl in 1852 to 1912 a seventy-three year old widow living with her two daughters. She died on 10th August 1924 in her home, "Avondale", Maribyrnong Rd, Moonee Ponds, Victoria.

I am deeply grateful to Brian Wates (a descendant of Sarah's sister Lucy to whom many of these letters are written) for the scans of the letters that I have transcribed. Brian has also checked and corrected my drafts and has also posted and shared scans of many photographs of Sarah, Ezra and their family, including the one at left.

Mike O'Shaughnessy
March, 2016

Chippenham
October 5th 1852¹

My Dear Lucy²,

It gives me great pleasure to comply with your request that I should write to you. I hope you and baby³ are quite well, please do give my love to James⁴ when you write to him as I know you do very often while he is away. I wrote to Charles⁵ some time since but he has not answered my letter yet. I should like him to write very much as it gives me great pleasure to receive a letter from any one at home. Perhaps when you see him you will be so kind as to ask him to write to me. I hope Jane⁶ and the children are well, please do give my love to them, and also to Charles. Will you ask Mother to please to send me some postage stamps, note paper and envelopes as I have none to use. I was most pleased with the letter you sent & Mifs Elliott's *present*. Will you tell James when he comes home from Ilfracombe that I will be glad if he would write a letter to me. I have seen Mifs Gay and she sends her love to you and says that she does not think she shall be able to come to Bath yet as Mrs Gay is not very well and the baby very troublesome so you must not expect her yet. Poor Mr James⁷ has been dead a fortnight. Please to give my love to Father, Mother, and all the family, and accept

¹ Sarah was 13yo and attending the school of Miss Elliott in Chippenham. In 1858 a Miss Elliott was running a Ladies' Seminary in St Mary's Street Chippenham.

² Sarah's older sister, Lucy Hannah WILLWAY (nee DAVIS) - b 1831 (about 8 years older than Sarah).

³ Lydia Lucy, b 8 Feb 1852

⁴ James William Cock WILLWAY, b 1825 married to Lucy DAVIS

⁵ Sarah's brother Charles Edmund DAVIS b 1827

⁶ Charles' wife Jane (nee COX)

⁷ My best guess at the name. Also, a Thomas James was buried on 27 Sep 1852 in Chippenham.

the same yourself from

My dear Lucy

Your affectionate sister
Sarah

P.S. I hope you will soon come to see me, please do write to me a few days before you come as I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you at the station. But I anticipate a far happier meeting than that when we shall meet to part no more, and that we may all participate in the joy of that meeting is the earnest prayer of your affectionate sister

Sarah

Mifs Elliott and Mifs Matilda desire
their love to you

Easter Monday afternoon
March 29th 1869⁸

My very dear Lucy,

As I sit down to write to you this holiday. I feel very sad for my thoughts are all about my poor sister Mercy⁹, the contents of Father's last letter written January 29th confirmed my worst fears up till that time, I had not heard that it was consumption, although I feared so from what I had heard of the symptoms. How anxiously I look forward to the next mail arriving. Father at the latter part of his letter gave some little hope of her recovery, but the disease is so delusive. If it is the Lord's will to spare her life I should be very thankful. I feel very sorry for her husband, it must be a great trial to him, and to you dear Lucy, how you would miss her. I was very pleased with what Father told me of her state of mind that she was willing to depart. My dear Lucy how our friends are departing one by one, so many gone that we have known and loved, and it will come to our turn soon we know not how soon; those of us who have children have those to wish to live for, the love of a Mother is such a loss - it was our dear Mother's wish that she may live to see her children grown up. Mercy¹⁰ was eighteen when Mother died. How fast the years are passing away, it seems to me that a few years ago I had nothing to look back upon but everything to look forward to, and now I have so much to think of in the past; yesterday was the ninth anniversary of our wedding day¹¹ and another 7th of March. I was thirty.

⁸ Sarah is now married to Ezra GOULTER and living in Melbourne

⁹ Mercy died 12 Mar 1869 in Bath - two weeks before Sarah wrote this letter

¹⁰ Mercy DAVIS b 1843. Sarah and Mercy's mother, Lucy Haines DAVIS (nee GARLICK) b1801, died in 1861

¹¹ Sarah married Ezra, 28 Mar 1860

I feel sometimes as though I had so much to say to you, but my time is so occupied with my daily duties, I had a good little nurse girl for some time, but her parents left the Hill¹², and she with them, and I have not got another. Baby¹³ wants no nursing she is nearly eighteen months old and very good, wants a great deal of watching, she climbs upon chairs and tables. I have not weaned her, but must next month she is cutting her eye teeth, and I am afraid of her being ill and not eating anything. I think it is weakening to nurse so long but I generally feel pretty well. Lucy¹⁴ and Charlie¹⁵ go to school together, Mary¹⁶ and Elsie¹⁷ play well together, Lucy gets very useful with the younger ones, in washing their faces &c though childlike she would rather play than work. She is quick at learning. She knows you all well by now and often talks to me about you, she is a very intelligent child, in quickness she reminds me often of Lyddie¹⁸, as I remember her, a little girl of seven or eight. Lyddie used to watch and listen trying to comprehend and asking lots of questions. Lucy's uncle¹⁹ said of her the other day, "what she doesn't know she guesses". Alfred is still with us. He was baptised a week or two since. He is a very nice young man. I believe he was very fond of Mercy, he does not seem to think of any other. I have been thinking for some time past of writing a long letter to Mrs Goulter. I think she would be pleased to know all about us.

¹² Emerald Hill where Ezra and Sarah and family were living - now named South Melbourne

¹³ Elsie Mary GOULTER b 1867 at Emerald Hill

¹⁴ Lucy Mary GOULTER b 17 Feb 1861 - now eight

¹⁵ Charles Comely GOULTER b 1 Jun 1863 - now about six

¹⁶ Mary Elizabeth Mercy GOULTER b 28 Jun 1865 - now four

¹⁷ Elsie Mary GOULTER b 12 Oct 1867, aged about 18 months

¹⁸ Lydia Lucy WILLWAY, Lucy's daughter, b 8 Feb 1852 (aged eight when Sarah left for Australia)

¹⁹ Alfred GOULTER, Ezra's brother born 1841 - aged about 27

But I must have a quieter time than I
have had while writing this, for the four children
have been playing in the room all the time.
I find I do not improve in letter writing, my
letters must seem very queer I know.
But I must hasten and finish this. I
put it away when I had got so far
to finish in the evening when the children
were in bed. I had written to Father, and
now conclude this. How I wish Lyddie would
write me another nice long letter. I suppose
she does not write to me because I have
not written much to her, but she should
consider how little time I have. Now dear
Lucy I must finish with very kind love
to you, and your dear children. I can
hardly fancy them grown up as they
must be - there are several friends
I should like to enquire for such as
Mrs Ostler Mrs Perret²⁰ and others.
But good bye my dear sister,

Yours very affectionately
Sarah Goulter

²⁰ A Mary C Perrett was a 'visitor' recorded with Sarah's parents in the 1861 Census. She was an 18 yo Milliner. Perhaps this is a reference to her mother or another family member?

44 Park St Emerald Hill
May 19th, 1869²¹

My very dear Sister,

My only sister - for the last two months and I did not know it till just a week last; many times how I prayed that the Lord would be present with her in her illness not knowing that he had taken her to Himself, where there is no more pain; nor sorrow nor crying, the latter is left to us. --- It did not come with a sudden shock to me, I had been expecting it for I know the nature of the dreadful disease, the hopelessness of recovery even when symptoms are pardonable, you dear Lucy seem to have had gloomy foreboding for a long time. At times I can hardly realize that she is dead; so blooming when I saw her last, do write to me and tell me about her illness, I want to know all you can tell me about her; what she said and how you think she felt, Father seems to wish she had said more, and says she spoke of the possibility of recovery, but that is such a general symptom of consumption I have seen it in so many cases.

