

Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe from England, 1854 to 1874

A selection of personal letters based on *Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe*, edited by L. J. Blake, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1975. († denotes an additional letter)

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To David Charteris McArthur

[England, late 1854
fragment]

If I do not write to my dear old friend Lonsdale it is because I hope & trust that before this reaches you he will be on his way home—but I shall be guided by what I hear from Mrs C. on whom I shall call the moment I get to town. My opinion of him you know, it becomes only the stronger now that I look back upon the past. I have heard nothing of the Moors or Stevens—who are I suppose both on the continent, indeed I could trace during my broken & long time in London few of our boys—except Mitchell who was alive—& as unhesitating & amusing, however wrong ten cases out of 12 in his judgement of men & things. I believe he told them at the Col[onial] Office—when he learned that Dr Thomson wanted an interview with the Sec. of State & was asked who the Dr was—that he was an old scamp & most improper character. This only to the initiated. When asked *my opinion*, I could only laugh most heartily & say that Mitchell certainly knew him better than I did.

. . . good hope that when out something else may come '*to the fore*'. I have been quite out of Melbourne news whether derived from the *Argus* or any other—but shall be in town in a day or two & will try to see Dalgety or some other of the 'old colonists'. What a shindy we kicked up a year ago! Long letters I expect from none least of all from an old steady file [i.e. deep person] like yourself whose fingers are sufficiently cramped, *like my own*—but ten lines from time to time will give real pleasure. If I do not write to Powlett by this mail say everything kind to him. I know I wrote to him a few lines while in Switzerland. To Mr Hart my very kind regards. I wish he could change the air which you will breathe in Melbourne when this comes to hand, for that which now fills my nostrils. I wonder what Sir Charles & Lady H[otham] who I presume reached the term of their voyage in safety—(good luck to them)—will say to Melbourne heat & dust. You know my principle throughout both fair & honorable times has been to set up a stiff lip & make the best of every thing—but I may now own that last summer's heat & dust was not at all to my taste—& if I had dared to open my mouth I should have gnashed my teeth. I feel all the benefit I could possibly desire from the relief which God in his mercy has given me from what was gradually becoming a grievous burden, —and am all the better mind & body for my holiday. We have had a most splendid season. In Switzerland I have never seen one to compare with it. I cannot reckon more than one rainy day in 6 weeks. Here everybody is glad & thankful at the abundant harvest—& now, cock a hoop at the success of our arms in the East. You know pretty well to whom, beyond your own hearthstone, I would be kindly remembered. My best regards & good wishes for Mrs McArthur & special greeting to my dear friends Mr & Mrs Simpson of whom I think much & often, & now God bless you.

Your sincere ...

C. J. La Trobe.

To David Charteris McArthur

London
3 February 1855

My dear McArthur

Many thanks for your kind letter by the overland mail via Marseilles which has come to hand in advance of any others for me which the bags may contain. Anything from your hand was welcome, even though of a character less cheerfulness than had been expected. I know too well the number & variety of the claims on your time & your pen, to expect that you should give me much—but shall always be glad to see your handwriting in however brief a form. Now, what am I to tell you more than that I am quite satisfied that, in all that relates to me & my affairs, you act for the best, and that however agreeable to me it would be to hear of a decent sale of a portion of my land, as projected, & of a stout remittance, I must submit to circumstances like the rest of the Australian world, & bide your time, living as much within my *apparent present* means as may be & trusting God for the future.

I have however no heart or courage to set about creating a home for myself,—& perhaps it is fortunate that just at present there is no immediate call for my doing so. But was ever poor mortal so misconstrued & abused. Why in Australia all those years, it was all I could do to make head against the imputation of being a regular screw & quietly hoarding to make a fortune by all manner of ways—*land, horses, cattle, sheep, brandies, merchandise* (Oh! that would Devil!), wines auction, bank and bridge shares, butcher shops, mangling machines, etc, etc.—not a word of truth from beginning to end, and now when I come home ten times worse. I am bothered from morning to night, & from one end of Europe to the other by the assertion on all hands that *I am the fortunate man who has made the fortune!*

So the papers have said again & again. So Mr So & So has said, so everyone has read, heard, or said & so it must be! £100,000, £80,000 or at lowest £70,000 for my estate. 'What a fortunate man' says one—'O the d-d villain'—another. 'Shy *public servant* indeed', a third.

Why the other day, who should I meet in Regent's Street, but old Barnes, you remember him—of the V.D.L. Custom House,— poor Cassel's friend. Hale, pompous, & well to do. You remember his extraordinary bawling voice. '*Mr La Trobe!!!*' grasping my hand. '*How delighted I am. How well you look! Quite young! O don't tell me but you do my dear Sir!*' and then roaring till you might have heard him in Privy Gardens or Pimlico '*I congratulate you—indeed I do, from my soul—a rich man!—ah! But you are. £80,000. You worked for it I witnessed that—fearful struggles—no telling!—but how well you look!*' Why, we had a crowd about us—and he was so excited that none of my interjectional disclaimers had the slightest effect. Every time I bellowed back—'Not a bit of it!' he met me with. '*O but you are! I'm so glad!*'—and this is only an example of what continually happens. *You* ought to know my dear fellow after your 20 years experience,—but I wish you would determine which is the most painful position—that of a man, who is really well to do in the world but is always spoken of & treated as a poor devil—or that of one of the latter stamp whom the world is leagued to hold out & treat as a millionaire. That, seriously speaking,—some injustice, and inconvenience & disadvantage as the result of such general misrepresentation & misconception—is certain but I lived in a good school for getting broken in—& manage to smile over much which may be calculated to provoke. I am undergoing my first winter & tho' I don't care much about it, I don't like it, but please God spring will come in due time. I do not like London, but must stay here a few weeks from this time if I am to see anything of either private or official acquaintances. Excepting Browne I have seen no Australian acquaintances lately. As the papers will tell you, we are in a terrible state of confusion with our Home Govt. I thank you for naming some of our common friends & acquaintances & nothing gave me greater pleasure than to find you give a good report of our excellent friends the Simpsons, & could say that upon the whole Mrs Macarthur's health was better. My kind regards to Mr Hart. I do not repeat what I have written in former notes. I am glad to see that the Colony in the main continues prosperous—as to the mercantile difficulties they were foreseen & predicted from the first. I do not touch on politics.

& now goodbye
& God bless you

Wish this war was over that our Australian communication might be put again on proper footing. What will you say to the discontinuance of the *overland* mail?

Yours very truly
C. J. La Trobe.

To Count Paul de Strzelecki †

14 Hanover St.
Hanover Square
16 February 1855

My Dear Strzelecki

You have set me a task, for I never gave myself a character yet in my life. In my younger days I was simply a “rambler” and my published productions partook of the character of my desultory pursuits as such. I am not particularly proud of them, but may state that they consisted of two works upon Switzerland & the Tyrol respectively — the ‘Alpenstock’ and the ‘Pedestrian’:—and subsequently three upon America — viz.: 2 vols. upon the ‘United States and Far West’ & one upon ‘Mexico’.

Since that time, & more particularly for the last 18 years, — my service in connection with her Majesty's Govt. has left me little time for anything beyond official duty & official writing. Of the latter sufficient has been laid before the country in one shape or other in that interval. My public service consists of an official visit to all the West India & South American British colonies in 1836–7, and since in 14–15 years service in Australia, in charge of the Colony of Victoria (Port Phillip) from the Lieut. Governership of which I have just retired. The only break was caused by a commission which I read, in 1846, to administer the government of Van Diemen's Land in the interval between the recall of Sir Eardley Wilmot, and the arrival of Sir W. Denison. As to the character of this long public service, I must refer you to all or sundry of the eight or nine “Secretaries of State” under which it has been performed. All I will say for myself is that it has not been of a humdrum & ordinary character.

I may add that altho' I have, as best suited my temper and scanty amount of personal acquirement, kept in the back ground I have not been indifferent to the interests of geographical and natural science, but have done what I could to promote it — gaining here and there, perhaps more credit than I really deserve. I have only to look around me to see men on every hand of far higher qualification & endowment than myself & undoubtedly higher claims, but for all that I have been so long out of the great current (tho' not in what may be called still waters) that I feel it would be an adventure to me to become a member of the Athenaeum, where a piece of bronze like your humble servant, may chance to get a small amount of gilding, by gentle & judicious friction against his neighbours — I have said! & remain

Yours truly
C. J. La Trobe

To Charlotte Pellet †

London
20th February 1855

My dear Charlotte,

The enclosed letter was forwarded to me the other day to send to you. It will doubtless give you pleasure & shew you that you are not forgotten by the dear children, etc. in Switzerland, and I assure you that you are not by me, or Agnes, or little Charlie in England. Agnes is now at school, but very happy, at Southwell near Newark [in Nottinghamshire],

under the care of the same excellent lady who educated our dear friend Mrs Perry. She was too young to take charge of her father's house, if he had had one, and it was a pity to leave her without regular means of improvement for her mind. Charlie is at school in Kent, and very happy – not a bad, tho' a very giddy boy. He has grown very much as you may suppose. I am for the time in London, a little lonely, but finding enough to do and to think about. My health is good, and tho' I have my share of coughs and colds, I do not care for the severe winter, as long as it is not wet.

I shall probably make some arrangement to bring the little girls to England in the course of the summer, but I do not pretend to see far into the future – but would leave all in the hands of our merciful God. You may be sure that I do not forget the past with all its joys & sorrows, & often recall your long and faithful service - and good little Rose, whom I heard some time since from Mrs Perry, was well and happy. I hope she takes care of you. I am sorry to tell you that the two last mails from Switzerland have brought me very unsatisfactory news about our dear Madame de Montmollin's [his mother-in-law's] health. I fear we shall not keep her long – indeed I have everything prepared to set off at a moment's notice. She was very ill with inflammation of the lungs – but when my last letter was written on the 16th, was a little better. I do not like to delay this letter. Pray write to me, and believe me ever

Your very attached friend

C. J. La Trobe

(P.S.) Many kind things to Rose and her husband.

To Charlotte Pellet

14 Hanover St London
3rd April 1855

My dear Charlotte,

I had sent the enclosed to you, or at least was upon the point of doing so a month ago, enclosed in a letter to Mrs Perry, –when all of a sudden I learned that she was daily expected in England, –and here she is, safe and well, with my dear friend the good Bishop. You may be sure, that I have not met them without many mixed feelings, tho' with great pleasure. I was glad to find that Mrs Perry had really seen you, and could report that you were well & happy, and good Rose & her husband also. I need not tell you what interest I take in you, –and my children also. Cecile wrote to me the other day, when she heard that the Bishop had come—'*I wish Charlotte and Rose would come also*'. I have little to add to what the enclosed will tell you. You would know that towards the close of February my dear Mother-in-law Madame de Montmollin went to her rest—that I went to Neuchâtel on being summoned but came too late, & returned to England after a brief stay of two days,—and that one month later Mr Louis Coulon, *pere*, has followed her to the grave. So all the old people are dropping off. You will have heard of the death of Madame de Pourtales of La Lance, earlier.

My children are well, thank God, both in Switzerland & England. Little Charlie, as well as Agnes, are at school, –but I hope in the process of time to have a home to receive my children in.

We have had a long cold winter—and the spring is very backward, but I have not felt it much. And now my good & faithful Charlotte, I commend you to God's great mercy in Christ. Say everything that is kind to Rose & her husband.

Your affectionate friend

C. J. La Trobe.

To David Charteris McArthur

London
27 July [1855]

My dear Macarthur,

The 'Red Jacket' is in. I get a few lines from Powlett & as he does not say you are ill, I presume that you are well. I can do little more just at present than advise you that I have taken the liberty to direct my agent Mr W. McMahon to address & ship to you by the 'Hebonheath' sailing next month a package containing a Tablet in memory of my dear late wife, designed to be erected in such a position in St Peter's Church as the authorities may direct & permit. I have consulted nothing but my own feeling & pen in the inscription, & hope that it will be held to be unobjectionable & to the point. I think that she deserves to be remembered in the community of which she was so long a member.

It ought to have been finished and sent out 6 months ago, —but Victoria is not the only country in which there are delays & disappointments. I shall be glad in due time to be informed of the precise position in which it may be placed.

All charges you will kindly place to my account & I know that you, or some of my private friends will see that it is properly fixed.

I have never had a line to say whether a font which I sent out to St Peter's last year had been accepted & erected or not.

With kindest regards to Mrs Macarthur.

believe me old friend

Yours very truly

C. J. La Trobe

I will write to you shortly again.

To David Charteris McArthur

The Mote, Tonbridge
3 April [1856]

My dear McArthur,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your short lines by the 'Lightning' enclosing bill of exchange for 800£, for which I thank you heartily—& telling me that I should receive a longer note with first of exch: by the 'Blackwall'. She is not in yet so I do not trouble you by this mail with more than this acknowledgt except to tell you how unfeignedly grieved I am to have read in today's *Times* the account of the death of poor Sir Charles [Hotham] on the last day of the year. I am more grieved than surprised—for he did not appear to possess the temper or personal habits which would seek necessary recreation of mind & body as a duty—and I know that no elasticity of the one or strength of the other could possibly, without such relief, bear the constant fret & strain to which one is exposed under such circumstances. I dare say I shall hear from Powlett one of these days, & will then write more at length to one or other of you. What an extraordinary state of things! Meanwhile I am glad to perceive that monetary matters are getting steadily into good order again, & I hope in every way times will become more favorable to the landed proprietor of Victoria than they have been. And here is Peace and I have no doubt our American Jefferson will prove all moonshine. I see no reason why if you can really command sensible & honest government, as the wind now blows—but Victoria will still maintain her wonderful prosperity & her rank. I have never despaired of her.

