

From Lady Franklin to her sister

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Government House - Hobart.

Copy

~~18th July. 1841.~~

My dear Mary

I found on my return from N. Zealand, the kind notes of Mr and Mrs Gould, brought during my absence by Mr Blackett, a rich Midshipman who purchased Lord Derhams Yacht, the Albatross, and has sailed from hence on it to New Zealand, with a cargo of muskets which he did not clear at the Custom House and which are consequently I understand a lawful prize to any ship who may meet him. I must write to the Goulds another time - pray tell them so and of the great pleasure we felt in hearing of their welfare and that of the Tasmanian bay, little Franklin

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whom we claim as our own.
Tell them we are full of admiration of their splendid Australian birds, which equal the most magnificent of their predecessors and are delighted to hear of the prospect of their coming out to us again, if indeed we are here to receive them. As to Dr. Rosses I have set on foot some inquiries for the objects in natural history he requires and some of which I am sure we ought to procure for him, in return for his present to us, which I much fear he has never received any acknowledgements for.

Sir E. Parry wrote a delightful affectionate letter to Sir John by the "Porpoise" thanking Sir J.

for his letter after his wife's
death and telling him he is
the first friend he has written
to in Australia since that
affliction - he says through
your kindness he hears of us
batta from time to time -

"Our island of Greece's climate
and Greece's beauty" Mr. Gell
writes to Mr. James Stephen,
I tell him it is cunningly put
to win over Dr. Arnold (whom,
(it is a bold conception!) we
are plotting to get out here
as Bishop - in lieu of our
late revered Archdeacon.

To procure Dr Arnold, to cause
his being applied to is one of
the chief objects of Mr. Gill's
letter - I urged him to do it,
not against his inclination,
though he thinks it a bold step
but nothing can be done with-
out ^{risking} a little - I found
Sir John averse (though
recommending that a Bishop's
See should be forthwith
constituted) to suggest any
particular individual for it.
He thinks it might be considered
presumptuous on his part,
in writing to Lord John, that it is
still more so perhaps to suppose
Dr A. would accept it and
that as the Archbishop of
Canterbury would most likely
be consulted on the subject.

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Mr Montagu went home 2 years ago, he carried with him despatches from Sir John, for the Col-Office, which he had special permission to read on the way. They had been concocted somewhat in a hurry, and advocated mainly an improved and modified system of assignment for the prisoners.

It was recommended that all prisoners in future should be placed in the unutilized district, there to open roads, clear forests &c; and afterwards to pass through different gradations of increased liberty, to perfect freedom. Such a system would have been a mighty blessing to the Colony. Mr Montagu having much business to attend to before he left, did not take an active

part in this matter - When he
got home, I have no doubt he
tried to prolong the duration of
assignment as much as possible,
but finding this in vain and
actuated by thirst in a great
degree by an ardent desire to
recommend himself as an
economical financier to Lord
John Russell, he concocted a
scheme, the best parts of which
he had borrowed, but the
main feature of which was that
of concentrating the whole
prisoner population of Van Diemen's
Land, in Tasman's peninsula, there
to be employed in forced labour
in trades and agriculture;
thus depriving a whole country,
whose tremendous forests and
mountains and ravines render
it inaccessible and useless, till

opened by the strong power of
art and labour, of all the
powerful and extensive appliances
which convert labour in large
masses and that alone, can give.
Mr Montagu in his report to
Lord John Russell seizes and
dwells alone upon that point
which he knew would have the
greatest weight, the saving of
expenditure - It probably
would be cheaper to lodge and
guard a great body of men in
one spot, than in many, but
here is the only advantage; and
it would be very easy to prove
that even this is problematical;
as to the interests of the country
or the colonists, one would think
Mr Montagu was wholly regardless
of it. He sent the report of his

Scheme to Mr Foster who gave
it to me to read. and I did not
scruple to tell him that I thought
Mr Montagu had had ~~an~~ eye
in it to only one thing, viz. the
serving to H. M. Treasury, and when I
wrote to Mr Montagu in June
last, about a great many things,
I did not scruple to say almost
the same to him. The only official
notice Sir John has of the
effect Mr Montagu's scheme may
have had at the Colonial Office
is contained in a recent despatch
in which Sir John is directed
to send the following prisoners
(now greatly on the increase) to
Yasman's Peninsula - and into
the unsettled districts; to
open roads, make bridges,

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and cut down forests &c -
This is all very well and looks
like a double acceptance of both
systems, but a private letter
received since by Mr. Forster,
informs him and is made to
inform Sir John, that Lord
John Russell agrees entirely to
Mr. Montagu's or the Yacuanas
peninsula system. Yesterday
with your letters, comes one
from Mr. Montagu to Sir John,
saying not one word upon that
all important subject, (neither
has he ever to Sir John written
one word about it) but merely
enclosing a note of recommenda-
tion from Mr. Vernon Smith for
some particular convict,
expressing his pleasure at Sir.

John's good health, and his own
intention of being back here at
such a time.