Your dear James, although he spoke once or twice of "falling asleep" up to the last he seemed to think he would recover. And life had become very dear I think to him for we know that it is love that makes life sweet, a few years ago she would have found it easy to die, just after Mother's death she often spoke as though she would fain leave this world. I was reading just now some beautiful lines he sent me then I copied them into my album "A voice

from Heaven". They are very beautiful, they commence thus -- I daresay you know them
"I shine in the light of God,
His likeness stamps my brow,
Through the valley of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now"²²
And another verse is thus ---
"Do I forget? oh no
For memory's golden chain
Will link my heart to the hearts below
Till they meet and touch again"²³
That is delightful to think upon --- I do not know that we are taught it in the Word that the spirits of the departed know what passes here - but what a delightful thought, or whether they recognise each other now tell me, dear sister, what you think -- I do feel as though they are linked to me still, my darling Mother and sister, and you must for you have another dear one there --- When I think of anyone who has had great and heavy trials I think of you --- you will be one dear Lucy of those who have come out of great tribulation for I cannot think of a greater calamity or sorer trial than to lose my husband May God grant I may be spared that --- and now you have lost Mercy, you must miss her so, you have been so much to each other these several years, I sometimes feel as though it would not have been so bad could I but have seen her again and I think of her husband, how desolate he must feel in his lonely home -- I sometimes think of that verse
'Let trials like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach my home,

²¹ This one, written first horizontally on each page then vertically, starting again at the first page, is the first after Sarah has heard of the death of their sister, Mercy.

²² From the hymn, "I Shine in the Light of God"

²³ Slight variation on a text found in "A Collection of Hymns: Supplementary to the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts (1859)", p.368 - the hymn named, "A Voice from Heaven" - attributed to Robert Prescott Stewart, 1863 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert*Prescott*Stewart).

My life, my heaven, my all²⁴

I know I ought to feel so, but I tremble
at the thought of some trials, some
sorrows. I must put this away and
finish it tomorrow if spared.

May 20th. I resume my letter, not to be
hurried this mail, I just determined to
occupy three evenings with my letters ---
the evening is the only time I can write
the children need so much watching, Lucy &
Charles go to school, but Mary & Elsie²⁵ are
always with me and especially the latter
wants so much watching; she is a year &
seven months old and of course runs about
and climbs and stirs the fire and all
this sort of mischief; they want much
care and are sometimes very trouble-

(vertical lines)

some but they are a great comfort as well --- they teach
me some sweet lessons sometimes of trustfulness in their
earthly parents -- teaching me how much more, and with
how far greater resolve I should trust in my Heavenly
Father and such texts as these come in to my mind
"As one whom his Mother comforts so will I
comfort you. Like as a Father pitieth his children
so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him "--

Thank your dear Lydia for her nice long letter, I was
interested in her account of the wedding, although sadly so
from Lyddie I can sympathize with her in her likening
to write of pleasant things, I should have felt so at
her age; but as we grow older and we lose those who
are so dear to us; we feel that this is a vale of tears
and we have indeed here no continuing city.²⁶

I will try to write to Lyddie soon, I shall only write
to Father this mail, I intend writing to dear Mrs Goulter
we had a nice letter from her the other day --- I want
to write to her to tell her how happy we are, to tell her

²⁴ Another slight variation on a verse: "*When I Can Read My Title Clear*", by Isaac Watts

²⁵ Lucy was 8 years, Charles 5, Mary 3 and Elsie 19 months old.

²⁶ A letter from John Thorp of Manchester, (a minister of the gospel in the Society of Friends) to John Cash, 1767, "... our probationary progress through this vale of tears, where truly we have no continuing city:"

that any mistends of²⁷ our love growing cold or diminishing
it has remained strong and increased the more we have
known each other --- and I want to tell her of Alfred's²⁸
baptism and having joined our little Church -- he still
lives with us, he is a most exemplary young man.

We are all pretty well in health. I am thin - much
thinner than I was at home, but have more colour
The children are well, baby has a little eruption on her
face which is, I think, from her eye teeth, she is
just cutting them I have not quite weaned her yet, but
it is time now that I did --- It seems such a comfort
to her --- What a sad account I had in Lyddie's letter
of her poor Aunt Mary's illness and death²⁹ --- How much I
should like a portrait of her if you have one to send, if
you have one only, I would get Ezra to copy it and return
the original, and Lyddie thinks I have had one of Bessie³⁰
but I have not -- only her and Willie³¹ ----- I send
kind love to them, dear children. How dearly I should like
to be able to do as Willie wished, live all in the same
place --- I shall never have another letter from Mercy.
I have so often wished she had written to me more recently
I have her last letter to me written a few days before she
was married, and she did not write after --- I suppose
it was because she felt weak and ill most of the
When I see her again there will be "no more sea to divide
us, no need of writing a few imperfect thoughts, oh what a
glorious meeting. It is delightful to think of now --- but what
will it be to be there? Sometimes as I sit in Chapel and
we sing some old and well known hymn, it takes me
back to the days of my childhood and my Mother, and
makes me feel very near to her. --- Dear Lucy, I
hope you will be able to read this, I have rambled
on as far, oh I could talk to you ---- tell dear John³²
with my kind love that although Mother and Mercy and
James are gone, there are some at home yet, I would
come home to see, perhaps I may, but if not we shall

²⁷ 'Mistends of' is my best guess - meaning dismisses, argues against.

²⁸ Ezra's young brother Alfred, b 1841

²⁹ Presumably Mary POWELL (nee WILLWAY), died 1869 - sister of Lydia's late father, James.

³⁰ Lydia's younger sister, Elizabeth Mary WILLWAY, b 26 Mar 1856

³¹ Lydia's younger brother, William James WILLWAY, b 2 Jun 1854

³² Presumably Sarah and Lucy's brother John b 1835

I trust and believe meet where we shall never part again.

Accept my very kind love in which Ezra unites from

Your affectionate sister

Sarah Goulter

Prahran March 23rd 1874

My very dear Lyddie

How very long a time it is since I have had a letter from you. I suppose you will not write because I do not write to you, but you ought to me in spite of that. You know what sorrow I have had, a great sorrow it has been and still is, at times, and it is only by the exercise of faith that I can get any comfort, oh what poor comforts those heathen mothers who lost their little ones had I daresay how they cling to that idea "those whom the gods love die young" poor creatures! ----- Dear Lyddie, I miss your letters so much, after reading one I seemed to know so much about you all, I thought Mercy³³ would have answered my letter but she never did I suppose my first was not inviting enough and I must try again, and Willie³⁴ wrote to me once and only once except a question when he sent his photograph to know if I thought him handsome? I may answer in the affirmative if he wrote me some nice long letters; and Bessie³⁵ once wrote to me, and I like her letter so much I wanted more of them, and Offie³⁶ once wrote to Charlie³⁷ so I suppose I must reckon that as to myself, Charlie often talks about cousin Offie, and wishes he was near to play with him Charlie is often sorry he has no brother but Lucy³⁸ and Mary³⁹ play with him Lucy is quite

³³ Lydia's younger sister, Mercy WILLWAY, b 8 Mar 1858

³⁴ Lydia's younger brother, William James WILLWAY, b 2 Jun 1854

³⁵ Another sister, Elizabeth Mary WILLWAY, b 26 Mar 1856

³⁶ The youngest sibling, Theophilus Charles WILLWAY, b 12 Feb 1860

³⁷ Sarah's son, Charles Comely GOULTER, b 1 Jun 1863

³⁸ Sarah's eldest daughter, Lucy Mary GOULTER b 17 Feb 1861

³⁹ Sarah's second daughter, my Great Grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Mercy GOULTER, b 28 Jun 1865

as good a cricket player as he is. ----
Now there are lots of things I want you to tell me of, whether Mr Powell⁴⁰ has married again and how your poor Aunt Mary's little ones are. . how your Grand Mamma⁴¹ is and how your cousin Jessie Jack⁴² is, & whether that is still her name? and how your uncle John⁴³ and his family are? But my beloved niece, the one question I want to put is, has your dear Papa's, prayer for you been answered? How well I remember the time, I suppose you were a week or two old and we (your Aunts Mary & Mercy & myself) were wishing you to have some fanciful name (for we thought a great deal of you) and your Papa said so decidedly "She shall be called Lydia, the name of the woman whose heart the Lord opened to receive the things that were spoken by Paul". Lydia dear is it with you, as it was with me when I was nearly your age knowing the way of salvation with my head but caring little for it in my heart and yet I did care too. I never saw anyone baptized but I wished I was in their place, but such thoughts passed away again, & I thought there was great happiness to be found in this world, --- but perhaps you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, as having died for your sins on Calvary, ah then happy are you for this life, and that which is to come. --- I thought to have sent your Mamma's letter (commenced last Decr.)