My best regards to Mrs Macarthur—to all our good friends & believe me . . .

Yours very truly

C. J. La Trobe.

To William Henry Foster †

The Athenaeum, London

1 August 1856

My Dear Willie,

I scrawl you a line by my good friend Mr Bell whom I am running down to Plymouth today to see off – to refer you to him for any inquiries you may be desirous of making about me and your young or old cousins – and further to assure you of my continued affectionate interest in all that concerns you. I may say my pride also to see that you entirely vindicate the good opinion I have of you, and my anxiety to see you get a fair chance in the world. Your good father just writes me word that he has a few days since received another good and satisfactory letter from you. I hope in due time you will have earned your leave and come home to show yourself – before you have grown completely into a John Chinaman. Write to me when you can if but a few lines. When you see good Mr Seddon remember me kindly to him – and when you go to Melbourne, take heart, and go and see the Bishop and Mrs Perry and if they are given to understand that you are my Mr Foster, I will ensure you a friendly reception.

God bless you

My dear fellow

Ever your affectionate friend

C. J. La Trobe.

To Agnes La Trobe †

Bedford, 19th January 1858 7PM

My dear Agnes,

Cecile is reading widow Bodot's memoirs - to Maman, Charlie & Nelly sitting round the table after dinner - but I must try to begin a letter to you to say what I have been about the last week while absent from Bedford. I left home, as we must call it for want of a better word, on Monday the 11th, with your uncle La Trobe – got to town about 3PM – went & had an hours work at the Storeroom – then to the Club – afterwards to the Geographical Club & Society where I saw many regulars, including Dr Livingston, J. Murray, Mr etc amongst the rest. I went and breakfasted with the Murrays having to answer many questions about you & the baby ['Daisy', aged 16 months] – and at 10 was off in the train for & Dursley where I arrived early in the evening – went & dined at the Rangers and saw dear Mr & Mrs Bell, Mrs Fenwick, Anna F – who has lost the sight of an eye, two other of the sisters and young Teddy. I need not say how much interest they take in you all. Mr & Mrs Bell must go out to Australia I fear in April next, to their great distress. Teddy is at school with the two young Stevens - His mother in Denmark – the father S [?] friend Nick's gone out to Australia.

I started the following morning the 12th, fine cold weather very early for Cheltenham, got there at 10 – walked out to see the poor Browne's at Greenway – found them all pretty well but still grieving over the loss of little Gerrard – answered many inquiries about all – drove back to Cheltenham, passed an hour with Anne Bagshawe, Annie & Frank & went on to Worcester in the course of the evening. On arriving there I wrote to your friend H. Pidcock proposing to call the following evening to see her & her father & mother.

The 13th Thursday – a cold but fine bright day I drove out early to Whitbourne & passed 4 or 5 hours in inquiring & inspecting in & about the Court – being civilly rec'd by all the people there - & being much pleased upon the whole. In summer when I had seen it, it was truly a lovely spot - & even in winter was not without beauty. In the evening I returned to Worcester & was soon after called upon by Mr Pidcock & arranged to go & dine at Rose Bank where I passed a very pleasant evening, Henrietta, however being absent at Malvern,

which I was very sorry for. They were very glad to think that we might come & live in their neighbourhood.

The 14th I went early to Malvern – crossed the hill over where the clouds were flying in quite a picturesque manner, & descending to W. Malvern spent 2 or 3 hours with Count & Countess Wengierski, the owners of Whitbourne Court, talking about various matters. I returned later in the afternoon – to Worcester & Cheltenham where I slept at Anne Bagshawe's – returning home-ward on the 15th – so far as Goring where I turned aside to pass 3 hours with our dear friends the Stevens at Braziers – but still reaching London at night. Sunday I passed quietly at Ely Place [with brother Peter at the Moravian Mission headquarters, Holborn] & after a morning's shopping & business reached Bedford to dinner yesterday.

I find your dear Mamma much better,* indeed if it were for the necessity of taking care of her to prevent a relapse just when this would be most inconvenient or distressing. I should say that she was well & had no occasion to keep house or take particular care. But I must do this, for I would not willingly run any risk of not bringing her back to you and little Daisy at the time fixed. It draws near – for in a fortnight the three children if so please God will be at school & we shall have nothing to do but to prepare for our departure for Paris, rest there a couple of days, & then seek to rejoin you. In the mean time we have plenty to do - & well must be our time be well shared out to meet all the claims upon it —

About Whitbourne Court, I must tell you more another time. After holding conference with Mamma on my return I have written to intimate my desire to take a lease of it & enter into possession in the course of the summer – provided it be put into the necessary repair. There will be room enough for our small tribe I think at all times and many advantages such as one can only have in the country. But more of this another time. We are all much interested in [...'s] prospective marriage. She is a very engaging girl & I make no doubt a good one. God bless them. All the world seems to be marrying & giving in marriage.

I write nothing about the children. We are sorry to hear that Cousin Elmiere has had a migraine of such duration. Give our love to her and cousin James & Elys. & Henri & Gaffbeee. We are very glad to hear that there is a chance of the avenue being spared. I enclose a tiny note for Tante Louise. You do not yet announce when the marriage of Aminka is to take place definitely. God bless you. Kiss our darling [Daisy] for us & don't let her forget to say Memé & Pappa. We have a very fine winter so far but a grippy one.

Aunt & cousin[s?], dear brother & sisters, & Mamma & Papa —

Yours affectionate father, C. J. La Trobe

[NOTE: This is but one of many letters that La Trobe wrote to his eldest daughter Agnes, b.1837, both when she was a young child—see excerpts under Publications, Transcripts — and after his return to Europe in 1854.

* In a letter to Agnes from The [Athenaeum] Club, 9th January 1858, La Trobe had said that Mamma was suffering from influenza: 'Of course you may judge that she is sadly *contrariée* by all this & would be melancholy about herself & all about her, if she had her way. My office is to try to keep all in good heart and good humour, which however is rather a difficult matter sometimes'.]

To Charlotte Pellet

Whitbourne Court Worcester
August 15 1859

For Charlotte:

I cannot accuse you, dear kind & faithful friend, of forgetting us, as I have no reason to judge that your silence & that of Rose is a proof of forgetfulness seeing that I have the greater

reason to hope, that you will not think that you are forgotten by us, tho' letters pass so rarely between us—I assure you that you continue to hold the same place in the affectionate remembrance both of your old master & his children & of her who now fills the place of mother so worthily in my household & that your name is on our lips much more frequently than you imagine. I rejoice to hear from my Friend M. Powlett who has lately been with us & at the same time by a letter from M. de Castella that you are well & happy & that Rose & her husband are in good health & prospering. We wish very much that Rose would take courage, take a good sheet of paper, & if not all at once, gradually, fill it with some account of you all, young & old. We know nothing of her children beyond the names—or of your residence beyond the bare locality:—Nothing at all of your interior occupations and a hundred other particulars which we long to know. We sometimes say how much we should like to send you some proof of our remembrance & affection—but are quite at a loss to know what would be useful or give you pleasure. God alone knows whether we shall ever again meet in this world—but however this may be—be assured that you are never forgotten by me & that I pray the Lord to bless you in time & in eternity.

Your affectionate friend

C. J. La Trobe

[This letter was endorsed to 'ma bonne Charlotte' by 'ta bien affectionnie Rose La Trobe']

To David Charteris McArthur

Whitbourne Court Worcester
16 January 1860

My dear Macarthur

A Happy New Year to you & Mrs Macarthur & many of them, so please God. It is never too late to send someone good wishes—pray accept them as very sincere, tho' rather old fashioned, of old date by the time you receive them. And now many thanks for yours of the 17th Nov. by last mail—the bill of exch: for £200 enclosed—& for the information contained about my affairs. They might be in a more promising state 'tis true were the times better & the chances of making further sales more frequent than they appear to be. But never mind. I must cut my coat according to my cloth—and meantime I can only repeat what I have said over & over again, that I am perfectly satisfied that you are acting in the manner best calculated to promote my interests in the long run—& as long as there is no sacrifice, I ought to be content. I suppose that Huckson's payment of balance is what has placed you in the position to make the proposed investment of £500 on mortgage & withhold a balance after sending me the 200£ & I am better pleased to think that that sum is added to my capital, than that it runs a chance of being taken up & be dissipated in meeting any but indispensable requirements here, as it might be were it placed at my bankers. I need not say that I shall be glad to receive the quarterly remittances (£200) which you propose making if you continue in a position to do so. I do not say but I may have to scrape a little here & there, till better times come,—for tho' I have no debts I have assumed certain obligations & certain liabilities beyond the maintenance of house and home, which swallow up a good fraction of my income—but never mind. I have seen worse times!

I need not say that I feel all the disadvantage of my *cottage* property & should be heartily glad to be rid of both—if one could compass the riddance without sacrifice. Huckson sent Deed of Conveyance for his section, for execution, thro' the Union B[ank] of A[ustralia] by the October mail but as I had no advice from you I declined acting. Your second note, referring to it, of course obviates all difficulty—& I shall see that it is done, having got thro' the U. B. solicitor instructions as to the form—& will go to Worcester, execute & send it to Mr Saunders the Secy for transmission by their mail. It would be well when any legal documents of this class are sent home for execution that clear fillings up in pencil are introduced or a memorandum attached clearly stating what form & before whom execution should take

place. The first thing the rogue of a London solicitor did was to clap a £10 stamp on the conveyance & I suppose that there will be all kind of oddments as charges besides. They are an insatiable breed.

And now having got to the end of my business yarn I would only add that I would ask you kindly to provide that when remittances are made they are made in duplicate at least to provide against the postal mischance or relays, which have been too numerous, —& that whatever is sent, is directed to me here, at *Whitbourne Court, Worcester—via Marseilles*. When a man is hard up, a few days makes the difference

[undated fragment to McArthur; it may have been the last part of the above letter.]

... and now what to tell you of interest about ourselves, I hardly know. We are all fairly well except Agnes who has a disagreeable cough. Beginning of December we had a very hard frost & Powlett who was with us for a few days at the time, had his first taste of English winter. We are in constant correspondence you may suppose. The same excellent honest hearted fellow as ever, trailing his puppy dogs about with him, & leaving no end of trifles behind him, wherever he goes. He will tell you all about [his daughter] Horatia, I make no doubt & about his plans— before & after his contemplated trip to Pau about the middle of next month. I have had notes from both G. Airey & A. G[oldsmith] since the beginning of the month both promising me a visit at Whitbourne in the course of the year. I was, as Bell may have told you, in town for about 3 weeks in November & saw divers old friends & acquaintances. Lonsdale was there at the same time but in his odd way managed so well that we did not meet. However he came & spent 2 or 3 days with me afterwards to our great contentment—and is still in England preparing the home he has purchased near Southampton for the reception of his family in the Spring. He is just now in town fitting Teddy out for his regiment. He is in excellent health seemingly & as playful as a kitten with the children. You may imagine what a yarn we had about old times & friends. Who should I stumble on the other day in Worcester but *Misther Brewster!* Now the worthy curate of All Saints in that city. I wonder if he ever makes a mistake & addresses his congregation 'Jintlemen of the Djury' instead of 'Dearly beloved brethren'. However I am told he has turned himself out of a bungling lawyer into very active & worthy clergyman. But I must not take up your time or my own in yarning. I often pay you a visit in fancy in your pretty retreat on the Yarra & half wish I could do so in reality.

With best respects & regards to Mrs McArthur ...

Yours very truly
C. J. La Trobe

To David Charteris McArthur †

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
17th April 1860

My dear Macarthur

I have no excuse for sending you a long yarn this time. I thank you for the 200 bill of exch. forwarded to me thro' Powlett, who had just returned from France; in advance, for the like sum, which you proposed to transmit, as by this month's mail. I am glad to gather that Mrs Macarthur & you yourself are pretty well & however sorry to think as regards my personal interests that you are absent from the Colony. I shall rejoice to know that you have secured the time & opportunity to come & see what is doing in Europe after such a long absence & such incessant strain on body & mind as you have had. I have no doubt but it will do you both a world of good.

Powlett comes to me for a few days with Horatia on Saturday, —and when he is back with you will tell you all you may be inclined to know about me & mine. He speaks of being

off by the 'Suffolk' not yet in I think, on the 18th of next month, & it will [be?] hard but I see the last of him at Falmouth, for tho' I have not much to complain of, there are not many friends in the world as steady & stirring in the world as he is. He does quite right to leave Horatia —particularly in the present state of his affairs & prospects. He takes these with a good deal of calm & philosophy. It is perfectly disgusting to see the way the world wags with you & your govt just at present, but it is no use fuming —for it is sure that the Colony must go thro' a process of fermentation & working, before the scum can be handled & skimmed off. In the long run I hope the liquor will run clear & bright. Forgive my homely simile, but my men have just been brewing under my nose. You have rendered our friend the most essential service in stopping Tyer's well-meant but most ill-judged proposed procedure in his behalf. It would just have given the rogues occasion & excuse to clinch the nail which they had driven, —& that beyond remedy— As it is, there is nothing to prevent its being pulled out, proper opportunity & excuse offering. But you may well understand how anxious I am about the matter.

You have had according to Bell's report a very hot summer, we in the mean time a very long & draggle-tailed winter, which is very loath to take final leave. I & mine however have got pretty well thro' it. My best regards to Mrs Macarthur & to Mrs Simpson when you happen on her.

