

Waldgate Jan. 20th 1863

My very dear James

Before leaving my room this morning, I was reminded by a note in a little text book, that it was seven years today since thou left England, that sorrowful time to some of us, yet we may fully believe it was the right time. My mind seemed to recede to many scenes & circumstances that have taken place since. Just after I came down stairs, the letters came, & it was very pleasant to find one from thee in the bag, it seemed somewhat as tho' thou were my companion at the breakfast table, my Bro then being absent, when I read thy letter with much interest, & I felt as tho' I must at once commence a letter for the mail on the 26th. It is always pleasant to hail a letter from thee, & to hear a little of what is going on

at the Antipodes, & especially
in the circle of thy own family,
I was sorry to hear of thy Uncle
having lost wife, it is a great loss
to a young family to be deprived of
the care of ^{thy} Christian Mother, & to
human reasoning, would seem a very
mysterious dispensation, but we
may rest assured that it is in Divine
ordinance, & much therefore be right.
And surely all these events call loudly
upon us to examine & see how we
are prepared to meet the summons
which earlier or later must be ours.

My dear Brother is now in Scotland
accompanying the Meeting, & with William
Miller of Edinburgh as his companion,
& and thankful to say he is in better
health than he was in the Spring,
& the state being far from strong, but
I hope is the case with James, & they
both speak a few weeks rambling
amongst the Welsh mountains, & were
much benefited by it, many of the
children are well, I have been at
home in the quiet, most of the sum-
mer, & have had great enjoyment

of the garden, we have had a very
fine summer, & now a splendid
week is rapidly being housed one far
above the usual average, the earth
has indeed yielded her bountifully, both
fruit & flowers in abundance.

If it were not for the wickedness
& man surely this earth would be
one of much greater enjoyment, but
it does sometimes seem as tho' Satan
was set loose, & the atrocities of those
bearing the Christian name is in-
deed deplorable; the accounts of the
murders in the Pacific, have only
yet been briefly noticed in any of
the English papers that I have seen,
but it is probable they may ere long
find their way into them - The war
in America is a fearful one, the
sufferings of many of our friends, we
hear is very great, & but little in-
telligence comes from those who are
in the Confederate States, now & then
a little is brought to light, a letter from
Sarah Leape of Philadelphia to Esther
Seeborn says, under date of June 27th.

"During last week a large number
of rebel prisoners, have been brought
to Fort Delaware, near Philadelphia,

"among them four or five members of
our Society, who were impressed into
the Confederate army eight months
ago. They had been dragged at the
point of the bayonet with Lee's arm
the strictly refusing to fight or to bear
arms - They had suffered terribly
but they had borne it in the spirit
of the martyrs, being often threatened
with death. One cruel Colonel ordered
his men to shoot them - the friends
replied, if it were God's will, they
were willing to suffer, & could say,
'Father forgive them, they know not
what they do' - after hearing this
the men refused to fire, when this
inhuman officer attempted to trample
them under his horses feet, but
the horse stepped over them, & plunged
into the battle (Gettysburg) & shortly
after he, (the officer) was killed,
Thomas Evans & two other friends
were taken to Washington & obtained
their release, on their taking the
affirmation of loyalty to the Govern-
ment" - I hope mentions several
friends being drafted, amongst them
her son-in-law, but several were
expecting themselves to obtain their exemp-
tion.

My dear Sister has been feeble most
of the summer, but her last letters
give rather a brighter aspect. I ex-
pect she is now alone, ^{at Doughty} Sarah Jane
having gone to Bristol to pay a
visit to her friend Sophia Fry (for-
merly Pease,) from thence she goes
to Southampton to Thomas's marriage,
which is intended to take place the
15th of next month, it will be a quiet
affair, very different to what it would
probably have been if he had chosen
a Friend, it is no little trial to us, &
especially to my Sister, Thomas's
leaving the Society, but we can only
hope & pray that he may become
a really decided Christian man &
then, I think, he would more fully
see the accordance of the principles
of Friends with the Gospel. He has
built a small house at Middlesex
which we hope will be ready by
the time it is wanted, the very
fine summer has been very ad-
vantagous to its drying.

I have not had opportunity to
deliver thy messages of love, except

to James & Mary who particularly
request their letters. My Sister
William is gone to nurse her sister
Emma. To be who, to their great joy
has a little son, the others all being
girls, Fanny is at home & in better
health. Mr. & Mrs. Ellis have
frequently desired me to send their
love when I write. Mr. Ellis still
continues his deep interest in the
youths who have been at school ^{here} &
at Ackworth, & keeps up a large
correspondence with them. I hope
thou received a letter he told me
he had written to thee, & he hopes
to receive an answer from thee.

Our schools have re-assembled
comfortably, my Nephew Albert
is now the youngest boy at Bootham,
Jas. getting to be one of the oldest,
I expect he will leave next sum-
mer & go to his next with his father.

John Ford was liberated at our last
monthly meeting to write to the
Wm. Farmer of Bristol an religious
service in Durham Quarterly Meeting

I expect he will be leaving home
next week, he still attends at the
school, when at home, attending
to the correspondence, but is not
bound to it, as formerly, I think
being considered as head master
& being thoroughly qualified for
it. Sarah Robinson is at present
paying them a visit, I do not ex-
actly know where her home is but
I think in Ireland, she had been
staying with Sarah Ellis, who has
felt very anxious about her but
has not the best letters from him
give an encouraging account of the
aspect of things in Madagascar,
she seems to hope the Mission is
on ground getting them before the
poor King's death - poor young man
it must a sad end, very different
to what was once hoped, but Mr. Ellis
had been God some time very
nearly about him, he appears
to have been a weak minded
man, & those who were adverse
to Christianity worked upon his
superstitious fears, & encouraged

mind to drink, until it seems W. Ellis
believe that he became quite insane,
tho' to W. Ellis he always showed great
partiality, & seemed to like his company.

I think I mentioned Josiah Foster
illness at the time of our Gundy hunt
he has recovered remarkably, tho' at
his age it will doubtless prove to be
upon him, yet we heard of his being
in London & attending meetings &c.
which at one time could not have been
looked for, my cousin Katherine
Backhouse who was also ill at
that time seems much recovered.

I do not remember whether I sent
thee one of the Cartes of my dear
Mother, however if I did, I do not
think it was so good as the one he
had last taken so I send one thy way.

And now to the my eyes, I purpose
give notice that it is time I quit
my love to thy Mother, I write much
to myself believe me ever to be
thy truly affectionate friend
Eliza^{tho} Backhouse

Jan 25. th 1863