⁴⁰ The widower of Lydia's aunt Mary WILLWAY who died in 1869

⁴¹ Presumably Mary Gilbert WILLWAY (nee Cock)

⁴² One of the children of Lydia's aunt Tabitha JACK (nee WILLWAY)

⁴³ According to Brian Wates, most likely John WILLWAY, brother of Lyddie's father, James

this mail, but I must enclose this for you
in your GrandPapa's. We have such an event
in our family a wedding! Your Uncle
Ezra's brother Alfred is to be married next
Monday week, Easter Monday⁴⁴, Lucy is to
be one of three bridesmaids she is to
wear my wedding dress taken to pieces &
made up for her & trimmed with blue
bows ; it is to be in the bride's brother's
house, the minister comes to the house, it
is a very frequent way here; I mean to
wear a sort of Lilac & White muslin
trimmed with black bows, it is just
seven months today since our little
Elsie⁴⁵ was taken from Earth to Heaven
oh the joyful meeting bye and bye.
God in His Infinite Wisdom , saw
it was best to take your dear Papa
to Himself while you were little children, but you
must all meet him may God grant that not one
of us may be missing on that day when the first
resurrection takes place, on that day when the Lord
"makes up his jewels". I cannot write more now
give my love to your dear Mama & Willie &
Bessie & Offie & dear Mercy, how I wish she would
write to me I think she must be shy of strangers
but she ought to love me her Mama's own sister
good bye, my dear dear Lyddie with love

from your affectionate aunt
Sarah Goulter

⁴⁴ Ezra's brother Alfred married Annie WHITE, Monday 6 Apr 1874

⁴⁵ Elsie Mary GOULTER died 25 Aug 1873

February 12th 1884
23 Chapel Street Prahran

My very dear Father,

I will begin my letter to you in good time, not leaving it till the last evening, last mail I made a mistake and finished my letter in a great hurry a week before the mail left. I find unless I keep a strict account, I am liable to make mistakes as to the time to write. I was glad to hear of your good health when you wrote, and am thankful to say that we are all pretty well although feeling the heat of the weather trying. We have had very unusual and unseasonable weather the last few weeks, cold and wet, just in the middle of harvest, it will result in great loss to many; we hear a very bad account from Alfred; and Charlie's five acres I suppose will produce very little. From Alfred it is very uphill work for him, they have five children now and expecting another soon, but he is of a very hopeful disposition, always expecting to do better next harvest; we are all of us looking forwards to seeing Charlie soon, in a few weeks perhaps; it is fifteen months since he went away. We have a members' tea meeting tomorrow evening. We have no chapel but rent the Protestant Hall, for which we have to pay £40 a year. We have had a baptistery made in it paid for by the Baptist Association. I suppose some of the denominations must be wealthy. One church in Melbourne pays their minister a thousand a year and another, eight hundred a year.

There are not many Baptist Ministers I suppose in England who get so much we can only pay Mr Mackenzie between two and three pounds a week but he lives in his own house and has three boarders, so that he makes it do. I was sorry to hear of Mr. Baillie's⁴⁶ health being still so delicate, if he goes to Reading, Lucy will lose both her married daughters. I shall be anxious to know if Lyddie⁴⁷ came up from Cardiff to spend Christmas together, your last was written a few days before Christmas. Ezra's sister Mary lives in Cardiff still I believe, but we have not heard from her for a long time, she has not been in good circumstances for some years I think, her husband was a good natured but indolent man he had fine opportunities but was not industrious. __ I will enclose in this a portrait of our own daughter Mary⁴⁸ taken the other day, it is a fine likeness of her, we always fancy she is like her Aunt Mary It is now the 13th & the mail leaves tomorrow morning, (I will write another sheet as the writing shows through so plainly)

I have not been able to spare any time today to go on with my letter, it has been dreadfully hot one of the very hottest this Summer⁴⁹.

⁴⁶ James BAILLIE married Elizabeth Mary WILLWAY, daughter of Lucy, nee DAVIS - Sarah's sister.

⁴⁷ Lydia Lucy WILLWAY, another of Lucy's daughters.

⁴⁸ Mary Elizabeth Mercy GOULTER, b 28 Jun 1865

⁴⁹ From the Melbourne Age newspaper, Thursday 14 Feb 1884, "The weather was yesterday most unexpectedly oppressive. The thermometer registered the greatest heat experienced this summer. A fierce hot wind blew all day, and rendered any outdoor exercise something to be dreaded. The thermometers at the Observatory registered 150 deg. in the sun, and 100 deg. in the shade. It is probable, however, that during to-day, a change

I had to go into Melbourne this afternoon and only got back in time for the tea meeting. Ezra & I went, and spent a very pleasant evening, about fifty five out of our seventy seven members present. I don't like large public tea meetings, but I do like these little gatherings or communions of saints, I do not remember anything in your last letter calling for a reply but will look over it again in the morning before I finish this; I was kept awake for two or three hours last night by mosquitos that is an annoyance you are free from. Here , towards the end of the Summer they are a great nuisance, they are like the common gnat in size and shape but they make a peculiar buzzing sound and then pitch on your face, neck or hand and sting you; they must draw a good deal of blood considering their size, for when you kill them there is a bright red stain. (Ezra tells me the thermometer was 102° in the shade today. I am sure that temperature would not suit Mrs Davis⁵⁰ or you; it is very trying, especially when you have a baby⁵¹ to nurse and lots of other things to do

will occur, as a weather report from the south was received yesterday stating that strong south-westerly wind was blowing and bid fair to continue."

⁵⁰ 'Mrs Davis' refers to Sarah's father's second wife, Sarah's mother having died in 1861. "She was referred to by the family as Mrs. Davis.", from *A History Of The Ancestors of William John And Lydia Lucy Ainsworth* by Brian Wates.

⁵¹ Kathleen Mary, born 8 June, 1883 - 8 months old.

still I would rather have it than cold weather. Feb 14th The mail leaves at ten this morning so I must hastily finish. The wind changed last night from north to south so that it is delightfully cool today the thermometer down to 60° the intense heat never lasts many days without a change I am afraid we could not bear it, people grumble very much when it is so hot & say the country is only fit for black fellows, but it is a fine climate generally. But I must close with very kind love to all. I often think I would like to write to Mrs. Davis a domestic sort of a letter, but I can so ill spare the time, some times the children & myself have to wear hot dresses in hot weather for want of time to make them.

I will try to write to Willie⁵² if possible next mail with kindest love to yourself and Mrs. Davis from

Your loving daughter
Sarah Goulter

Mary sends her love with her photo & hopes you will like it.

⁵² William James (Willie) WILLWAY, Sarah's sister Lucy's son born 1854

32 Munro St. Ascot Vale
March 21st 1898

My Beloved Sister,

I think it is two or three months since I wrote, not since I wrote to Mercy & Willie in December, although I have no business to attend to as you and Mercy have my hands and head are fully occupied & my health is very poor sometimes & my strength very small - This summer has been a most trying one. I never felt the heat so much before & Katie⁵³ was away with Mary through the worst of it, so that I had no help in the house & at the same time that we were nearly exhausted with the heat, you were suffering from the cold! I was sorry indeed to hear of your illness from Lyddie's letter & very glad that she did not write until you were better. I hope you quite recovered. I was so pleased to get a letter from Lyddie will you please tell her so when you write, & for the photos of three of her dear children, their cousins think they would dearly like to see them, Winnie⁵⁴ borrowed a camera the other day & took some photos of us, they were pretty good for her first attempt at outdoor photography. I hope to send you ones of Ezra & me soon. Ezra looks well but I look quite an old lady, as though I had been married nearly thirty eight years. I will enclose a little contact(?) print of Katie & our little dog Frisky, perhaps it will

⁵³ Sarah's youngest, Kathleen Mary GOULTER b 8 Jun 1883

⁵⁴ Sarah and Ezra's daughter, Winifred Allie Mary GOULTER, b 18 Jul 1875

go black before it reaches you -- So many things have taken place since I wrote, I must try & remember some of them. Katie went away just before Christmas with Mary & her children & stayed until the 8th of Feb. the bush fires came within a few miles of them; about a month ago the whole of the factory was burnt down not by bush fires but from a spark from the engine. The owner does not intend to rebuild so Mary's husband⁵⁵ has lost his situation! ⁵⁶ It seems very sad just as they had got well settled down there, he has applied for another but the butter season is nearly over. He is very clever at both butter and cheese making. Katie brought home a little butter & it was very much nicer than the best we can buy ---- I am sorry to say that Charlie too has lost his situation, it was only 25p ⁵⁷ ---- His employer failed, & situations are very difficult to get especially now the end of the summer. Charlie's wife had a little son on the 3rd of Jan. It was two months before the time & still born; she was very ill & I was too ill to be with her. We had the little girl Leah⁵⁸ over the next day & she is with us still, each one makes a difference with such a small means & the little one is very happy with us; Laura⁵⁹ has recovered now but one of the children has the measles very badly, Winnie went over yesterday after Sunday school & took some eggs &c

⁵⁵ Anthony Robert BROWNE

⁵⁶ Anthony BROWNE may have been misleading his mother-in-law for some reason. He and a Mr Keogh were running the Benambra Cheese and Butter Factory in 1897 but I can find no record of the factory burning. But it did undergo some business difficulties at that time.