Ever dear Macarthur, Your ever sincere friend,

C. J. La Trobe

To David Charteris McArthur

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
11th May 1860

My dear Macarthur,

Accept my thanks for the letter I received by the last mail & the Bill of Exchange, the 1st of which had reached me thro' Powlett. You will hear with some surprise, perhaps, that he is still in England, and only goes out by the 'Suffolk' at the close of the month—but on the one hand he dreads the broil of the Red Sea & on the other insists, in which Piper is his companion, will come into dock before the expiration of his leave. In his place I would not have run it so fine—as he is so critically situated with respect to future Govt employment, that no vantage ground should under any circumstances be given to the enemy. He & Horatia were with us again for a few days last month but we can hardly expect another visit. However I am not going to let so old & true-hearted a friend slip quietly thro' my fingers without an effort and I propose running down to Plymouth to see him off if all goes well. I cannot go to London where he now is, without involving myself in more turmoil, engagements, & expenditure. That suits my present circumstances—to keep as quiet as I can in the country, keep my family straight as maybe—and what is much more difficult—servants up to their collars—what a plague they are! —all the world over!—look after my kitchen & flower garden, 3 cows, 1 horse, half a doz. pigs or piglets—some dozen cocks, hens & ducks—now & then to look up the papers, & do all I can to keep the wolf from the door.

This falling in the rents & decrease of revenue consequently which your last announces is not particularly cheerfuzing, but I know there is no help for it & all is done which prudence & good management can do. We must look for better times, & in the meantime I must scratch on as I can. Of course Powlett & I have had now & then a little talk upon the subject of my interests in the Colony, & when you are together you may find opportunity to confer as to any particular way without real sacrifice of getting rid of the cottage allotments which are a drag now, & likely to be an increasing one as they get older. Of the lower cottage I have not much to say—but of the upper the timbers were first rate & the main buildg ought not to be far gone in decay. However I do not look to either adding much to the land value of the allotments on which they stand. I can well understand that wooden houses have gone out

of fashion. As far as the land goes however I would still plead for no sacrifice. However I must be plain—for the produce must be my children's fortune as well as my own & those dependent on me in old age if I ever get old. Your proposal to invest a still further sum comes to me, however inconvenient such serious reduction in my receipt for the time maybe, with the same recommendation that all your proposals have done—& one way or other, I will try to scratch on in a way that will allow you to do so. I propose therefore that you should retain the July & October remittances—200£ each to this end & do the best you can with them. If I can add another 100£ to them I will do so—Thus making the investments of the last 12 months 1,000£. I presume you will have already invested the 500£ withheld for that purpose as note fwd me in your November letter—& that in due time it will bear some fruit. If nothing further therefore passes between us on the subject I shall after the receipt of the annual remittance next mail—look out for none until that to be made, if all goes well, in Jan'y 1861 unless times mend & capital be realized by sales, of which however you do not hold out any immediate expectation.

I sent your note addressed to Lady Franklin at once to her, & hold her receipt. I just got a note from her delighted at the receipt of the R. Geo. Society's Gold Medal, for the discovery of the NW Passage as representative of her late noble old husband.

Powlett will be a living letter & so I leave him to answer many questions or tell you much which otherwise I might feel inclined to tell for your amusement not at that busy place the Bank where you must be now as formerly steeped in bother & business—but at your pleasant garden house on the Yarra, where I often pay you a pop visit, without disturbing you.

My family is just at present on the point of a temporary scatter—Agnes in town—Nelly going there & my wife for a fortnight to Neuchâtel to see a dying friend. I hope we shall all be at home again middle of next month to welcome Charley from school. What to do with young hopeful as yet I am quite at a loss to know. Give my best regards to Mrs Macarthur. I wrote in my last & now repeat how heartily I should welcome the news of your revisiting Europe. Poor Wright—I have heard of his accident with much regret—but he has pluck enough to bear even that—Goodbye—God bless you—believe me . . .

Your very faithful friend & sincerely

C. J. La Trobe.

To David Charteris McArthur †

Whitbourne Court Worcester
19th September 1860

My dear Macarthur

The July mail, was from some reason or other a week & more behind time – but not the less welcome when it arrived, & brought me yours of the 25th of that month & the 200 remittance for which I thank you, as well as for the explanation you give me of the causes which led to the non-receipt by me of the April supply. I heard accidentally that you were in Sydney & fancied that your absence from Melbourne might account for the latter. All is well that ends well & if matters remain as you encourage me to hope they may, as long as the Cottages are let, even at their present low figures, I shall keep my head above water, I hope, & have patience to await better times, –such as I think must come sooner or later.

Long ere this I hope that you will have welcomed Powlett & Piper, dogs & all – and from him you will have as much intelligence about your old friend as any one may be in a position to give. You say nothing about your own chances of revisiting Europe, but I hope you will not be forced to put off such visit, if you contemplate it, too long; for some how or other one's powers of enjoyment – after a certain age – begin to weaken, as well as those of one's limbs.

You will have heard on all [hands ?] I make no doubt, what an unprecedentedly unfavourable season we are passing thro – in fact 'Summer' has eluded us altogether, & if the

autumn goes on as it has begun – we shall reckon but a short interval of ‘warm & wet’ weather, between the long winter of 1859-60 & the impending one of 1860-61. Our harvest is still in great peril, & unless we have a fortnight’s reasonable weather before the close of the next 4 weeks, it is as good as lost. We have hardly any young birds in this quarter but a good many old ones, thanks to their getting wild very early last season. I & mine are thank God well. I have been very quiet the last 12 months, for I am too poor to travel much just at present but may have to pass 8 days shortly in running down to Strasbourg & back, with my 3rd daughter Cecile, whom we propose locating there for a term, by way of finishing school life.

My best regards to Mrs Macarthur & receive the assurance that I never forget our long & old friendship, & the obligation I am under to you in very many ways, and continue Macarthur.

Yours very truly, C. J. La Trobe

To David Charteris McArthur

Whitbourne Court
23rd December 1860

My dear Macarthur

I hope that by the time this reaches you, you will have had a Happy Xmas & New Year. If I send, as I am naturally prompted, the best wishes of the season in writing to an old friend, –I fear that however warm, they will hardly be accounted otherwise than cold & out of date by the time they come to hand.

After an awfully disagreeable summer & rainy autumn we have at present a seasonable & pleasant outlook for Xmas—a little snow on the ground, clear frost, & bright sunshine, & very glad we are of it, for it looks as if the Zodiac after having been ‘taken up for repair’—had been restored to its place again,—& that we may hope that 1861 will be more pleasant than 1860.

I have to thank you for your October letter with 1st of Exch: for 200£ (which I need not say was welcome) and in general good news of yourself & Mrs Macarthur to whom I beg my very kind regards. I thank you also for your mention of Powlett & his prospects—which I would to God were brighter & more certain than I can gather either from his own account or those of his friends. I am at times very anxious about him, as he is not of a build & temper, or habit to ‘be able to’ live up an air, as little as some others of us, & I would willingly know that he was spared some difficulties, which are hard to bear at any time of life, & very ill about the time when a man feels that neither mind nor body are quite as elastic & pliable as they were—It was my wish that he had made up his mind to marry again—if he could have found one who would have been really a mother to his little girl, & a help mate (read help-meet if you will) in all respect for himself. But I never had heart to set to work to urge the subject & was never a match-maker. However it is not too late. Your description of your snipe-shooting expedition amused me vastly & I sympathize with your night adventure & fancy that I *hear him*.

What a terrible misch masch they are making of the New Zealand business. I dare say that Leslie & Cary & others of our old friends are heartily disgusted. My feeling—& perhaps I should have the *Argus* down upon me for it—is that the war aught never have taken place & that if the Governor had stuck to his first wise & safe principle, never to have anything to do with land about the title to which there was any dispute whatever, it never would. Now, tho’ it be disagreeable to fight on such a business, there is no help for it. We cannot try to mend matters by gentle means till the natives get their lesson & lay down arms.

I have nothing extraordinary to report about self or family this time—all, thank you, are well. –I keep out of London—to keep out of debt. We just heard from poor Lonsdale that they have lost their 4th boy, Oswald. It seems that he never was what he ought to have been.

Goodbye & take care of yourself my dear friend.

Yours truly,

C. J. La Trobe.

Pray recall me to the kind remembrance of any of your family who can look back so far.

To Sir Redmond Barry †

Whitbourne Court, 20 June 1862

My dear Barry

How are you getting on - physically & morally in the midst of London hubbub. I cannot imagine a greater contrast than your life there, & your old friend's here. I heard of you from Macarthur (D.C.) who spent a quiet dreary week with us - for the weather was so broken, as to prevent our bestirring ourselves much out of doors- Perhaps you may have seen him since he left us. I had my usual batch of colonial news from Bell & Powlett - not very cheering, as I need not tell you, who have I make no doubt still more ample means of hearing how matters are going on. Powlett was still unprovided for & Bell on the tenter hooks awaiting the decision of the Leg. Council on his claim - I trust however not expending the prospective compensation money on the chance of getting it. I had a note from Mme de la Salle some time ago giving me the information I sought about one good friend [Goldsmith] - but am anxious to know that his convalescence has remained unchecked by relapse or retard of any kind. Have you had a recent communication from that quarter?

Let me know your summer plans. Mine are all in the vague as yet, as I have to await various [...?] visits from foreign friends drawn over to England by the wonders of the time [the International Exhibition in South Kensington] - & till these have come off cannot well say what I may be able to do - but I may have to run up to London to see Macarthur if he goes out, as appeared possible next month, & you may be sure I shall do all that is in my power to foregather with you, if but for an hour. As to your welcome here, whenever you are disposed to try the bush & possibly 'blue pill & glauber salts' as our friend Reeves found it requisite to do in old times, occasionally, I need say nothing - as you are well assured of it - but leave you to propose your own time etc. when the press of the Season & its manifold engagements may be over. Meanwhile we often talk of you, & the lassies [probably daughters Eleanora aged 20 and Cécile aged 19] never forget the advantage they had in your kind countenance & escort in the great Exhibition. Give me a line whenever you can to say how you speed & believe me ever

Yours to a faithful friend,

C. J. La Trobe

To Ronald Campbell Gunn

London 19th January 1864

My Dear Gunn,

Were it not that there was so much in your letter of a character to give a man sober thoughts, -if not an aching heart,-I should certainly not have withstood the temptation to head a note to you with our old Shiboloth-How's your leg! Let me spare you that. When I opened your well filled envelope of Nov 21st and recognised your handwriting, I felt that the long interval that had passed since we last interchanged a line-& still longer since we met-was nothing in the balance compared to the unaltered esteem & regard I conceived for you in old times & have preserved fresh & green to this day. I have also the proof & the conviction that it is mutual & I thank you most heartily for your kind remembrance & far all the details you give me of what has befallen you in the interval-in fact, since the date of my leaving your neighbourhood-now within a month or two or three of ten long years. How time flies. God has laid His hand upon you very heavily, dear friend,-and your trials particularly in your domestic circle have been such as make men old much sooner than the

loss of fortune or outward disappearance. Happy those who can recognise and bless His hand nevertheless as that of a Father—I need not tell you how much I have been interested by all you tell me.

The episode of my short connection with your colony is a very interesting one to me in memory, & I often recur to it, & the scenes & persons etc with which it made me acquainted. I have a good memory for them—& having long intervals perhaps found occasion to freshen it on casually meeting one or other connected with the colony. Two or three years ago I stumbled upon Mr Kermode while on his last matrimonial visit to Worcestershire. Meyers I see occasionally, both he & she being always the same—with Courtney I have exchanged a line occasionally—tho' we have never met (one of God's oddities!) Only the other day I met & made acquaintance here in town with Sir Henry & Lady Young & had principally with her a long chat about you all & about old scenes. Great changes have been operated in society at least since my time but there are still many *to the fore* still, whom I knew. They spoke of you with much esteem. I hear that old Tallygoram Grant & his nimble-fingered wife are still alive. Baron von Stieglitz figuring away in Europe with another wife having, I presume dutifully buried the first old lady, leg and all—I never go over the acts of our journey to Falmouth (as I do sometimes travel again over old scenes to keep the memory green step by step) without a feeling that my side is sore with laughing. We were certainly in good spirits—Fraser they say is in England—Seymour, then in Bicheno's office just appointed Governor of Vancouver, J.P. &c.

But if I am to give you any account of myself I must go on another tack and if I pretend to do so, however briefly, you may take as a proof that I consider the interest you profess to take in me is genuine. I have little to say; you know that I returned home in 1854 after my 14 years exile a little broken backed with the toil & responsibility of my three previous years struggle with the difficulties following the gold discoveries (no *nice responsible* govt then to act as *buffer*, behold the governor & the governed!) having sent home that dear wife whose face I never saw again—& my little children the year before I arrived at home just in the bustle of the Crimean War—soon found out or either verified my idea of the materials of which a Colonial Office, whose head is constantly changing, is composed. I saw that it was not enough to have worked hard & loyally at every sacrifice of personal fortune to do one's duty both to decent colonists at the other end of the world—that neither honour nor reward, hardly recognition could be expected to be reaped spontaneously—but that if you expected anything of the kind, you would have to *work for it—clamour for—*make friends as you might amongst subordinates—to secure it & in short descend to something very difficult to what you considered your place, to gain what was your undoubted right in holding the place & playing the part you had played. I had been a little spoiled and was of too independent & merry a temper for all this—& soon made up my mind to let them alone—& nevertheless however conscious of *wrong*—to pass the rest of my life if so pleased God in anything but courting disappointment & gain nothing.

You must be one of those who know the fact, that in spite of all the nonsense written or believed both by friends and foes, Mr La Trobe brought away no fortune from Australia that I had opportunities & chances such as fall to the lot of few, if any, at home, but these I neglected, from principle, however innocently they might have been embraced—and here I am drifting into old age, with a large family literally, personally & from necessity cognizant of the fact not only that 20 shillings make a Pound but that 12d go to a shilling & not neglectful of the propriety of following an odd penny thro' the hole in my breeches pocket & tracing it to the depth to which it may have descended. I live quietly as maybe with my excellent second wife and my children—two of whom little girls both 5 & 6 years old are my play things, at a retired country house on the Herefordshire border—behind the Malvern Hills. I have hitherto found solace & occupation in my domestic circle—with my book, drawing, paint brushes—looking after gardens & small interests of a small establishment, seldom come up to town except when forced & as in the present instance in consequence of the

death of my eldest brother whose executor I am. However contented I have nothing against Society & am not sorry to rub off the rash could I do it with a good conscience but I must wait for better times and the realization of some of my morsels of land at Jolimont which is still an affair of the future—before I dare give way to it.

You may have heard from Powlett that within the last 18 months I have . . . an affection of my left eye (no outward appearance or pain of any kind) which has increased till now the sight is gone and never can be restored, an effusion upon the retina. I was in Berlin to consult Graff and here have seen some Jack & Harry—but there is no help—Sight is gone—and that of my right so far affected by sympathy with its fellow that I feel I ought to be prudent. I seldom write a note such as this—but you deserve that the effort should be made. If I preserve the sight of one eye I shall have nothing to complain of. If not, God's will be done. I have a brain & a memory which as long as they retain life will be stored & alive with beautiful pictures.

Lady Franklin & Miss C[racroft] are here—we have talked of you & in a note received this morning she desires me, if writing to give you her affectionate remembrance. Your bush is in her little Hall. Now Good bye, my dear Gunn,

Yours most truly, C. J. La Trobe.

To Charlotte Pellet & Rose Amiet

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
26th May. 1864.

My Dear Charlotte & dear Rose

I have just become aware of the great loss which dear Rose has encountered in the death of your son-in-law & your husband, of which the newspaper report by last mail has met the eye of Eleanora, now absent from us. I have just time before the mail closes to send you the brief assurance of our most sincere sympathy—and

[the remainder of this letter is missing]

To Rose Amiet

Whitbourne Court
19th December 1864

My Dear Rose,

The receipt of your long & interesting letter of the . . . giving us a full account of the circumstances attending your great loss, & of the position in which you & your dear Mother find yourselves was a real gratification to both parents & children; & has been read, & re-read with great sympathy & interest. May God be your comfort & a father to your fatherless children and enable you to bring them up in His Fear: so prays your old friend! All you tell of your dear old Mother now upon the verge of old age has special interest for us all. I am sure my dear Rose that you will remember that she is no longer young however active in mind & disposed from long habit to great activity of body, & that you will spare her where & when you can. Tell her how much & with what unceasing regard my wife & I think upon her and remember her faithful services to *three generations* of our family. I have left the duty of informing you both of many particulars relating to us & our past movements to my children, & have no doubt but that they will perform it much better than I could do so—even if I were better in a position to undertake it than [they,] seeing the position to which I am reduced by the failure of sight—I really am—I write & read very little at present but very thankful for the power which I still possess. When I find a suitable opportunity I will not fail to send you some little presents which have been retained till we knew where you were fixed.

My good friend Mr Powlett always mentions you & shows unabated interest in all that concerns you. I wish you could send us a photograph of yourself & your dear mother, if you have such things. Now once more

God bless & guide you, dear friend —
ever your affectionate old friend
C. J. La Trobe.

From a letter to James Graham

25 March 1865.

You may have seen that they propose in Parliament to provide some retiring allowance for retired governors. I have not the slightest expectation of profiting by this—on the contrary— have been civilly informed that strong as my case may seem & be undeniably—& unexceptionable my services & claims in themselves the case is such an exceptional one that nothing can be made of it in framing the proposed measure and as Port Phillip had no separate existence & Legislative machinery during the many years of my ministration of its affairs, I have no claim to profit by the proposed measure.

From a letter to James Graham

15 May 1865.

You will recollect that I had a particular knowledge of that part of the Yarra—originally Langhorne's native reserve—I think the poor people of Melbourne may have some appreciation for the foresight, if not task, which has secured them their ample means of recreation—Botanic Gardens & Parks on both sides of the Yarra—I have nothing on my conscience on that score. If I had been individually as free to act on my own responsibility in other matters as I happened to be in that I should perhaps have escaped some pail-fulls of hot abuse.

To Frederick Armand Powlett

Whitbourne Court Worcester
25th May 1865

My dear Powlett,

Many thanks for your well-filled envelope of the 22-24th March. Piper sent me also a good yarn. I wish it had been a more cheerful one as far as his own prospects & that of the Colony were concerned—so that I am not without sundry intelligence of you—Bell adding a sheet of town talk & I need not repeat how sorry we were to see nothing of Horatia—and we hear nothing of her save that she is well & plump. Never mind she will fine down without banting. Of Airey I have heard nothing since he went to Pau where I think he is known now as *Captain Airey*. I had forgotten that you had already got a photo of Charlie—but you may easily get rid of it.

I heard from Graham & something about Jolimont, that [. . .?] satisfactory as times go. However I await the result of your palaver with good McArthur when he would be back again from V.D.L. or Tasmania to know what may have been definitely settled about continued sales. You know that after our former disappointments I am getting a little impatient to realize when anything like a decent offer of purchase comes forward and if the sum offered for the upper house is not to be rejected as preposterously out of the question should not be sorry to know that it at best was off our hands—with all the contingencies to which that kind wooden property is unavoidably liable. So God guide you—the last papers from V[ictoria] said nothing more about the 'city built on gold' & the riches under the honeycomb of Collingwood flat. So I suppose that was a hum, tho' for my part I do not know where, go deep enough, gold may not be found in Victoria.

I see that tho' in the Bush you continue to have old friends about you. My anxiety is to see you stick limpet to your Post & not think of anything like leave of absence—or give the dirty Powers-that-be begging their pardon between you & me—the slightest reason to get their

lever under you. So sure as you do—unfairly or not, there are those amongst them who will make it a sacred duty to give you a hoist—I have not had the courage to look into the papers to see the details of the last serious between their Honors & the Ministry but as I just got a note from good AG[oldsmith] dated the Cavendish & offering to come & see me next week which offer we rejoice to close with—we two will have our amusement out of it. I need not close this before he is here.

I have had you & our last scenes of meeting much in my mind these last days. I have told you that I am minded to give up my pretty retreat here at Whitsuntide. So far I am quite abroad as to the future. I would [. . .?] stick to old England tho' only making for a year or two a temporary arrangement. If it could be arranged that I kept Agnes & my sister with us it would be more to my mind but to secure this object I must find a warm & cosy retreat however humble somewhere on the south coast. I ran down last week with Rose in one stretch from my own door to Penzance! 9 hours from Worcester! & came back by Totnes, Dartmouth & Exeter. I recalled to mind Piper's & my Sunday there & our parting at Plymouth dogs & all. I think Rose has come to the conclusion that if we could find a place to our mind cheap & nasty tho' it be— only considered by all as a temporary arrangement & all being willing to put up with certain inconveniences, this plan might do— but there are many difficulties & obstacles in the way. The alternative will I suppose be to go to the head of the Lake of Geneva or some such locality. I shall break out again for another trip probably next week this time alone—when I am more free to go hither & thither & scout up & down the Devonshire coast. It is a great pity that Cornwall is so terribly far, tho' you now go from London to Penzance in eleven hours. Altho' not more beautiful than our present country, [nor more charming?] with Devonshire & many of the sites on either hand of the rail from Tallast to Truro. That locality I know you are well acquainted with. You shall of course know my plans whatever they are when I know them myself.

22nd. A. G[oldsmith] does not come until Thursday so I do not keep my envelope open for him. Thank Piper when you see him for his letter. I am sorry that there is no certain chance of seeing him home. You will see or hear of the Bill to be laid before Parliament for the relief of Col. Governors. It excludes such as myself as I was civilly assured 9 months ago by the Col. Office it must do. You see that I have sat down between two chairs, the home and the Col-Govt. & must sit on the 'ground'. I receive from ignorant friends many congratulatory words—that at last I may be set straight & provided for. Don't let any in the Colony put themselves to that trouble—wife & daughters 3—little ones two all send you kindest regards. We hope to get sight of Horatia sooner or later if we remain in England & if not I shall not lose sight of her. My sight, tho' sufficient for all common purposes, is anything but a matter to boast of.

My dear Powlett, Yours truly
C. J. La Trobe

To Augustus Tulk †

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
8 June 1865

Sir,

I heard accidentally the other day that you were in Europe, & have been furnished on my application to Mr Guillaume with what was your address, when lately in town. If this reaches your hand I would ask you to have the goodness to inform me what may be the probable length of your stay in England - & whether you would oblige me in returning to Melbourne to take charge of a few volumes which I have from time to time put aside with the idea that they might be acceptable to the Public Library under your charge - in the prospect of which I take much interest.

I am
Sir

Yours very faithfully
Chas^s J. La Trobe

Augustus Tulk Esq.

To James Graham

Whitbourne Court
25 June 1865

My dear Graham

You will be sorry to learn by this mail that the one from Australia due this month has not come to hand—in fact was not heard of till the other day when it is rumoured that she [i.e. the ship] has damaged her machinery & gone into the Mauritius. When we may see her mail no one can tell—I fancy that it might contain something of importance for me. If a bill of ex[change] I hope duplicate will follow next month, & possibly, as you have frequently done so—slip of or duplicate of anything of importance which may have been sent me. In the meantime you [section missing]

. . . me and mine making preparation for our quitting W[hitbourne] at Michaelmas. I have yet no definite plan—but fancy I may go abroad for a year before I fix upon another residence. Next mail I must have made up my mind—as the breaking up of such an establishment as ours requires time & forethoughts. You may or may not have been told in my last that Henri Moor had for his *own* satisfaction if not for mine taken up my cause & rubbed my claims upon the nose of the good people in the Col. Office with a view to my obtaining some solid requisition of services under the Colonial Govt. Pension Act, now before Parliament. As it was framed, I should have been totally excluded. He has fought the cause with so much pertinacity & skill that Mr Cardwell gave in & it was understood that if Mr. M. could get backers to an amendment on the Bill, which would do what one required, it would not be opposed by him. Backers enough were to be had, and the day before yesterday, the said amendment was put *passed* without any opposition, in a manner sufficiently complimentary to me. So after ten years waiting & I must say with no expectation whatever of even having the slightest chance of recognition of service, I may now secure something. Without Moor I certainly should never had a chance. You will see all the proceedings brief as they were in the papers for the 23 June. It will be sometime I dare say before I get to know from those precious papers [indecipherable] how they will rate me & more time probably before I finger anything. In the meantime I & mine are thankful for the chance—& all my friends right & left will be pleased to. I know that I may fully reckon you amongst the number— & my good faithful friend McArthur to whom you will communicate this—with my very kind regards.

We have Horatia Powlett & Dr Meyer both with us so we talk a good deal about Australia just now. We have a most splendid season—my hay crop is in & will bring in a few pounds towards moving. Goodbye—my kindest regards to Mrs Graham

ever your true old friend
C. J. La Trobe

To Augustus Tulk †

Whitbourne Court
Worcester
29 June 1865

Dear Sir,

I beg to thank you for your obliging note of the 9th inst. & for the gift of the Supplementary Volume of the Catalogue of the Public Library at Melbourne upon which I set one value. I request that you will kindly offer my acknowledgement to the Trustees of the Institution.

I send according to your direction a case of books to Mr Bain of the Haymarket for presentation in my name. There is nothing, as you will see from the enclosed list, of great value – but some of the volumes may fill a gap in your Library, or possess some interest. You are to consider yourself quite at liberty to withhold any you may think unworthy of being placed on the shelves.

I presume that whether under the roof of the great Institution or not there may be some depository of Botanical Specimens accessible to the public, & I have with this idea taken the liberty to include in my package, a few parcels of interesting other plants addressed to care of my valued old friend Dr Ferdinand Müller.

Will you pardon my drawing your attention to & correcting two errors which I have remarked in your first Catalogue in connection with my own name –

1. That my Father's name was Christian Ignatius, & not as therein noted (*Voyage to South Africa*) – Christopher,

and 2nd. That a volume of Poetry – *The Solace of Song* – therein entered as one of my works, was that of an elder brother, the Rev^d John Antes La Trobe, two of whose other works I have taken the liberty of sending, *The Music of the Church* and *Sacred Lays and Lyrics*. The first of these is now somewhat rarely met with, but considered of value by those who have studied the subject.

I may be in London before the Great Britain sails, & when there will make an effort to meet with you.

Believe me
Dear Sir
Yours very sincerely
C. J. La Trobe.

To James Graham

Whitbourne Court
18th August 1865

My dear Graham,

I need not tell you how deeply I am affected by the sad intelligence brought me by this mail of the unexpected death of our dear old friend [Frederick Powlett]. What a bereavement for all who knew him & above all for his orphan child. You know how long & sincerely we have been attached to each other & how loyal & sincere & enduring his friendship. I feel that the loss is to me irreplaceable & I am sure that it is one which will be long felt in the community of which he has been so long a member & in which, after all done & said, [he] had played no obscure or ignoble part. I have had notes from Sturt & Bell & good McArthur & am therefore not in ignorance of the causes, apparently, & circumstances attending his removal from the world. The good Bishop also who shews how sincere his appreciation of Powlett's noble charm etc. But I must advert in all brevity (for my eyesight is more than usually troubled from some cause at present) to the business part of your note.