⁵⁷ I'm guessing this was his salary - is it '25 pence per hour' or 20'?

⁵⁸ Leah GOULTER, b 8 May 1893

⁵⁹ Laura Marion GOULTER (nee CURTIS)

dear good Winnie, she is a good
daughter & sister indeed, she is retouching now
½ past 9 in the evening, extra negatives
she has brought home from two other
photographers although she is employed
from 9 to 5 ---- we have to help
Charlie a good deal, poor fellow. I
believe he would despair altogether
if it were not for our help &
sympathy -----

March 22nd ---- I must finish my
letter tonight, I am thinking
of taking a trip down the
bay tomorrow to Geelong, I have
not been out at all this
summer & I think the trip will
do me good, it costs only 1/10^d ⁶⁰
I am going to see an old school-
fellow who was at Mrs. Collins
school with me , her name was Paul
& her husband was an apprentice
of Father's, Alfred King --- we have
not seen anything of them for many
years but a month or two ago
the eldest daughter called here &
said her mother was very anxious
to see me, she had tried to find us
in Prahran & could not ascertain where
we had gone, (if she had consulted a
Melbourne directory as another friend did,
she could have found us). Miss King
was in Melbourne visiting when she
had a letter from her mother saying
that Mrs. Goulter's brother had told
her she was living in Ascot Vale
& telling her to come & see me. I
cannot understand why Charles⁶¹ should
write to Mrs King & I have felt
very anxious to know; please do

tell me something about him
Willie has not mentioned him
for some time, if you cannot
find time to write a long letter
perhaps you or Mercy could
write just a little note & enclose
when Willie writes, especially if
Willie wrote on thinner paper
I don't care how common or poor
the paper may be, as long as it
has beloved writing on it ----
Winnie sends her love. she is still
retouching, when I tell her she tries
her eyes too much, she says the
winter is coming; I shall be very
glad to get the next draft, I know
you will send it as soon as possible
does Mrs. Davis ever come to see
you? I never hear of her ---- My very
kind love to you my dear sister
& your dear children from your loving sister

Sarah Goulter

⁶⁰ One shilling and 10 pence

⁶¹ Charles Edmund DAVIS, b 1827

For Lucy⁶²

32 Munro St, Ascot Vale
March 21st. 1899

My very dear niece,

I have intended writing each week since receiving your letter & photo of group, but have been prevented just at the last, so now I begin a day or two before the mail leaves.

I was very very pleased with the very handsome photo. It is pleasant indeed to look at the faces of your dear Mother & yourself whom I have not seen for nearly thirty nine years and of your six dear children that I have never seen.

Your garden is much admired as a "real English garden"; even among the native born Australians, proud as they are of their country, there is a sort of admiration for anything English, while to us there is more than admiration there is love for our native land. ----

Winnie has mounted the picture & we mean to get it framed. I am sorry that Mr Ainsworth⁶³ is not in it to make it more complete but perhaps you have one of him alone that you could send us ---

I hope to send your dear mother a photo of your uncle and myself taken by Winnie in our back garden, we think them very good especially of your Uncle, it makes me look stouter than I am & like most outdoor pictures, the eyes appear partly closed. I am very slight, the other day I weighed myself, and was exactly 8 stones which is not very heavy --- I was wondering how you had spent

⁶² In a different hand, a later annotation.

⁶³ Lydia (Lyddie)'s husband, William Ainsworth.

Christmas, how very nice for your Mother & brothers & sisters & Mr Baillie to come to Swindon. I can well imagine that it was a happy time. Lucy our eldest daughter paid us a visit in November with her youngest they still live in Sydney child Eric. ^ Mary used to live a long way off, but for the last two months nearly she has been living close to us, in the same street, it has been very pleasant to be so near, I think they are going to remove to Camberwell, another suburb of Melbourne, as her husband is employed there & the train costs too much. She has six children, the eldest a boy of 12⁶⁴ & the youngest a dear little girl of 16 months⁶⁵ named Clarice. I have been over there this afternoon & nearly made a little shirt for one of her boys. I make many little garments for Charlie's & Mary's children. I know so well what it is to sew for so many, & they both have straitened means ---- I should very much like to be able to do more for them if I could. Lucy needs no help, her husband⁶⁶ has a very good appointment as inspector of agents for a large insurance company, he has £350 a year, 12p a day travelling expenses & 1 per cent on all new business so that altogether he has a fine income. I should be glad if they lived in a quieter way & saved some, which they do not now. Fred is clever in insurance business but apart from that I do not think him very intellectual, but he makes an excellent

⁶⁴ Thomas Anthony (Jack) BROWNE b 1888

⁶⁵ Clarice Kathleen BROWNE, b 1898

⁶⁶ Frederick William NICHOLSON - also part of a wealthy family, grandson of Laurence ROSTRON, the son of a wealthy Lancashire cotton manufacturer.

husband, & is devoted to his wife & children --
I hope your mother received the photos
of Winnie, Charlie and Katie, I have been
anxiously looking for a letter from her, or from
Mercy in return but alas it has not come,
how regularly your dear Grandpa⁶⁷ wrote to me
for so many years, I have very many, (I
think a hundred or two) of his letters, I some
times read a few, & always with profit; for
while the first part was devoted to family
affairs & news, the later part was almost
invariably relating to the 'better things'
as your Grandpa called them; the
things that remain, & they are more to
me now than they were when they were
written, "he being dead, yet speaketh"⁶⁸
Wed 22nd. I thought to have written
a much longer letter to in some
degree make up for not answering
your interesting letter of about a year
ago but as usual I have left it
till the last evening within an
hour or two of the mail leaving, and
with some friends
as Katie has gone to the seaside^ for
the day, I shall have to post this
myself & so must finish hastily --
I should like to have written about
your children whom I want to know
from the photograph. I hope your
eldest is happy at the school in
Malmesbury, how familiar the name
sounds; we have a Malmesbury
here not very far from here, it was
very puzzling when I came here
first - the numbers of names like
those in England, but they are not
all English for we have a very

⁶⁷ Charles Chapel DAVIS, died five years earlier in 1884

⁶⁸ From the Bible, Hebrews 11:4

pretty place near Melbourne named
Heidleberg & we have Carlsruhe &
the people name their houses after
their old houses, you walk along
& see Falmouth Hill, Portsmouth,
Plymouth, Devonshire Cottage &c &c
Mr. King of Geelong with whom
I spent a day lately has named
his house "Oldfield" because he
lived in Oldfield Road Bath --
Mrs. King lent me a very
interesting book 'the Bath
pictorial' & we do enjoy looking
at the well known places.
Please to give my very
kind regards to Mr Ainsworth
I am so glad he is a strong
advocate of total abstinence
I belong to the W.C.T.U.⁶⁹ but
there is so little we can do
against the powerful & dreadful
drink traffic. ---- How I wish
your dear Mother would write
to me more often, she does not
know how I long for her letters
ask her please when you write
I do hope she has not been
ill this winter, I see by the
'Age' this morning⁷⁰ that you still
have snow storms although so late
in March, I am sure I should
feel the cold very much if I
were in England, hot weather suits
both your uncle & myself so much
the best, I have just asked him
if he remembers you and he says

⁶⁹ Women's Christian Temperance Union

⁷⁰ "SNOW STORMS IN ENGLAND.

LONDON, 20th March.

Though spring is close at hand in England the severity of the winter is still felt. At Durham, in the north, yesterday, heavy snowfalls occurred, interfering with business and work, and reducing to compulsory idleness some thousands of workmen."