First I acknowledge as in duty bound the receipt of the Bill of Exchange for 500£ which I am very glad to receive—for tho' no pressure is ever applied on the part of my good friend in Hatton Garden yet I chafe over any liability which I may have no ready means of relieving myself of at any time. If you are able to remit the £200 quarterly, which you had hoped to do—I do not just at present fear that I shall have to ask for further extraordinary aid to keep well afloat but I may be in a position to write more readily on this point by next mail. You will have heard, & I make no doubt with great pleasure, that thro' the unsought, and I had almost said also undeserved loyal actions of Moor in Parliament—The Govt was fairly forced to admit my claim not to be excluded from any advantages that might fall to my lot, if

included in the recent retired Governors Pension Bill—and that therefore I am supposed to be in for *some* retired allowance. But my case is & must continue to be held to be such an *exceptional* one that it is hard to meet it by applying the provisions of a Bill framed without any reference whatever to such & I must say my expectations are only moderate. It is clear that I cannot come in for full pension upon any class—but whether, on the reduced scale, they will award me 5 or 600, or only 200, remains to be seen. All officials are off on their summer trips—& care little about the inconvenience felt by those who are a-waiting. Their decision—nothing will be settled certainly for a couple of months to come: but of course you shall be apprised of whatever is decided. I will not repeat what I have here said on the subject to either McArthur or Sturt—you will let them know what I have said.

Thanks for the promises of the map which will be very useful & will in addition be perfect information which you have supplied me with, leaves me no room for doubt on any point connected with my little interests in V[ictoria], Macarthur & Sturt's handful. I embrace with eagerness & gratitude the proposal which Macarthur makes in this note to me, that you & Sturt should be linked with him in a new power of attorney to be forwarded to me for signature by next mail. Nothing could be more in accordance with my wishes—& you both know me well enough to be assured that you possess the fullest regard & confidence—the same, which, in foul weather or sunshine, Powlett & McArthur have always felt certain they were possessed of.

I do not know if any of my letters to Powlett by the April & following mails have been sent by me under cover to you. I wrote to Sturt. That one may be returned to me—they may be simply opened—any enclosures (if any) addressed to Bell or Piper or others forwarded, the photographs disposed of to friends or burnt. Poor dear fellow—how little Horatia, while having her summer holidays joyously with us, thought she was then already doubtless an orphan. Our kindest regards to you all my dear Graham

Yours truly
C. J. La Trobe.

P.S. 23th. I have waited for the Southampton mail before I closed mine—but have received nothing in addition to what I hold but a very nice & very touching note from my faithful old Cleary. We have received a very feeling letter from dear Horatia. Tell McArthur this, if you see him. My spirit is more with you in the Colony these days than at [home?] What a stranger I should be with the *multitude*—if I were to revisit it. I suppose that I might walk from one end of Collins Street to the other without being recognized.

Goodbye.
God bless you
C. J. L.

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court
October 24th 1865

My dear Graham

Your kind letter by the August mail, has duly come to hand with the duplicate of the previous letter and Second of Exchange £400, and this morning I received the plan of Jolimont to which reference had been made by you and Macarthur. You will be sorry to hear that I am not just now in a position to examine it or make any remarks, as I am for the time just *hors de combat* as far as sight goes. I had to set off about a fortnight ago to escort Agnes to Pau, where we had resolved she should pass the winter to give her a chance of escape [from] the winter coughs which she has recently experienced year by year. I halted by the way at the pretty Chateau of our friend Goldsmith near Tours. Just when I was about to resume my journey I found the sight of my only remaining eye so seriously affected, that,

committing her to my good friends' care, I had to lose no time in returning home literally groping my way alone and hourly increasing blindness, by Paris, Dover and London, till I reached home on the evening of the 14th. Since my arrival the care of my wife, who for the time, with my two little girls is my only companion, and medical treatment have, I trust, operated some little improvement in the organ but I am, for the time, very nearly disabled, please God that next month I may send you a better report. I may mention that Cecile has been sent to Zurich in Switzerland; and placed under the care of an Oculist of repute there, Nelly is visiting friends, and Charlie pursuing his avocation in London.

On business matters I have nothing to say, but that I approve all what you and McArthur have done and intend to do. By last mail I sent you the new power of attorney received by the July mail, duly executed, and trust that it will have come safe to hand. I will not recapitulate any things I have said in the letter accompanying it, it strikes me it may be just as well, until otherwise directed, to let any bill of exchange forwarded on my account after the receipt of this, be drawn in favour of Messrs Mallalieu and Co., and sent direct to them, it will obviate delay, in the event of my being abroad, as I may possibly be if all goes well sometime or other before long. I receive yours and others hearty congratulations on the subject of my claims being specially admitted by parliament to be included in the provisions of the 'colonial governors pension bill' with much pleasure, the whole credit is due to my good friend Moor, I am however obliged to tell the many, here and elsewhere, who participate in that feeling toward me, that they must not exaggerate the results of the application of the provisions of a bill framed without any reference to the merits of the case so completely exceptional in all its features as mine and the fact is, that having been notoriously underpaid during my 14-15 years service, I must now, from the peculiar wording of the provision of the act, submit to being under-pensioned, being placed I understand upon the reduced rate of the third class, which will give me £333.6.8. per annum. I hear nothing whatever of any back pay. So my dear friend, you see I am still dependent upon Jolimont whatever it may have brought and may yet bring. I wish you to give this information to McArthur, Sturt and all others right and left who may be interested in the subject, and further to add any particulars with regard to my present state of health which may be interesting. I may add that I never have suffered any pain in my eye and am in excellent general health thank God. I will not forget your wish to have the girls' photographs.

Kindest regards to Mrs Graham. I received various letters by the last mail from friends whom I should wish to reply to however briefly, Mrs Perry, Bell, Piper, Mrs Ferguson and a very affecting one from poor old Cleary who had lost his wife. I could wish to acknowledge one or other of these however briefly, and should I slip any such acknowledgements under this cover, you will kindly put them in envelopes and forward them.

Believe me my dear Graham

Yours very faithfully

C. J. La Trobe

My particular kind regards to Macarthur & Sturt.

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
November 18th 1865

My dear Graham,

I am in receipt of your kind letter by your September mail, with the duplicate of the proceedings, & thank you heartily for it. It has made one of the quickest passages we have had recently, from your side of the globe. My last to you would acknowledge the receipt of the Jolimont property plan which you had previously sent me, & whenever I may be able to consult it, & make the additions to the information previously on the face of it, which your present letter furnishes, I shall find myself in possession of all that I can possibly require. Let

me thank you for your care of my interests, & desire to make everything clear to me. I am quite satisfied with what you have done, & propose doing. The information which I sent you in my last, with respect to the probable amount of my future pension under the Act recently passed, will shew you that I must still depend upon the proceeds of my little Australian property for the means of keeping the wolf from the door, or at least of filling my position in the world, humble as it is, with comfort & decency.

That letter would also inform you to what degree I have been suddenly deprived of the power of sight, which I had retained since the extinction of my left eye, & of the circumstances attending it. I am thankful to say that there has been some partial progress made, since I wrote, in the recovery of a certain amount of sight, however cloudy & insufficient, during the hours of broad daylight, & I still hope, if it please God, to increase my power of vision. I have not stirred from home but have been quietly pursuing the course prescribed for me, by my medical advisers. All paper, printed or otherwise, is, for the present, a perfect blank to me, but there are plenty of willing hearts & hands around me, to make me forget to what degree, I am for the present, disabled. I am sure you will have told my dear friends Mr & Mrs McArthur of my present circumstances, & as any letter I write to you, may be communicated to him, I spare him, at least just at present, the infliction of a scrawl such as that you now receive from the pen of my dear daughter Nelly, the only Australian girl at present with me, or from my own hand. I am getting pretty clever in conducting part of my correspondence by the latter means, finding no difficulty in writing, tho' in utter darkness, by the aid of a little wire frame invented to assist people in my predicament.

You seem to be, in what the Yankees would call 'a precious fix'; Governor, Ministry, Legislature, Government machinery & all. All I think the consequence of your ultra-democratic fashions imported over the water. It is a mystery to all here, how you will struggle out of it. I do not know that I should be able to write to Mrs Perry by this mail but if you should stumble upon her or the Bishop anywhere pray give my kindest regards, and add such information about me as this may enable you to offer. Tell Sturt from me, that I have written to Lady Franklin to find out what chance I had of getting information from her, with respect to poor Powlett's matters, in connection with her, but as yet have no reply. She has been all the summer & autumn, dancing attendance on Queen Emma, & is now, I understand, upon the point of going to Bombay. If I hear from her before this mail closes, I will write to him.

Kindest regards to Mrs Graham.

Ever yours truly
C. J. La Trobe.

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
December 22nd 1865

My dear Graham,

The intelligence which you will have received from & of me, by the two last mails will have prepared you to understand my employment of other pens. With regard to my sight, I dare not say or speculate much, but it is evident, that if in God's mercy, there is to be amelioration it cannot be expected to be rapid. There are, however, no want of kind & efficient helps around me, in my necessities, and gradually we are slipping through what has been in the opinion of far better qualified judges than myself, an exceedingly gloomy season, depressing alike to mind & body. Our good wishes for you & yours for Xmas & New Year, will be cold before they reach you, but they leave the oven piping hot here, & are very sincere.

You had not much to report, & I have not much to remark on business matters in your October letter just received. No purchase is better than a bad one, which the Minister of

Justice seems according to your statement, to have been likely to prove himself though I am very sorry that the lot was not sold & fairly out of our keeping, & I am quite sure that your anxiety, & that of my other friends to realize what remains of the property is equal to my own. Your picture of the state of the Colony just at present coincides with that drawn, as far as I can hear by all the public prints, & is much more reliable. A pretty hash Messrs McCulloch & Michie & the poor Governor, seem to have made of it, and the exceptional dry season seems to their aid. However as you say, it is a long lane that has no turning, & we must hope for better times. I thank you for the remittance, £200, Bill of Exchange enclosed in your letter. Anything I get from Australia will be welcome notwithstanding the *fine* pension of £333.6.8, which has been awarded me dating from the 5th of July last. It may pay for boots & breakfast if not breeches & beefsteaks. (Nelly my amanuensis blushes).

I need not tell you, or any who know me, the interest I take in the Memorial Portrait movement, however disabled from personally acting in the matter, as it would have been otherwise my pride & pleasure to act; but I have selected one whom I believe to be both as capable as willing to fill my place, & carry out the wishes of the Committee & Subscribers. I have apprized Sir Redmond & my dear friend McArthur of all on this subject which it may be necessary for them to know at present. I hope that ere this the new power of attorney, received in September last from you, & returned by our outgoing mail of that month, will have reached its destination in safety. I must close with kindest regards to Mrs Graham & your tablefull,

I remain ever, My Dear Graham

Yours most truly

C. J. La Trobe

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
January 15th 1866

My dear Graham

Thank you for your lines by your November mail & for duplicate of the October letter & Second of Exchange for £200. After the report given in your last which I have acknowledged, I hardly expected a further account of sales, however much these might be desired. I could well imagine reasons why you did not like to push that Minister of In-Justice Michie to the wall, however much I regret that the allotment was not fairly disposed of. But better luck next time, I hope. All the accounts from the Colony coincide in saying what bad times you are passing through & how the political deadlock & mismanagement of your administration is felt to 'be prejudicial to' every interest public & private. How you are to wriggle out of your difficulties no one here seems to guess! To me it seems that every fresh plunge taken by the Governor & Government, plunges you deeper in the mire. But I may be mistaken, as I own to being quite out of the way of hearing all that is written on either side upon these matters.

I cannot talk of much progress or improvement in the state of my sight, & all paper, printed or written, being perfectly blank to me, the reading & writing which is absolutely necessary must be performed by those around me, and these, willing as they are, are but three in number, & as you may suppose, have their duties & requirements.

As I have not stirred from home since I returned in October I have very little to write about. While I think of it I thank you for telling me that P. in Sturt's name stood for *Pitfield*. This is what I had not suspected, as both a printed paper I consulted, & Goldie's evidence, I think, went to say it was *Pulteney*. Bye the bye before I close this, I may have a message to send him in reply to a question which he asked me in his last. I have written to him by the two last mails, sending him an important letter by one, & a duplicate by the last. I am glad to learn from your letter that the new power of attorney had arrived safely out. Bell gives me a sketch of Sir Redmond's last *Waterloo banquet*; I am afraid that a few years must reduce greatly the number who attended. The last 12 months have made several gaps.

19th. The Southampton Mail brings me nothing so I'm concluding my note, by begging you to tell Sturt that I have quite failed in ascertaining who may be Lady Franklin's agent or man of business in Sandon. He must apply to Ronald Gunn for any information.

And now, one word more, for one has enough matters, for you, McArthur and Sturt. Without detailing reasons which press upon me in my present position & state of health, I am exceedingly anxious to know that the remainder of the unsold portions of Jolimont may be off our hands. In short, that there may be no question of my being possessed of what may be called *real estate*; and further, that the personal property & investments in Australia, might as far as may be of a character to render the capital as *comeatable* (to coin a word which may be understood) as possible. In short, to give as little trouble to Executors, & those who may come after me, as practicable. I dare say you will understand what I mean.

More I need not say, at present. I thank you for the very complete information which I have received on all subjects connected with my interests since you co-operate with McArthur and set just value on his & your steady friendship. My kindest regards to him—I do not write this mail. Say everything kind for me to Mrs Graham and believe me ever dear Graham

Yours most truly
C. J. La Trobe

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court, Worcester
February 19th 1866

My dear Graham,

Our Australian letters via Marseilles came to hand upon the 14th, Ash Wednesday, otherwise St. Valentine's Day, & I thank you much for yours of December, & the enclosed account of the six months ending 30th of September, with all the details which you kindly give me. I need not tell you that the state of matters in relation to my affairs, is quite as favourable as I could expect or dared to hope. During the period of stagnation in which all business seems to be in the Colony, I did not look out for notice of any further sales till this state of things changes, but I hope that there are better times ahead, & that the realization of the fair value of the remaining portion of unsold land may be secured after a time. Meantime I possess my soul in patience; that quality is one which I am bound, in my present state of continued disablement to study, & pray God to vouchsafe, morning, noon & night. My last will have prepared you to find that I am unable as yet to report any great or decided change in the state of my poor sight. I thank you for giving poor old Cleary the information he sought for. He is as true-hearted an old fellow as ever lived. You will satisfy any kind enquiries that may be made after me by old friends. The number, that may adorn Sir Redmond's yearly banquet to old Colonists, is rapidly diminishing alas! I have contrived to dictate a few lines to 'old Fyans' to congratulate him upon his daughter's marriage, I will not trouble you with a longer yarn this time. Perhaps you will have the goodness to address & forward the enclosed to my good friend Piper. I am afraid that his wine speculations have not turned out as favourably as at one time he hoped that they would. I only wish that I could transport tea or hock hogsheads of cider which encumber my cellar, into some shady spot in the diggings with an honest fellow to serve out the contents at sixpence the tankard. I think there is little doubt but that in the thirsty weather that reigns in your quarter of the globe, the speculation would be a good one; in fact a better one for me personally, provided the tapster did not bolt with the proceeds, than those confounded ten hogsheads of brandy which were consigned to me in the 'London'! in 1840, and which old Willis made such good use of to damage my character as patron of the Temperance Society. You will remember this fact, & be amused with the recollection as I said. Would you believe it! That venerable old gentleman is alive, and as I hear, as fond of quarrelling with his neighbours as ever, residing within a mile or

two of Worcester. Strange to say, often as I have been there these 7 years & upwards, I have never set eyes upon him.

I shall be very glad to hear that your precious Government has found the means of getting the Colony out of the difficulties into which it appears they have involved it. Now goodbye. God bless you; my kindest regards to Mrs Graham and

Believe me, my dear Graham,

Yours every truly,

C. J. La Trobe.

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Bourne East Cottages
Hemel Hempstead
March 21st 1866

My dear Graham

Your January letter has come to hand in due course, and I thank you heartily for it and for the proofs of your continued friendship and attention to my interests which it conveys. You have been quite right in taking advantage of the Cash offer of £900 for Lot 31 so tell MacArthur that I am perfectly satisfied. I am so fully aware of the rumble tumble state into which the dear old barrack, the birthplace of three of my children, and for so many years our pleasant home had necessarily fallen in the lapse of 25 years and more, that I can hardly groan about its sale, and transfer into other hands. I have no clear idea what quantity of land has gone with it; but may ascertain that on my return to Whitbourne. I shall be very glad to hear that the times may favour the disposal of the upper house also at a fair price. In fact that the whole of the value of the property may have been realized. Whenever this may have been done, I calculate that the 'tottle of the whole' will fall considerably under £90,000 which my friends *Argus* and company hinted in 52-3 was the amount of the probable haul which His Excellency would secure from his land speculation in the Colony under his Government. Thanks for the 1st of Exchange, which having been made payable to my order instead of Messrs Mallalieu, I took occasion to bank in due course when in London the other day.

For the first time since my return in my disabled state in October last from the Continent, I slipt the tether rope from my neck a fortnight ago and with wife and two little ones came hither for a little change to visit a relative and be in proximity to town for the transaction of any necessary business. I shall probably be home again soon after Easter. Our contemplated removal from Whitbourne by Michaelmas next and choice of another place of residence—if all goes well, are the main duties which lie before us. I need not tell you that proceedings which under ordinary circumstances would be matters of comparatively easy accomplishment become invested with considerable difficulty and gravity, to the view of one in my particular position. But, I look to God's mercy to give me the energy and power to play my part whenever the time comes. Our present views lead us to consider that a greater proximity to London and possibly for Agnes' sake, a residence somewhere on the Southern Coast might have its advantages. But you shall know our decision and all our acts and doings as time moves on.

You will have heard from my more recent communications, that my power of vision has undergone no sensible improvement from all the care and doctoring of which I have been the subject for 5 months past, and I must not conceal from you and other friends that the decided opinion of my London Oculist confirmed by my own impressions is not at all favourable to the recovery or retention of any useful power of sight. All I can say is that I would place my trust in God to enable me to bear my trial, which, great as it may be, is, I feel, not laid upon me without reason, and is attended by numberless alleviations, beyond those which others similarly tried, can enjoy. I have thus put it in your power to state plain facts to any old friends who may ask after me. Thank my steady old friend Col. Anderson for his hearty greeting. Mrs. La Trobe and Agnes recall his friendly visit at Whitbourne with great pleasure. What you tell me of him and of the worthy lighthouse keeper at Cape Shank was very

pleasing to me and my family. Think of John Barker having a son of age! how old we get. Agnes is still at Pau quite well, we shall rejoice to have her back with us. Your brother's wish to have a photograph of me, I may at once satisfy by borrowing one from my niece's album, and thus doing at once what he wishes.

And now—Goodbye, believe me ever my dear Graham,

Your very sincere old friend

C. J. La Trobe

Everything kind from us to Mr. & Mrs. MacArthur when you see them. I shall doubtless hear from Sturt about dear Powlett's affairs, in due course.

To James Graham [in another's hand]

Whitbourne Court

April 16th 1866

My dear Graham

Your kind note, with duplicate of the preceding, by February mail, has come duly to hand, & I thank you heartily for it, I hope that your Council may in the end find out that their quarrel is not only injurious to the prosperity of the Colony itself, but lowers it in the estimation of all, & that they will find the means of reconciling their differences.

By this time Sir Charles [Darling] will have heard of his recall, & probably this mail will take out some intelligence respecting his successor for I take it for granted, that if the probability be that the present Ministry will be defeated upon this reform question & retire in consequence, they will take care & leave no such piece of patronage open to their successors. With regard to myself I have little to say. My last will have told you the result of my visit to my London oculist, & my present state will show you that I am again at home. We returned on the 4th inst. after spending a few days in a visit to Tonbridge Wells & a fruitless hunt after a house at Hastings. We are quite abroad as yet as to our future place of abode, & I need not tell you or other friends to what an extent any want of sight complicates every project & embarrasses me & mine. But I have good confidence that God's good providence will guide us. I was pleased to stumble upon good old Alex Mollison & have a quarter of an hour's chat with him at Tonbridge Wells. I cannot tell you how he looks but his greeting was as friendly as ever. With this exception I stumbled upon no Australian during my month's absence from home. Sir W[illiam] à Beckett has gone to live at Upper Norwood. Maar has been in Florence. William Mollison & Thomas à Beckett alas both on the Continent. I was very sorry to hear of my kind friend Mrs. G's mishap, though gratified to think that notwithstanding the number of your olive branches you were disposed to think you had too many. I shall be pleased to hear of her speedy & perfect recovery.

There is nothing much to remark upon business matters. I could not help smiling at the idea of the stable becoming independently productive under your management, but am really pleased of course that it is. If the times improved, I shall be very glad to hear that the sale of Upper Jolimont can be effected. The only thing that I missed in your note, was the absence of all mention of my dear friends the Macarthurs. Perhaps they were not yet at Melbourne but wherever they are my most sincere good wishes & kind regards follow them.

Now good-bye. We are fairly now in spring weather & I can smell the violets & primroses which my children gather for me even if I cannot see them.

My kindest regards to Mrs Graham & all inquiring friends of whom my family [leads?] me. I believe that I may still name a dozen or so in the old province.

Ever, my dear Graham

Yours most truly

C. J. La Trobe.

To Captain George Ward Cole †
[from a draft in another's hand]

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex,
January 28th, 1869.

My dear Captain Cole,

Last mail will have taken out the sad intelligence of the death of our excellent old friend, Captain Ferguson. This will have been a terrible blow to his children and to his friends in the colony, who may have held reason to expect his early return to his home, with a not unreasonable prospect of ultimate restoration to health and activity. In the course of last October I went up to town with one of my children, mainly with the purpose of finding my way to Pinner, where he and Mrs. Ferguson were staying with an intimate friend. I found him in excellent health and spirits, and enjoying the prospect of a speeding resumption of the service to which he had devoted his best days, and upon the furtherance of which his entire energy was still directed. A week or two later Captain and Mrs. Ferguson went to Dover for change of air, and being still under the impression received from the advisers by whom they had been guided during their residence at a hydropathic establishment at Matlock, felt encouraged to plan almost immediate return to the colony by the Jerusalem early in December. However, certain misgivings in the mind of a medical gentleman, then in England, under whose care Captain Ferguson had at one time placed himself in Williamtown, led them to consider it judicious before departure to take the advice of some surgeon of eminence in London. Accordingly they came up to town at the close of November. The first London practitioners they consulted shook their heads, and advised consultation with Sir Wm. Ferguson. The result was that amputation, without loss of time, was pronounced necessary. The rest is soon told. He received the painful intelligence with calmness and full resignation to God's will, and underwent the operation at King's College Hospital with exemplary firmness and courage on the 28th of November. Perfect success seemingly attended it, and there seemed, humanly speaking, to be every prospect of a prompt cure and early convalescence; everything seemed in his favour. A few days later, however, all was clouded by symptoms of hospital fever (*pyoe æm ia*). This resisted all control, and finally carried him off on the 27th of December, just one month after the operation. He had lived a Christian life, and his death was the peaceful and resigned death of a Christian. It was a melancholy satisfaction to me to be able to join a few friends in following his remains to their resting place in one of the outlying London cemeteries on the last day of the year. You know Mrs Ferguson well, and will be prepared to hear me say that her whole conduct and demeanour throughout this period of suspense and bitter trial has been worthy of her high character and steadfast principle. Come what will, and happen what may, I have the fullest conviction that neither the widow nor the children will be forsaken, however doubtful and clouded the future may appear, in consequence of the irreparable loss which, they have sustained.

And now, dear Captain Cole, it is possible that you may already have heard all this from other sources, but I have dictated it to you under strong impulse, for I feel assured that there is no member of the community in which you live who will more sincerely deplore the loss of Captain Ferguson on private grounds; at the same time that there is no one who, from long acquaintance with his official character and services, will be in a better position to estimate their real value or the loss which the colony has sustained.

The circumstances in which Captain Ferguson's family are left not only demands the utmost display of sympathy and interest on the part of friends, but may call for decided and prompt action; therefore I cannot rest satisfied without discharging what I consider *my* duty, and seeking to strengthen your hands as far as I may in bringing the character of his long services before the existing colonial authorities. Of his private career previous to his entering the service of the Colonial Government in 1851 nothing need be said.

Captain Ferguson was appointed as the Harbour Master at Geelong in April, 1851 – a few months before the separation of the colony from New South Wales. He there did excellent service in a variety of ways calculated to advance the interests of the port, and to introduce

order, where, from circumstances, but little order had hitherto prevailed. His was the first appointment of this class in that locality. The separation of the colony from New South Wales took place in the month of July following. Shortly after, the late Captain Bunbury resigned the Harbour Mastership of Port Phillip. Captain Ferguson was at once (February, 1852) appointed to succeed him, and from that time performed all duties of Chief Harbour Master of the colony. The previous year (May 1851) the first gold discoveries in New South Wales had taken place, and in the month of August those of our colony followed. At the time of Captain Ferguson's taking charge of the Port of Melbourne their influence had begun to be fully felt, and in no department more seriously than in that of the Harbour Master. This is no place for statistical details, but they must bear me out in reminding you of a few facts connected with our late friend's career. At the time of separation that department comprised only 30 individuals of all ranks, and when he took charge the number was much reduced. There were at that time, according to the returns, no fewer than 54 vessels, registering 26,785 tons, in Hobson's Bay alone. The crews on arrival numbered 1,235 men. Of this number only 463 remained on board, 500 having deserted, and the rest having been discharged by arrangement or pure necessity. For the first six months after Captain Ferguson's assumption of office as Harbour Master the duties of Police Magistrate and Chief of the Water Police were superadded, and how much labour they involved may be surmised from the fact that from 1st of April to the 31st July, 1852, four months only, no less than 236 marine cases were brought before the bench at Williamstown - sometimes as many as 30 in a day. A year later (March 1853) the returns show that the number of vessels in the harbour in Hobson's Bay alone were 91, tonnage 43,754; and passing on to the still later returns of May, 1853, two years after Captain Ferguson's assumption of office, we find from the records that the number of ships in port had increased to 129; tonnage, 63,292; crew on board on arrival, 2872, and at the date of report, 1628; the amount of desertions at that time having, however, proportionally diminished, in consequence of the abatement of the gold fever, caused by the non-success attendant upon the labours of thousands at the goldfields.

The above numbers take no account of the large number of vessels and amount of tonnage lying at the wharves at Melbourne or elsewhere. From these figures alone it may be judged what must have been a struggle in which the Chief Harbour Master was engaged from the very outset to secure order, and answer the innumerable calls on every branch of his department, at the same time that there was for many months an almost complete impossibility of securing subordinate agency, such as boatmen, pilots, and police, at any price. But I may bear witness to the untiring diligence, energy, and self-devotion with which Captain Ferguson grappled with the difficulties of his position, and the seemingly insurmountable obstacles which stood in his way.