The Age, Wed 22 Mar 1899, page 5

yes, he remembers you and Willie
with a pleasing remembrance as
very nice children, & sends you an
Uncle's love, he is pretty well
in health but is failing very
much in many ways & cannot
walk except about the house
through rheumatism ----
But I must close abruptly, with
very much love to children
& to yourself from

Your affectionate Aunt
Sarah Goulter

This missed one mail
2 Canterbury St Moonee Ponds
January 27th 1901

My beloved Sister

This is Sunday afternoon

& if I begin a letter to you now
it will I hope be finished by
Wed. morning when the mail
leaves, so often I mean to write &
put it off till the day before & then
something prevents me. Since the
news of the Queen's death, I have
thought of my sister, my brother &
myself, all of us though not as old
as the Queen, yet we are getting
old, & some day the news will
go that one or the other of us will
not need to be written to any more.
This afternoon the Imperial troops
(the thousand men sent from
home to take part in the
Commonwealth celebrations) are
to attend a service in the Ex-
hibition building & to march through
Melbourne just quietly without any
bands, there will be great crowds
to see it & I was not going to
allow Katie to go but last evening
Albert⁷¹, Alfred's second son, a
tall young man of twenty, very
shy and countrified, came un-expect-
edly, he wanted particularly to see
them & has not been in Melbourne
since he was a little boy, so Katie
has gone with him --- they have
come back, could see nothing but
a dense crowd, & only the tops of
the men's hats or feathers, it

⁷¹ Albert Comely GOULTER, son of Alfred and Annie

was very quiet, no cheering or
anything of that sort.
Our chapel organ, writing desk
etc. were draped with black today
& our minister Mr Steele⁷² President
of the Victorian Baptist Union

the latter part
preached from Job 1st & 21st ^ I should
suppose & hope that she was a true
Christian & as good a Queen as could
be, but I am a democrat, I would
not have such a luxurious, expensive
monarchy, while there is so much
extreme poverty, Ezra & I agreed to
differ on the subject - I used to tell
him he was born a Tory, & I was
born a liberal; he believed the
election of a president cost America
as much as England's monarchy --
God did not give His people a
king, but judges, until they
wished to be like other nations
& to have a king -----
Now I am wondering how you are
this winter, for I have read of
extreme cold & floods in Bath
& I know how you feel the
cold, & poor Charles I am afraid
he must feel the cold, did he
get that charity he applied for? he
was to know in November
they have just passed "the old age
pension bill" here that those
above sixty-five who have been
twenty years in the colony should
have ten shillings a week ---
there is a poor infirm old man of
73 who comes here once every week
selling tapes, cottons &c. I buy all I
want of him & we generally give him

⁷² Rev. Alexander Steele, died 12 Feb 1922.

a cup of tea & something to eat, for he lives some miles away, I think he is a Christian, a North of Ireland Presbyterian. I hope he will get it. I always pity poor old men they seem so helpless so much more so than women are, how did you spend Christmas? I hoped some one would write & tell me, I expect you were all together, I had some idea of having Charlie's & Mary's families all here but gave it up not feeling able, so we three had an early dinner & then took the train & tram to Port Melbourne -- It was the day of the Mail Steamer leaving & the girls had never seen a large ship leave, it was very interesting to watch the bustle & the farewells, & the cheering from the crowd as they moved off, but it was almost too much for me, it brought back so vividly the time, more than forty years ago, when we three landed at that same pier, & I was the only one left⁷³; as they moved off, a man to someone on board on the pier called out ^ "think of your old ones" & I had been thinking of old times & they were too much for me, 'now these all lie behind me, oh for a well tuned harp'⁷⁴, then we looked at an immense German ship, the largest I ever saw, the "Grosser Kurfurst"

⁷³ The three who landed in Melbourne in 1860 were Sarah, her husband Ezra and Sarah's brother in law, James WILLWAY - Lucy's husband. James died within a few weeks of arrival while Ezra had died in May 1899.

⁷⁴ From the hymn, "The Sands of Time Are Sinking"

I cut out a notice of it which I will enclose, they charged a shilling to see over it each ^ so we did not go on board, but went by steamboat across the bay to Williamstown 6^p each stayed some hours in the public gardens, & then back to Melbourne & to Ascot Vale; the next day was too hot so stayed at home

Feb 3rd

and rested. - Sunday evng ^ just returned from Chapel. Bertie⁷⁵ is writing home so I will write too for a few minutes. He is just four months younger than my Bertie⁷⁶ would have been, my Bertie who is with the Lord. I was reading the other day of a poor woman who was very ill & some one spoke to her of Heaven, she said 'she had no relations there', poor poor woman. You and I have many relations there -- They sang Bessie's⁷⁷ 'best hymn' again to -night, 'Forever with the Lord' Just in front of me this evening sat a poor young widow with her three young children whose husband was drowned last March, he was the chief engineer & the ship went down. She was very much distressed. I saw the suppressed sobs, & her little ones looked up at her, it is sad & lonely to be a widow at my age but to be left a widow with little ones to bring up all alone as you were & yet not alone, for the Lord was with you as He promised ----- Tuesday evening & my letter not finished yet, but I must send it tomorrow, Bertie went home yesterday, he said he enjoyed his visit very

⁷⁵ Albert Comely GOULTER, son of Alfred and Annie

⁷⁶ Cuthbert Ezra GOULTER, son of Sarah and Ezra, born 15 Feb 1880 and died 12 Feb 1887

⁷⁷ Sarah Bessie May GOULTER, Sarah and Ezra's daughter who died 21 Dec 1889 aged 17.

much, he went about alone sight seeing every day, Melbourne is a wonderful place to country people, something like London was to us. This evening I am all alone so can write without interruption. Winnie is gone to a friend's to tea & Katie is at a practise over at the Chapel, she sings very nicely, but is not in the choir, I don't care for her to be --- I like to be alone sometimes for I have so many & so much to think of this is my Bessie's⁷⁸ birthday. She would have been twenty nine but she has been in Heaven more than eleven years, when Ezra heard of the death of a baby he would say, 'happy baby' & I say happy Bessie. Then it is the day on which Ezra first told me he loved me and asked me to be his wife, forty two years ago⁷⁹, truly we spend our years as a tale that is told⁸⁰ & some of us are coming to the last chapters ---- I am sorry your minister preaches as he does, & I am sorry some of our preachers do the same. Mr Carey the new minister of Collins St Church is very advanced in his ideas, talks of bringing science to bear on & believing the reading ^ of the Bible, he is a descendant of Carey the missionary too & a student of the Baptist-College, preaching for us the other day, went farther than Mr Carey does, I am afraid it is a downgrade in Melbourne as it was in London, I saw that Gipsy Irish was doing a great work in Bath it was in the Southern Baptist I saw it. There is an English mail to be delivered tomorrow evening, how I wish it may bring me a letter, Please write soon. I am a little better but very far from well, very poor appetite

& very easily tired, my very kind love to all your dear ones & to yourself from your loving sister-
P.S. If Charles should still need it, please keep £2. for him to be paid weekly. My love to him and to Mrs. Davis.

⁷⁸ Sarah Bessie Mary GOULTER, born 5 Feb 1872, died 21 Dec 1889.

⁷⁹ Making the date of Ezra's proposal 6 Feb 1859. Did he propose by letter before returning to Bath or had he already returned?

⁸⁰ Quoting from the Bible, Psalm 90:9

[From Lucy Willway to her sister, Sarah Goulter, this is apparently the returned letter referred to by Sarah in her August 23rd letter to Mercy, below. Probably the last letter from Lucy to Sarah, it was in the possession of Lucy's family along with Sarah's letters. Lucy died a little over two weeks after writing this.]

Febry 24th 1905

My beloved Sister

Your letter came last Monday while we were suffering from an intensely cold wind it seemed so strange to think at that very time you were seeking the coolest noke⁸¹ and we were sitting by the warmest fires -- There are extremes in this world just think of your cats being better off for meat than our poor people. I expect you have heard all about our poor in "West Ham"⁸² there are mysteries and mysteries in this world but I believe if they were unfolded we should see no mystery but cause and effect -- I read this morning in the Book of Joshua⁸³ 1st ch where Adoni Bezek had his thumbs and great toes cut off he knew the reasons why, "thirty & two kings" he had caused to suffer the same - he admitted the righteousness of God's judgements - and here is the mystery of the Cross.