Ashore and afloat he was always ready, showing the same directness of purpose, intelligence, and forgetfulness of self. He shunned no responsibility, and turned his hand from no work, whether within or beyond the ordinary scope of his duty, which the hard necessity of the times forced the Government to bring under his notice.

Already in 1852, when the overflowing of our gaol and stockade rendered the adoption of other methods of restraint absolutely necessary, and addition to the existing buildings could not be thought of, it was Captain Ferguson who first suggested the employment of hulks; and it was with his personal assistance and supervision, and under his unflagging energy, that the three first of these - the Success, the President, and the Sacramento - were purchased, fitted up, and made available for the purpose in view, and the rules and regulations for the employment and safety of the men afloat and ashore prescribed and carried out. He carried the same energy into every branch of his department, and his influence was soon apparent. His subordinates of every class became actuated by his spirit. As time moved on, the range of his duties, both ordinary and extraordinary, increased.

In the formation of the quarantine station at the heads, in the management if not the erection of lighthouses, sailing directions, port and wharf regulations, buoys, signal stations,

steam dredging &c., he was the main and most active agent. The whole pilot establishment and regulations, men, and vessels, were under his charge; and when I left the colony in May, 1854, the entire range of ports outside Port Phillip Heads from Point Lonsdale to Portland, as well as that of Geelong had felt the influence of his intelligent supervision and care.

The entire department of Chief Harbour Master, which I have numbered at the period of separation about thirty individuals, then numbered 230.

The character of Captain Ferguson's unbroken service during the fourteen years which have elapsed since I left the colony must be well known to the Government and the people he has served so long and so faithfully. I confine myself to recalling to mind those earlier, and what must have been the hardest and most difficult, period – none can know *how* difficult but those who were in that fierce struggle for the maintenance of order under so many disadvantages; and on this subject I have spoken advisedly and with reason, for I may truly say he worked under my own eye. I had sincere regard for the man, and just pride in the qualities of his heart, head, and hand. Whatever mistakes may have been made by the Government of the colony in those hard and difficult times (and I am quite ready to admit that there were many, especially if the past is to be judged by the light of the present), I never have hesitated in believing that, in appointing Captain Ferguson to the office he has so long filled, it was the right man in the right place. I shall be heartily rejoiced to find that the Government and inhabitants of the colony admit that this has been the case, and to learn that they have not forgotten the strong claims of one who has served them so long and so faithfully, and who, removed by God's providence, so to say, in the maturity of his powers, has left a widow and young family behind him.

I have done, I leave you to make use of this communication, or any portion of it, which you may think judicious and called for. There may be among Ferguson's friends those who may not be sorry to be reminded of *facts*. By-the-bye, I may mention as a proof how completely Captain Ferguson's mind was engrossed by devotion to his public duty, that while in Dover, only ten days before the operation, he took an opportunity to drag himself up into the lantern of the S. Foreland Lighthouse, and made a most careful scrutiny of the whole apparatus and arrangement, with a view of the adoption of any hint for the perfection of those under his charge in the colony. And now, goodbye.

I trust this will find you in good health, and in comparative vigour.

Believe me ever, dear Captain Cole,

Yours very truly,

C. J. La Trobe

To James Graham †

[November 1869

Extract]

Since I received your last, I have had Rusden's promised note, with its poetical enclosure. I beg that you would thank him heartily for it, and the kind spirit which inspired both the lines and the letter. I am not insensible to the compliment paid me [about the legacy of Melbourne's parks and reserves], and the recognition of one good service, at least, which I had it in my power to render to the public inhabiting the City of Melbourne, and their children after them. I am jealous that it should not be quite forgotten also that, from the first, I fostered the plan of the Yan Yean Lake, and turned the first sod of the works. Without the advantages thus secured, Melbourne would never be what it is now.

To George William Rusden †

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex

[in another's hand]

December 1st 1869

My dear Mr Rusden,

By a recent mail I requested my friend James Graham to acknowledge receipt & thank you heartily for your kind note of the 9th of August, with its enclosure, which I need not tell you, both amused & interested me. It is only fitting, however, that I should take an opportunity of doing this in a more direct manner. I am much obliged to you for having elicited an expression of goodwill & remembrance on the part of the Old Colonists towards me. I have always considered that the circumstances & position which allowed me an opportunity of providing for the ease, comfort & pleasure of the community among which I was thrown for the time being, in the manner you adverted to, gave me a rare privilege; and I cannot but be grateful at finding that the manner in which it was exercised, is appreciated by the 'gentle public', as good old Fawkner would have said.

I would also thank you for the mention you make of Mr Wintle and the transmission of his expression of goodwill towards the old Governor. I am far from being insensible to it; and I beg you will seize any opportunity that may present itself of telling him so. He was under my eye for ten years, or more in the *ordinary* times preceding the gold discovery. I never had reason to doubt his faithful and efficient discharge of duty, and the manner in which, subsequently to that event, he rose to the difficulties of his position, and bore his share in the struggle to maintain discipline & order in the midst of all the distress & perplexity of those hard times, justly placed him very high in my estimation & confidence. I trust that he has not retired without fitting acknowledgement of his services from the community he has so long and ably served.

I hope you are well, and continue to preserve your active habits of mind & body.

Believe me, dear Mr Rusden

Yours very faithfully

C. J. La Trobe

To Alexander Mollison [in another's hand]

April 29th 1870.

My dear Mollison

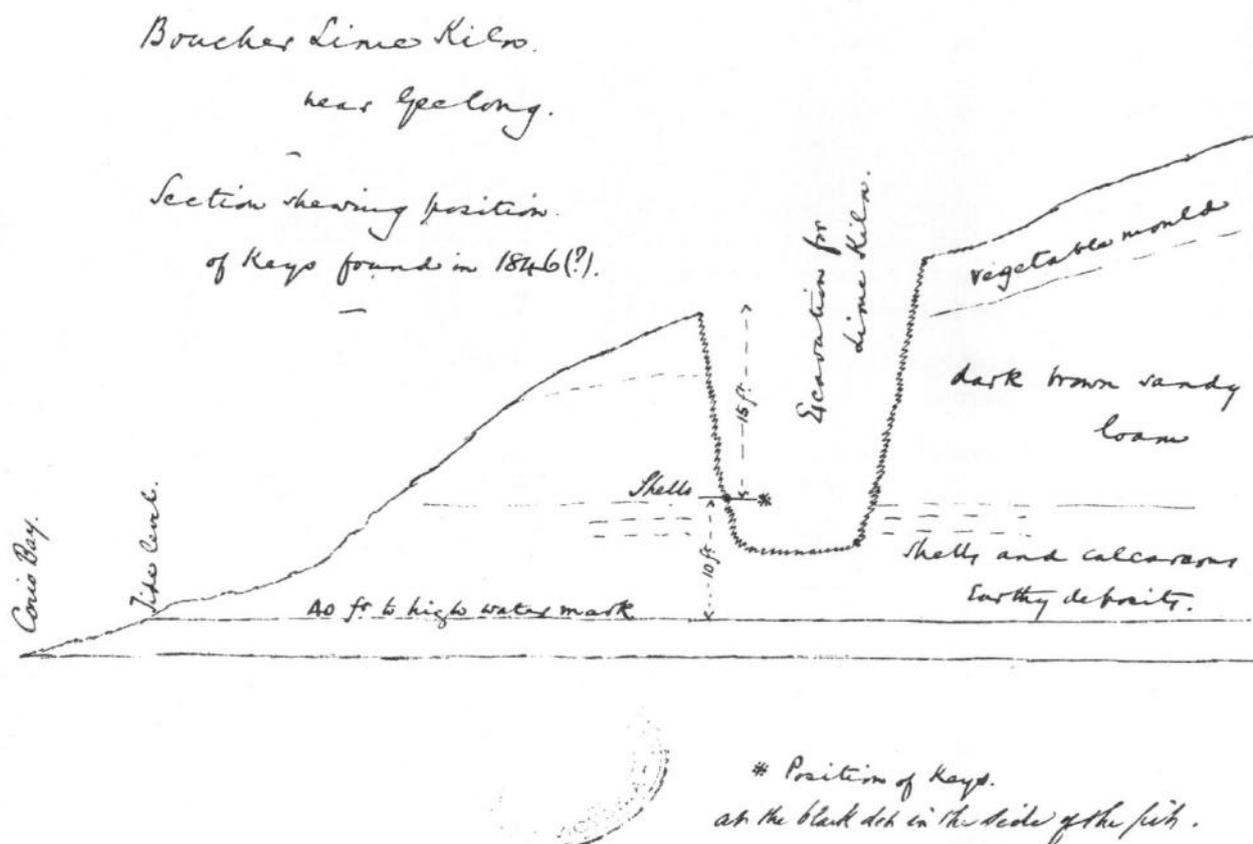
The short conversation that we had on Monday morning last, relative to the discovery of the *keys* in the excavation for the lime kiln in the vicinity of Geelong some 4 or 5 & twenty years ago, has set me again thinking upon a subject which has always been one of great interest to me; & can never cease to be a puzzle. I have, since my return, laid my hand upon the scratch & memoranda made at the very time & on the very spot, & I enclose a copy [see *next page*] of the former made by my daughter for you; which will at once jog your memory as to the main facts. Unfortunately the paper bears no date. I think it must have been in the course of 1846; but as you say you were on the spot within a day or two of my visit & the discovery of the keys, perhaps you may have it in your power to find me a clue as to the exact time. The circumstance is so vividly impressed upon my memory, that I really believe that I might venture to take my 'Bible oath' in reference to every detail.

I sincerely hope that neither Miss Mollison or yourself have experienced any bad effects from this *return* of winter, for such it is, compared to the summer heat of last week.

Pray present to your sisters Mrs. La Trobe's & my own kind regards, & believe me ever, dear Mollison yours very truly.

C. J. La Trobe.

La Trobe's sketch to show location of the Keys



To Alexander Mollison [in another's hand]

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex
December 20th 1870

My dear Mollison

Many thanks for your kind & prompt reply to my unceremonious note of inquiry as to your present whereabouts. The report I had received of your change of residence appears to have been totally unfounded.

I would at once discharge myself of the duty I owed you as an old friend, by testifying the very sincere regret which I experienced in October last, on my return from the continent, on learning that it had pleased God to remove your excellent sister in the course of the summer, from a world which had been, latterly to her, one of prolonged suffering. Pray accept on the part of myself & Mrs La Trobe the assurance of our sincere sympathy. Shortly after we met in April last, Mrs La Trobe made a flying visit to Switzerland to make arrangements for the reception of the eldest of our two little girls, Margaret, whom we proposed sending thither for the purposes of education and the first days of August I undertook, under convoy of my eldest daughter to cross France & commit her to the hands selected to receive her. Though hostilities had actually commenced by the bombardment of Sarrebrück, we found no difficulty in making our way to Neuchâtel; —but the astounding & unforeseen progress of this dreadful war soon placed obstacles in the way of a return by France. I had intended in returning, to make my way to Tours, to spend a week or two with our friend Goldsmith. We met him in Neuchâtel, on his way home from Wildbad. He effected his purpose, but before we could follow, the French door was slammed in our faces; & ultimately we had to make a circumbendibus, returning at the close of September by way of the Lake of Constance, Ulm, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Mayence & so down the Rhine & thro' Belgium. But enough. You see that blind as I am, I contrive still to blunder my way about the world & follow my nose, under gentle guidance over flood & field.

And now to change the subject, you may recall the conversation that passed between us relative to the discovery of "*the Keys*" in the lime kiln on the coast S. of Geelong. Well, I find that as soon as I reached home, I set to work to lay my hand upon the memoranda which I was certain that I had kept relative to that extraordinary incident. I even find now that I dictated a note to you on the subject, which for some reason I now forget, was never sent. I do not know why I should not send it now as it may save my amanuensis some little trouble in following dictation at this time, over the same ground. To the information which the above note & sketch, & our conversation on the subject supplied, I have little to add. But there is one remark I think it well to make. My idea was in the first instance, that the undoubted existence of shoreline at the elevation indicated above the present tide level, pointed to the *upheaval* of the present line of coast at one time or other. But a more thorough examination of the shores of Port Phillip and of Corio Bay, has led me to attribute the phenomena which I have described, not to an *upheaval* of the coast, but to a *subsidence*, to the extent indicated by the plan, *in the water level*. Further, to account for this hypothesis, by the undoubted fact that at no very distant period of time the coast line from Arthur's Seat to Barwon Heads was uninterrupted; the outlet of this large interior bay being at the Barwon Heads or thereabouts.

There can be no doubt, that at one time this was the case, & it is probable that, until the violent disruption of the coast line between Pt Nepean & Pt Lonsdale, of which we possess so many proofs, took place, the level of the waters of the Bay must have been much higher than at the present time. But upon these points it would give me infinite pleasure, at some future time, to have another chat with you. Whichever idea, of *upheaval of land*, or *subsidence of water* be adopted, the fact of the presence of the keys in the position where they were found must continue to furnish the same inextricable puzzle.

But enough, for this time. I have to thank God for very good general health & appetite but there is no doubt that I owe an occasional fit of ague, to our residence in this locality.

Believe me ever, with best regards from Mrs La Trobe & myself to your sister, always dear Mollison

Yours most truly

C. J. La Trobe.

To Alexander Mollison [in another's hand]

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex
February 18th 1871

My dear Mollison,

Thanks for your note of the 1st, mainly referring to the matter of the Keys.