"Complete atonement Thou hast made
And to the utmost farthing paid
Whate'er thy people owed
Payment God cannot twice demand
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,
And then again at mine."

I was sorry I sent the picture without a line but it is often so I cannot get the leisure to write - you asked

⁸¹ Noke - apparently Middle English origin of nook.

⁸² Sarah also refers to 'West Ham' in her letter of Feb 21st 1911

⁸³ It seems Lucy has misremembered - this appears to be from the Book of Judges, not Joshua

me if I could get the picture to send it and Mrs Britton⁸⁴ sent it to me without asking Mrs Davis I could not send it in the frame it would have been so heavy -- I would like to send your little miniature I will some day Offie⁸⁵ took 3 copies of the Baptism one each for Mere Lyddy⁸⁶ & Bessie⁸⁷ It is a beautiful Photo - I am so glad you go to Picnics and it is nice when a Mother's presence gives joy to her children it must be a lovely place by the sea in Australia you are favoured to live in such a sunny land You are right on the South coast the water is very clean but then it it (sic) takes about 4 hours to get to Weymouth or Bournemouth When you take 8 hours for the journey it is not very inviting to go for a day's pleasure We did not go to Swindon this Xmas I was afraid to risk the journey so Mercy⁸⁸ and I spent a very quiet time at home, Offie went on the Monday to Swindon The children the grown up children wanted him so much he is very fond of fun and recites beautifully - he has never grown a strong man, but has been delicate from his babyhood, he is not fit to take care of a wife and would sadly miss the care of his Sister and Mother -- Thank you for sending The Age It does seem sad to see so much destruction it was sadder still to see

⁸⁴ Most likely Mary, the niece of Mrs DAVIS (maiden name Elizabeth FLEWELLING). Mary had married William John Britton in 1886. He died in 1888.

⁸⁵ Lucy's son Theophilus Charles WILLWAY, b 12 Feb 1860

⁸⁶ Lydia Lucy AINSWORTH (nee WILLWAY), Lucy's daughter b 8 Feb 1852 - known as Lyddie or Lyddy

⁸⁷ And Elizabeth Mary BAILLIE (nee WILLWAY), another daughter b 26 Mar 1856

⁸⁸ Lucy's daughter Mercy WILLWAY, b 8 Mar 1858

those poor Boers houses and farms
set on fire for the benefit of the
miners and Chinese
I do not think Electricity will ever supersede
Gas. -

Mrs Davis is still the same perhaps
a little weaker Mercy went to see her
about two weeks ago she welcomed her
so much -- she is quite a captive cannot
go out alone she is watched over most
carefully by Mrs Britton and her Mother
Mrs Flewellyn⁸⁹ as long as Mrs Davis lives
they have a very comfortable home so they
do all they can to keep her well, but
she is very unhappy sometimes they
never let her know her money comes
just as usual but they have given
her the impression it is lost Mrs
Britton went to Mr Moore to ask
him to send her the cheque and
not let it come through us - so Mr
Moore asked us if he should do it &
we said yes -

Mercy took the other £1 to Charles and
gave it to him alone, for he was in
bed, he had been very poorly but
was getting better - a half Sister of
Nettie's husband (Sydney Churchill) died
and left Daisy his daughter £100
& a house in Upper Weston for
her when she comes of age she
is just 19 now I did hear they
thought of going into the house
which has a large garden I should
be glad for Charles sake for he
would then go out into the air, now
he can never leave the house & it
is a very small house 4/- per week
I am sending you some Income Tax

⁸⁹ Should be 'Flewelling', most likely the sister in law of Elizabeth Davis, Sarah FLEWELLING who became a widow, like her daughter Mary BRITTON, in 1888.

paper to fill Mercy has had to go
so many times to Mr Jeffries about
the tax you have no idea the trouble
it is to get all the Vouchers &c
the Government hates to give back what
they have unjustly taken -
You will see the claim is only made
for 1 year Mr Jeffries says it will be easier for
him to do it every year than
two years at a time -- I suppose you
had better return it to me -- Your
letter of Dec^r 5 was very interesting
What a difference there is on Children of
the same family!! We have now a
dear little boy named Norman⁹⁰ - you
remember Winnie⁹¹ and Bertie⁹² were
with us about 5 years altogether
neither of them are very intellectual
still they had every opportunity of
learning Winnie was very good and
really worked very hard but Bertie
would come in from his play nearly
8 o'clock sometimes to learn his home
lessons and his time for going to bed
was ½ past 8 he is an exceedingly
handsome boy and has most winning
manners every one loves him but
he is just earning 10/- a week in his
Father's office -- Winnie is at the
Technical School in Swindon but
Norman begins his lessons straight
off and he has so many to learn
but I never have the slightest trouble
with him his is clever he will be 11
in July next - he is so thoughtful for
me - Lyddy paid me 5/- per week each
for the two children but I will not
let her pay more than 4/- for
Norman and I used to have so much

⁹⁰ I assume these are Lucy's grandchildren, Norman John AINSWORTH, b 15 Jul 1894

⁹¹ Winifred Mary Violet AINSWORTH, b 9 Aug 1888

⁹² Bertram Willway AINSWORTH, b 22 Dec 1885

trouble to get Winnie & Bertie to go
to bed at the right time but Norman
is so good to go at once at 8 o'clock
but now I must leave off for it is
dinner time and this must be posted
by 2 o'clock - Our very kind love
to Winnie and Katie and to yourself
a double portion from

Your loving Sister Lucy

Tuesday Evening
Canterbury St Moonee Ponds

April 25th 1905

My very dear Mercy,

My letters to your dear dear Mother were really to you & Offie as well, for you were so really one, as ever three are, but now I must write to you direct, I thought to write to Willie this mail but I felt that I must write first to you, since I got Willie's letter last Saturday I have so constantly been thinking of the desolate houses & your loneliness, my dear child Bessie who died in December 1889, had been ill for more than six months & I gad waited upon her so constantly that when she had gone beyond my care, I felt as though I had nothing left to do; & I am thinking how much more you must feel it, when care for your dear Mother has been your life work for myself I feel as though I now give up all hope or thought of coming to England, to see my beloved sister was what I longed most for, & I do not think I could bear the journey, I am not feeling as well as I did a few years ago, & of course it is not to be expected now I am sixty six ----- I hope you will write to me soon, I would like to know where your dear Mother is buried, is it near my dear Mother? how strange it was that it was

also on March 12th that your Aunt Mercy died; I hope you will still sometimes see poor Mrs. Davis She must be so pleased to see you, I feel very very sorry for her. And your poor Uncle Charles as well, I am writing to him by this mail, Nettie wrote asking me for a little help to "paying up some arrears & the expense of moving". I am sending fifteen shillings, it is all I can spare, & I think when they will have no rent to pay they ought to do pretty comfortably. I ought to have written to your sister Bessie by this mail, but perhaps you will tell her when you write, there is a young man a friend of ours that we think very highly of, a deacon of our church, left by the "Burnie" last week for a trip to England mostly for his health & I gave him an introduction to Mr. Baillie; he is likely I thought to see him at the Baptist Congress in July at Exeter Hall, I suppose Mr. Baillie will be almost sure to be there. The young man is Frank Mellon, quiet unassuming, not married & thirty --- This is only a short letter, but I hope to write again soon, my love to Lyddie and Bessie, & Willie & Offie & to yourself from

Your affectionate Aunt
Sarah Goulter

Wed, morn, I have just received the paper from Willie, please thank him for it and tell me just where the cemetery is for I do not remember it, we who are left must draw even closer together --

August 23rd 1905

My very dear Mercy⁹³

At last I have copied
your dear Mother's letter & send you her
now precious letter, I scarcely like parting
with it but I have many others, & I
know you will be glad to have it. I have
been very poorly this winter feeling the cold
very much, I am longing for the summer
I can bear heat so much better than cold.
Now I can only say a few words this evening
Katie has very poorly for a few days & is
not up yet & I must take this to the
post myself -- There is an English mail
to be delivered this evening & another on
Monday next, I always listen anxiously
for the postman, whether I expect a letter
or no, write to me as often as you can
dear Mercy or Offie or Lyddy or Bessie.
Willie⁹⁴ writes to me most often. I hope
you will see poor Mrs. Davis when
you can, I am afraid she is not very
happy & your poor Uncle Charles, if he
lives at Weston it is a very long way
for you, but if you could go to see him
How I have longed to see all my
loved ones again but now I know
I shall never take that long voyage
I have given up all thought of it
I feel so grateful to Mr. Moore
for his kindness in looking after our
affairs; he has certainly been kind to
the widows & the fatherless ----

Now I must close with very much
love to yourself & all other dear ones

from your affectionate Aunt
Sarah Goulter

⁹³ The daughter of Sarah's sister Lucy who had died five months earlier

⁹⁴ Mercy's siblings, Theophilus, Lydia, Elizabeth and William

Canterbury St Moonee Ponds⁹⁵
February 21st. 1911

My very dear Lyddie,

I ought to have written to you long before this, when you were so good to write to me just on the eve of your daughter's marriage, when I am sure your head and hands must have been very much occupied -- But I have not been at all well this summer the heat has been very trying, today is very hot. Kathleen has gone to see Mary, so I am alone and no one to interrupt my writing; at one time three or four people talking would not have disturbed me, but now they would. We always have a lot to talk about when we have been separated for a few hours, I expect you know that Winnie is in Town, at the same Studio for the last ten or eleven years, Kathleen has retouching for a local studio, a lady photographer as she does it at home I have her company which I would not like to be without. I can with her sit ^ & sew, I make all our underclothing, generally trimmed with my own crochet, and I knit our woollen singlets, and a few for some of Charlie's children, so I am not idle although I do not do much besides, we have a woman to wash &c once a week, this is very commonplace, but even little things interest one another don't they? I had a letter from Willie yesterday & he said Mercy would most likely write the next week, you don't know, and can scarcely realise how I have always longed for letters from England, and although two of my dearest ones can write no more, I greatly value the letters of the ones who are left --- How many many hundreds of people are coming here just now , I am afraid many of them will be disappointed, it is not what it has been represented to be, those who have capital to go on the land may do well, but those seeking other employment will not find it such an Eldorado, domestic servants are always in great demand & can get from ten or twelve shillings a week

⁹⁵ 2 Canterbury Street

upwards --- I am a democrat somewhat, but I am sorry the Labor Party is so much in power, I don't think it is good for the country. ----- Willie has a great wish to see Australia, I should be very pleased if he and Theophilus, or any others could pay us a visit, it is a wonderful country, and Melbourne is a fine city, with suburbs the population is now 550,000 --- I would have been glad to see you all & my dear old city, but it was too late for me to come, but it is not as though we were parted for ever we hope to spend a glorious eternity together, "by the Grace of God" --- Now let me go back more than fifty years, like aged people generally, I seem to live sometimes in the past, Longfellow says let the dead past bury its dead⁹⁶ but I find pleasure and profit too in remembering it ---- I look back to when you were a little girl of six or seven & Mary Willway⁹⁷ Mercy & myself were young girls (I was the eldest) the many happy times we spent at Walcot Terrace & Combe Down & Nightingale Cottage on the Gloucester Road -- We felt as much at home as though it was our own, your Father⁹⁸ and Mother⁹⁹ were so kind and good to us, giving us all the pleasure they could, & before that when we a few years younger, your dear Father would teach us how to make crystalised alum baskets, miniature earthquakes between the two great pear trees at Walcot Terrace, which only resulted in a crack in the ground, and dye stuff for our dolls clothes¹⁰⁰ ---- & I the only one left of the three, poor Mary hers was not a very happy married life & Mercy's was a very short one. How dearly your Father loved your Mother and you children, it was a great trial to come away & leave you, in his pocket book he had written some amusing childish sayings of you elder ones, I cannot remember now what they were but in the voyage¹⁰¹ he often looked at them & spoke of them.

⁹⁶ A Psalm Of Life - Poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

⁹⁷ Presumably the sister of James William Cock WILLWAY, mentioned in Brian Wates' *A History of The Ancestors of William John And Lydia Lucy Ainsworth* as being born 1841

⁹⁸ James William Cock WILLWAY

⁹⁹ Lucy Hannah WILLWAY (nee DAVIS), Sarah's sister

¹⁰⁰ This sounds a bit risky though the details fit with James having a dyeworks on Walcot Terrace.

¹⁰¹ James had tuberculosis and accompanied Ezra and Sarah to Victoria in the hope that the climate might improve his health but died only weeks after arriving while sailing to Brisbane via Sydney.

I remember he said one day, 'I believe Lyddie has a very tender conscience', you know he chose your name as the name of the one whose heart the Lord opened and you were born on his birthday, I always remember it on the 8th of this month ---- The very last evng I saw him, we were talking about you all & I stayed till it was getting dark & I was timid, your Uncle was so busy building the operating room to begin business & I promised to come the next evening, but I did not, it was not nice for me to be out alone in a strange place & your Uncle said we will both go tomorrow, which we did, we found he had gone to Sydney that morning, he must have decided suddenly for he did not speak of it to me, I was so sorry that I did not venture that

if I had

evening, I thought perhaps he may not have gone ^ but Mr. Davis & Mr & Mrs. Mackenzie tried to persuade him not to go, but it was no good, then when Mr. Davis called & told us the sad news of his death he said his luggage will be sold today, I directly said couldn't it be stopped? he said no it will be over by this time, I was very grieved when four months after my Father wrote -- "we were sorry you did not stop the sale of the effects" -- your Father had given Mr. Davies¹⁰² power of attorney to act in everything for him he belonged to Bretheren & was a solicitor, a good man, I met one of his daughters recently, I had not seen her for many years, she said there are so few living who knew my Father, she keeps a school & was having a holiday at Fern Tree Gully, we met at the little Baptist Chapel, 2½ miles away --- 23rd Just as I was busy writing this, a knock came to the door, two unexpected visitors, Alfred Goulter's eldest son & the one he is going to marry in a month or two, they both live about 300 miles away in New South Wales, have been to Colac & were on their way back, I had to get afternoon tea & then dinner, I did wish they had written & then Kathleen would not have been out, however Winnie laid the table when she came home, & we had a

pleasant evening, but it put me out a little, I like to & generally do, take things very quietly now ---- I could have written last night but I never like to miss the prayer meeting, it is so near --- now I must write just a few lines to my good correspondent Willie -- I wanted to write about the post card of the wedding group, I can recognise several but I would like to know all of them but I must conclude this hastily it is near posting time, my love to
(this written vertically on the left margin)
yourself & all your dear ones I am

Yours very affectionately
Sarah Goulter

Kathleen had a nice letter this week from Sister Hetty of West Ham, acknowledging the receipt of the two bales of clothing ---

¹⁰² Appears to be 'Davies', though probably the same person as the Mr Davis mentioned above.

'Avondale' Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds
June 11th 1912

My dear Theophilus ,

I must begin with asking you to excuse me for not answering your most interesting letter of Feb. 13th, I feel almost ashamed of the date, it is so long ago, I really had forgotten that you asked me several questions, until Mercy's letter of yesterday reminded me of them, my memory is getting very defective but I ought to have remembered what you asked me --- Now I will lose no more time, but answer your letter in order, as I have it before me, Kathleen is sending you a letter by the same mail, I was very interested to hear all about your business, even your business trials, I can deeply sympathize, for we had many losses and disappointments, we had businesses good and bad, one particularly in Collins St. Melbourne in 1865, in which we had used a lot of money (our savings for a year or two, during which time your Uncle had part of the time £4 & part £6 a week, but his employer failed) and a legacy of £140 from an Aunt of your Uncle's --- I believe we would have done well, had it not been for what they called a deadlock, which it was; a dispute between the two houses of parliament, they voted no supplies, I forget for how long, no one from the Prime Minister down to every policeman postman &c &c had a penny, except what they had saved or could borrow at high interest; photography being a luxury, of course suffered, we paid every one, but we lost all our money, but I must not fill my paper, I really could, with our ups and downs, our business in Prahran was good for some years, until a man who began as an errand boy with us, set up a few doors away; took photos on Sundays, got of course cricketers footballers & did a great business, he is there still, charging very ridiculously low prices, but he has a motor car & a fine house --- where Winnie [is] they have a good business at high prices, but I with you would strongly advise no one to take it up as a profession, how I wish Charlie had been taught something different, but at the time he was growing up, our business in Prahran was good & there was plenty to do in it, he does very poorly as an outdoor photographer, he and his partner, they get a good order sometimes, but it is very precarious ---- I do indeed remember the