You know to what a degree my powers are now limited; and that tho' I keep a stiff lip, & a rare amount of independent action, for one in my position, I must continue to be dependent upon others for many kind offices. My Secretary has had a batch of work for me in hand, which has delayed my sending you a reply. I wished her to make a copy of my detailed memorandum on the subject, such as it was; but find now that to avoid further delay, I had better trust to your kindness to pardon my despatching to your address, the original, which you will receive by Book Post. You will make what use of it you choose, provided you kindly return the manuscript,* when convenient. Make copy or extracts of any portion you choose, for satisfaction of yourself or Mr Wilson. I return his letter to you. Considering that 25 years have passed since the circumstances stated in the paper, I am afraid he's not likely to learn much corroborative of the facts, in the Colony, even tho' he may set his clever "tiger" upon the trail; but I wish him all success. One thing I insist upon; that my statement of the circumstances may be taken without hesitation 'for true', as the negro says; —Whatever deductions may be drawn from the facts. It will never tire me, nor her whom you obligingly call, my 'amiable secretary' to communicate with you on any subject of common or uncommon interest. [*Memorandum was published in *The Australasian*, 3 June 1871, p.7.]

With our best respects to Miss Mollison & yourself believe me dear Mollison.
Your very faithful old friend

C. J. La Trobe

One way or another, our poor friend Childers, has, & I fear will have, a hard time of it.

To James Graham †

27th December 1871
[extract]

I have received Rusden's pamphlet, and have read every word, with the greatest interest and approbation. It has quite come up to what I expected from his pen; nay more. It so far excited me, that I went rummaging at once, with the assistance of one of my children, among a number of papers, which I had collected years ago, upon the subject of the early settlement of Port Phillip collating the statements I had received on many points, with his facts; and further set to work to write to him a letter, which I had intended to send to him by this mail, but I cannot from press of other work. He shall have it however, please God, by the next. Pray tell him so with my kind regards.

To George William Rusden †

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex
January 1872

[in another's hand]

Dear Rusden

I have been exceedingly gratified to receive by the Southampton division of our last mail but one, the copy of your recent pamphlet 'The Discovery, Survey and Settlement of Port Phillip', which you sent me. It was not only that I was pleased to accept this mark of your remembrance but it happens that the subjects treated had always possessed great interest for me. In fact, after my return home in 1854, I took no little time, trouble & pains to bring together all the information accessible to me upon the early settlement of our Colony, with no very definite idea of the use I might make of the information thus put together. You are aware that at the earlier period of the colonization of our great Australian continent, there was no Colonial Office properly so called in existence. There was, it is true, a department called 'for War & Colonies'; and to this department & that of the Admiralty, all correspondence referring to the settlement and government of the original establishments made on the coast of New S. Wales etc. were referred.

On the formation of a distinct Colonial Office, it was presumed that all such original correspondence as far as possible, had been collected and made over to the guardianship of the Colonial minister. This, I found however, was far from being the case; and what between the impediments which rose in my path in seeking to trace the course of any subject thro' the mazes of this originally divided correspondence; the red-tapism which frequently stood in my way; and the recurrence of frequent apparently insurmountable gaps in the relation of early events; I had to confess myself fairly beaten. —For example, to my great exultation, I sometimes hit upon the record of the receipt at the Admiralty, or might it be the other departments, of an important despatch from one of the early governors; presumed to contain the very document communicated by a subordinate officer, which I had long been in search of, only to find that I had got the *poke* & not the *pudding*. The endorsement upon the despatch showed that at a certain date, the valuable enclosures had been forwarded across the way for the information of the other office; & never returned. I am very glad to find that your success in obtaining important information has been far greater than mine, and excellent use you have made of it. I have no doubt there is a good deal of information of one kind or another still to be had; but I think all of real importance has more to come to light.

You are quite right in tracing the settlement of almost everyone of our Australian Colonies, whether ultimately persevered in or not, to jealousy of the French, and a determination if possible, to be beforehand with them; and history shows what a hard & close run it was in various instances. Even New Zealand must be added to the number of instances. To our shame be it said: in the case of the Society Islands, Tahiti, etc. we permitted our neighbours to step before us, and tamely allowed a community which had not only been discovered, but civilized and to a great measure christianized by us, to be taken possession of and demoralized, as I personally witness, by the same interlopers. Were we under the same roof there is scarcely a page of your pamphlet which would not give subject for interesting conversation & discussion, as you have on about every subject added to my information, and confirmed my impressions.

No doubt, the credit of opening Port Phillip to permanent occupation, and of determining the position of the first important settlement, the Melbourne of our day, must be adjudged to Batman and his party. Fawkner will lose little by being deprived of that single feather in his cap, as there can be no doubt that, next to Batman, no one played a more important & stirring part in the early history of the Colony, than he did. —You have sketched Fawkner's character, I think, with great & kind discrimination. As to myself, unfriendly, if not unjust, as may have been at times the part he played towards me personally, and notorious as may have been his weaknesses and failings, I never could bring myself to regard him in a really unfriendly light.

There is no portion of your pamphlet that has given me greater pleasure than your vindication of Hamilton Hume to be real head and heart of the expedition overland which he and Capt. Hovell took in 1824 & 5, and entitled as such to all the credit accruing from the adventure. —Capt. Hovell could never be considered from first to last, but as a drag upon it. I am sure that no bushman could come to any other conclusion. Hume's account of the expedition was not published till 1855, after my departure from the Colony, [while] Hovell's 12 years previously. I was still in Melbourne when Hovell paid his first visit there in 1854, & received an ovation. A party was organized to accompany him to find the precise spot where to the best of this recollection, he & Hume had struck the Port Phillip bay, some 30 years before. The party was led by him somewhere to the vicinity of Geelong, if I recollect right. He afterwards called upon me, and gave me a copy of his work, but I own that I could not get satisfactory answers to some of my questions, and the opinion that I had long entertained that he was far from being clear as to the actual circumstances of the latter portion of their journey was confirmed. But perhaps I did him injustice.

I recall, however, a circumstance which may have an interest for you. The third excursion which I made after my first arrival in Port Phillip, in fact in the month of June [*sic*] 1840, was to the Western Port district, to get sight of the so-called coal-field lying on the coast near the eastern head of that bay. I was accompanied by Capt. Lonsdale. At the crossing place of the Dandenong Creek, when we encamped the first evening a stockyard had been made by Mr Langhorne. At the NE corner of this yard, on one of the enormous red-gum trees which diversified the surface of the river-flat, appeared the remains of a large-size monogram, evidently cut by European hands with a hatchet, certainly at a date previous to the recent settlement of the country. Though distorted and overgrown by the natural expansion of the bark, it was still possible to decipher what appeared to be a double H, and other carving. Its origin was accounted for by the people in the neighbourhood by a reference to Hovell & Hume. This was evidently impossible, as, whatever point of the Port Phillip bay these explorers may have really reached in their southbound progress from the Big Hill which afforded a certain point in their journey, they never would have crossed the Yarra, & reached this portion of the Dandenong Creek at the foot of the Western Range.

I was not until later aware of the fact that Hovell had been subsequently attached to the expedition sent a few years later by Governor Darling to occupy Western Port. In London in 1856-7, I found among the papers in the Colonial Office certain references from Com.

Wright, the officer then in charge of the settlement at Settlement Point, embody copies of Hovell's reports to him of excursions made in exploring the country. In one of the reports to Gov. Darling, dated March 29th, 1827, it is that Mr Hovell reports thus on one of his excursions: '12 days occupied in looking at the country... between Western Port, the mountains & Port Phillip; I never got to the latter'. It is perfectly evident that it was on this excursion, being obliged to keep to the N. of the great swamps at the head of Western Port, that he made the Dandenong Creek, and left that proof of his visit. The double H was perfectly distinct, was no doubt his own initials which are WHH. I may mention that I took all the measure in my power to secure the preservation of the huge red-gum which bore this monogram, succeeded for some years, but you might as well hope to assist Mrs Partington in mopping out the Atlantic Ocean, as keep an eye upon the doings of the settlers in the woods of Australia.

As I am in the vein, I may as well tell you that in another record of a similar excursion which Mr Hovell made from the settlement, he states that he 'reached Port Phillip on the xxx in the course of this excursion; continued along the sea coast till near the head of the Bay & having ascertained the spot which terminated the journey of Mr Hume & myself, returned; passed thro' a very large plain the second day; & very extensive fresh water marsh 12 to 16 miles long & 1½ to 6 broad, separated from Port Phillip by a narrow ridge of sand, not more than 300 yards broad.' If you can make head or tail of this statement, you are much clever than I am, especially if you bear in mind that he has since fixed upon the neighbourhood of Corio as that in which he & Hume really came upon the waters of the Bay. But enough.

I must close this letter, tho' I have still plenty to say on the subject of the early occupation of the Port Phillip district respecting which I hold many interesting records. Allow me still to observe that I miss in your enumeration of the names of many early settlers, the names of not a few who might justly claim to be remembered. Ham's early publication upon the occupants of the early squatting districts would furnish you with a ready list of those who were first in the field.

With thanks for your kindly mention of myself and my claims to the remembrance of the inhabitants of Melbourne.

I remain, dear Rusden yours very faithfully
C. J. La Trobe

To James Graham [in another's hand]

19 March 1872

My dear Graham,

I have this day addressed a small parcel of some interest to be forwarded to you when occasion offers. As I am in the prospect of a move as you know in the course of the autumn, so taking time by the forelock and attempting to put my house in order I have collected a number of documents addressed to me in 1854 [actually 1853] by old colonists to whom I had applied for information respecting the early occupation and settlement of our Colony. I intended to have made a certain use of this information myself but from circumstances was prevented from doing so. The day may come however when it may be considered of too great interest to be lost and I therefore propose that the parcel should be deposited somewhere where it will be accessible when the day comes, say the Public Library or other Public Archives. On this point perhaps you will consult those who ought to be consulted. I think it may be a little early to make unrestricted use of the contents of these letters. In sending them to you however I am securing their being deposited where they ought to go. It will be seen that I had contemplated writing out the story of the early settlement of our Colony myself but do not recollect that I got much beyond the draft of the first chapter containing the record of Collins' first settlement in Capel Sound, the signs of which were still perfectly traceable when I first visited that coast in 1840.

[Not signed]

To Sir Redmond Barry † [in another's hand]

Clapham House, Lewes, Sussex

September 1873

My dear Barry,

Ever since I received a very kind and pleasant letter from you, in the course of the Spring, I have been minded to send you a hearty acknowledgement, and to assure you of the pleasure which its perusal had given me.

But here I find myself driven into a corner after all my good intentions, and Graham's impending departure reminds me, that if I am to give you a visible token of my sincere friendship & remembrance, this token must be forwarded without loss of time.

Pray receive this as such – unworthy as it is – with assurance of my continued respect and remembrance.

I hold in profusion at least – even if I can no longer see them – various proofs that you among some few others, have not forgotten the past; and I dare say can even look back to the day, when in the exuberance of health and good humour, we stole ten minutes from official labour to troll the ditty of 'the little men in drab, drab, drab'. How time flies! That must have been five & twenty years ago at least.

Our good friend Graham, who returns to you as cheerful and active as ever – & will probably hand you this – will be a living letter to you, and others of my old friends. He and his two winsome daughters forming but a small segment of the family circle, which with God's help and that of Mrs Graham, he has had the good fortune to surround himself with – having given me in my solitude, as much of their company as I could decently claim. – He will tell you all about me and mine.

In fullness of time, you will I hope see my only boy, Charlie, make his appearance at Melbourne, where he was born, as you may recollect; and I know that you will not withhold a kind word of welcome for his father's sake.

And now, dear Barry, Good bye and long life & health to you.

I enclose one of the last photos executed of the old Governor at the age of 72, as you may calculate, if you are so minded.

Yours most faithfully and sincerely,

C. J. La Trobe

To George William Rusden † [in another's hand]

March 20th 1874.

My dear Rusden

I am very much pleased to receive your note this morning, & I have at once sent you a telegram to correct your misapprehension of our whereabouts with respect to the line. If you went to *Lewes* you would overshoot us considerably. – We are four miles from *Berwick* station and as it happens that my drag will be there precisely to meet that very train, 11. 9, to bring a lady, Mrs Bagshawe to us, you will have a companion in the drive, even if I cannot go to meet you. So nothing could be better timed. I shall be delighted to hear your voice & my wife and three of my children to see you. We will settle about your return when you come within reach. – I am exceedingly obliged to you for having taken the pains to find me out. If you found my address in the Sussex Directory, it will have amused you as it has done all old friends who have been acquainted with the extent of my farming! viz: 2 cows, a horse & a pig. – This may come into your hands before your train starts tomorrow morning. If not, it is of no consequence.

Ever yours most faithfully
(for) C. J. La Trobe

To George William Rusden † [in another's hand]

March 28th 1874.

My dear Rusden

I was glad to find by your note of the 25th, that you had reached your London 'pied-a-terre' in safety. If I call upon you when I am in town, it will be at Boltons. I & mine thank you for the photographs of which the ladies decide, that the *civilized* one resembles you more than the *uncivilized*. We were gratified with your visit, & trust that it may be repeated before you turn your face southward again.

Meanwhile, believe me ever very faithfully yours

(for) C. J. La Trobe

Remember, you promised me another copy of your pamphlet on Hovell & Hume.

LINKS

Overview by date

www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/LaTrobe'sLettersEnglandD.pdf

Overview by recipient

www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/LaTrobe'sLettersEnglandR.pdf

Notes on the letters

www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/LaTrobe'sLettersNotes.pdf

Index to the letters

www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/LaTrobe'sLettersIndex.pdf

See also Letters of Charles Joseph La Trobe from Australia, 1839 to 1854

www.latrobesociety.org.au/documents/LaTrobe'sLettersAustralia.pdf