beautiful view from Beechen Cliff¹⁰³, but it must be different to fifty or more years ago, I remember it as a sort of wood with large trees, on one of which a boy lover & cousin of mine George Towson carved our initials, when I was about sixteen. You are rich in musical instruments, we have only one piano, Kathleen is the pianist --- I would dearly like to see all of them, especially the piano, around which we used to stand & sing long years ago, your Mother played, your Father & my sister Mercy & myself, & sometimes others --- but bye & bye we shall sing 'the new song' & we shall go no more out for ever. I must put this away now ---- The photo I would like you to copy is one taken of your Uncle before we were married, purposely to leave with my Mother, it was I think about cabinet size & it was coloured I think; it was taken by Newport of Milsom St. the one of whom he learned photography¹⁰⁴; in your Grandfather's will, it was expressly left to your Mother I am very fond of poetry, unless it is too fanciful, & I would rather hear a good recitation than singing, unless the latter is very good, Kathleen is programme arranger for our local Band of Hope --- your Uncle John Willway used to please us very much when we were young, he recited well 'the Jackdaw of Rheims' & others I remember, is he still living? is he still an Unitarian? I hope not --- I must send Willie to-day's 'Argus', we have been suffering from drought and some of us have been praying earnestly for rain, as we read of the starving sheep and lambs, & the prospect of a poor harvest, but the Lord has sent the beautiful rain and our hearts are filled with thanksgiving "He sendith his rain."

Now I will try to tell you what I know about our ancestry, which is not very much, my grandmother died when I was about fourteen, I was sent for to see her before she died, from Miss Elliott's school at Chippenham; I think she was then, seventy seven. I remember James Hardy the portrait painter, eldest son of Mr. Hardy of Henrietta St. who was a Baptist preacher & who often accompanied your Grandpa & cousin Seaman in their visits

¹⁰³ Beechen Cliff - and there are still trees. I wonder if her initials tree is still there.

¹⁰⁴ Confirmed by the website, "Photographers of Great Britain and Ireland 1840 to 1940" <http://www.cartedevsite.co.uk/> which shows a "Charles Ezra GOULTER" working as an employee of J G Newport, 35 Milsom Street 1859

to distant villages --- James Hardy who was just a rising artist asked permission to paint my Grandmother, as she had such a fine old lady's face --- I believe it was much admired at the time, she was considered very much like my Father, I remember a gentleman who saw it in the drawing room saying to my Father, why were you painted with a shawl & cap on? Father told us of it. I only remember hearing of her Mother having lived to be that great age, 102, I think my brother Charles must have been the only one who saw her --- my Grandmother must have been very good looking, she was called pretty Sally Atwood by her girl friends, I know very little of her relations, but I think they must have been in a good position, I remember hearing her speak of an Uncle of my Father, I suppose her brother in law, wearing frilled shirts, long black silk stockings, & silver buckles; she must have been a very capable woman, for she was left a widow with two little children & my Father was born after his Father's death --- if there are any more questions, I will answer as well as I can ---

Weds. evening --- we have just come home from the prayer meeting and I will finish this now, so that Winnie can post it in the morning as she goes to business --- I cannot write to Willie this mail, I know he will excuse me when he sees this long letter, will you give him the enclosed cuttings from the 'Argus', he will be very sorry for Mr. Wainwright's loss, please ask Mercy to give my love to my brother & I hope to write to him soon, I am so glad she goes to see him sometimes, my love to all the other dear ones & to yourself & Mercy. How I would like a photo, of yourself, Winnie & Kathleen send their love in return for yours & to the others as well.

from Yours very affectionately
Sarah Goulter

'Avondale' Maribyrnong Rd. Moonee Ponds
October 29th. 1912

My Dear Nephew,

I write at once to thank you for sending me the photo I asked for, I shall prize it very much; of course it is not very good, I would rather it had been uncoloured and there is no expression in the eyes, Winnie thinks she can improve them before we frame it. You can imagine that I loved him very much, to be willing to leave all my dear ones & come all these thousands of miles --- I do indeed remember the painting of Mr. Porter¹⁰⁵, I think my Father left it to your Mother, also those of my Father and Mother, I think all three were painted by Father's cousin Charles Seaman¹⁰⁶ who went to America very many years ago, I think it's a very nice idea, to make a presentation of it, he was one of the first, if not the very first Pastor of the church, I have often heard my Mother speak very highly of him, she was a young Christian then, and enjoyed his teaching. ----- It always hung between the two windows of the drawing room at Walcot St. I am afraid I cannot tell you much about our ancestors, as to the occupation of the wealthy uncle, his name was either Davis or Attwood according as he was related to one side or the other, I fancy he had a large pastry cook's business, I remember my Father saying that he once ate so many cheesecakes, that he could not bear the sight of them for long after --- I remember my Grandmother speaking of his silver buckles on his shoes, long black silk stockings & frilled shirt, which of course sounds very funny now --- There was a rich man on my Mother's side, her Father's brother, whose name was Garlich¹⁰⁷, he was a coach builder in London, not married & at one Christmas he sent a model of the Lord Mayor's coach as a present to my Mother and her sisters & brother, my Mother always thought that he was Lord Mayor of London, & he

¹⁰⁵ Probably, Rev. John Paul Porter, "More Than Forty Years Pastor Of The First Baptist Church In Bath" - book by Philip Cater.

¹⁰⁶ Charles Edwin Seaman, Portrait and miniature painter (act.c.1831-1839), b 6 May 1797, Bath, d 8 Nov 1864, Kentucky, USA. Parents Abraham Seaman, 1773-1814 and Nancy Campling Davis, 1771-1860. Handicapped from birth, he is said to have worked with his toes as well as with his hands.

¹⁰⁷ Should be 'GARLICK'.

was never married & Mother thought he must have left a great deal of money, your uncle Charles wrote for a list of list of the Lord Mayors, but the name of Garlich was not in it ----

I think it interesting to know something of one's family but as Cowper wrote, something like this,

"But higher still my proud ambitions rise.

The child of parents passed into the skies."¹⁰⁸

Yes, my Father was a wonderful man, how he walked miles & miles nearly every Sunday, Summer & Winter, after a strenuous business week, to preach the everlasting gospel, up in the dark, early winter morning and off long before we children were awake, my dear Mother up at the same time to give him his breakfast, my Father was "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."¹⁰⁹ ---- I must put this away till the morning. 30th I feel that I owe a great deal to my Father's diligence in business and the Lord's blessing upon it, we enjoy this house & garden, & easy circumstances, we have not always had them, our front garden is beautiful with roses and many other flowers, nearly all passers by look as though they admired them , and we have such abundance of vegetables, we are not quite vegetarians, but like them very much, they are very dear especially potatoes, old 2½ and new 3^d a lb ---- We all help a little but Winnie is generally up before six and out in the garden at work. Kathleen has not been well lately, but is better, she "says she is not fond of kissing, but if you haven't a moustache, & as the distance is so great, she will accept it, & hopes to send a photo of herself soon --- About my looking young I think Mrs Ketch must have only seen me in the evening, without my headaches, I assure you I feel quite seventy three sometimes, I can still walk well on level ground, but on rising ground, ever so slight, I have to walk very slowly. --- Now I must conclude as I want to write a short letter to my brother, not to Nettie, I have not heard from her since ----- The mail leaves in the morning, but I want to go to the prayer meeting this

¹⁰⁸ "But higher far my proud pretensions rise, The son of parents passed into the skies." - *Poems of Home: I. About Children My Mother's Picture* - William Cowper (1731-1800)

¹⁰⁹ "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" - *Romans 12:11*

evening I will close now with very much love to
yourself & all dear ones from

Your affectionate Aunt
Sarah Goulter

Photos are always welcomed how
we & all our friends have admired
those of Bessie's house at Abergavenny¹¹⁰
Winnie & Kathleen said it made them almost
long to go home & see it.

¹¹⁰ "Bessie married James BAILLIE, the pastor of the Manvers Street chapel, in 1880" - *Ainsworth History*, Brian Wates. Also "the Rev. James Baillie, Abergavenny, formerly of Cardiff, occupied the pulpit in the morning and evening", - *Monmouth Guardian and Bargoed and Caerphilly Observer*, 13 Nov, 1914 p.3 They were back in Bath by 1923 at 74 Shakespeare Ave.