

## THE LETTERS OF GEORGINA MOLLOY

Wife of Colonel Molloy, Founder of Augusta

LA paper prepared by Mr. W. G. Pickering from material supplied by Mrs. J. M. Drummond and read before the Society, August 31, 1928

The Swan River Settlement was projected in 1828. Regulations were issued from the Colonial Office on January 17, 1829, and Captain (afterwards Sir James) Stirling, R.N., was appointed Lieutenant Governor. He reached the appointed site in the following August. The three towns of Perth, Fremantle and Guildford, were founded in the same year. In March, 1830, before many dwellings were erected or land surveyed, fifty ships with 2,000 emigrants, bringing property amounting to £1,000,000, arrived.

Among those tempted to leave their native land and cross 12,000 miles of ocean, to seek their fortunes in a then almost unknown land, was Captain John Molloy, of the Rifle Brigade, and his bride, and it is of their experience in the new settlement that the following letters tell.

John Molloy, who was born in England about 1780, was a member of the family of that name, hailing from Mill-cent, County Kildare, Ireland. He had begun life as Midshipman (many of his family having been officers in the Navy). Preferring, however, the career of a soldier, he obtained a Commission by purchase (1807) in the old 95th, afterwards the Rifle Brigade. He was in one of the three companies of that Regiment with Sir John Moore's Army from Salamanca to Vigo, and fought under Wellington at Rolica, Obidos, Vimera, Salamanca, Vittoria, the Pyrenees, the Nivelle, Nive and Toulouse, and Waterloo. At Waterloo he was severely wounded and left for dead on the field.

Those who have read the accounts of these campaigns as related by his close friends and brother officers, Sir Harry Smith, Jonathan Seale, Johnnie Kincaid, and others, will realise that the experiences of a Rifleman were likely to foster a love of adventure, and understand that life in Barracks in the British Isles in time of peace might seem tame after the stirring days of the Peninsula. So when his friend, Sir James Stirling, urged the possibilities of the new Settlement of Swan River, John Molloy was one of the first to decide to try his fortune there. That some of

his friends heard of this decision with misgivings is shown in the following letter from one of them, dated Grelow's Hotel, London, October 1, 1823:—

My dear Molloy,—It is with great pain that I hear on my arrival in England of your intended project. You are too sensible and too little of an idle speculator to embark on any scheme without sufficient promise to justify the sacrifice you make of profession, country, and friends; but still the difficulties you would have to encounter would make the boldest pause. It is now too late to dissuade you, and I only hope—and hope most truly—that you may enjoy every happiness and reap every benefit that the Swan River can afford. I also congratulate you on your marriage, and trust you will make Mrs. Molloy acquainted with my name. Good-bye, my dear Molloy. Tell me about the Miskerry's, and believe that, wherever you go, you carry with you the most sincere regards of your sincere friend,

ORLANDO FELIX.

When Captain Molloy first turned his thoughts to the Swan River Settlement he wrote to Georgina Kennedy, who afterwards became his wife, asking if she would throw in her lot with his, and venture with him into this new world.

Georgina Kennedy was born in Cumberland in 1805. Her father (to whom she was most devoted) was killed by a fall from his horse when she was 16. Her mother had then moved with her family from their home, Crosby Lodge, Carlisle, to Rugby, for the education of her son.

When Georgina Kennedy received the letter from Captain Molloy asking her to be his wife, she was staying with her friends, the Dunlops, at Keppoch, Dunbartonshire, Scotland. It was arranged (as the time of sailing was near) that the wedding should take place there, and Captain Molloy, accompanied by Lieutenant Dalton Kennedy, the brother of his fiancée, journeyed to Scotland, and on August 6, 1829, John Molloy and Georgina Kennedy were married by the Rev. Robert Story, of Rosneath. That night they went to Glasgow, next day to Greenock, thence by boat to Liverpool; from Liverpool by coach to Coventry, where Mrs. Kennedy's carriage met theirs, and in it they drove to Rugby. As they entered Rugby the bells were ringing, and the bride's family were waiting to welcome her. The

three days of their stay at Kingby were spent—her diary records—in bidding farewell to friends, packing and eating “bride cake.” Then Mrs. Molloy bade good-bye to her family, and she and her husband went to London to make their final preparations for the voyage. They had expected to sail early in September, but the departure of the vessel was delayed. In the meantime they were busy laying in stores of all sorts and making general arrangements.

Of his wife, John Molloy writes: “She is quite notable in the way of equipping herself and has accomplished the whole of her affairs in as quiet and easy a manner as if she had been a wife of two years standing.”

“My gowns,” writes Mrs. Molloy, “are all very plain without anything but hems and tucks, and my bonnet’s cottage shape with ribbons, so I have not given away to the vanities of this truly depressing London, where I never dreamed of such dreadful vice and search after unsatisfactory things, as I cannot turn myself without beholding.”

They went to the church in Regent’s Square, where Edward Irving, then at the height of his fame, was drawing crowds by his preaching. Mrs. Molloy had known him at Rosneath. They had met him at Robert Storey’s, and meeting him again, Mrs. Molloy writes to her Scottish friends:—

“Irving, prayed for the New Settlement and for those two lately joined in wedlock by God and Man, that they might be like Abraham and Sarah in the land God had allotted them, and that they might reach that other promised shore, which had been ordained for them by Eternity.”

They sat for their miniatures to one Mr. Warrington. The days were filled with saying good-bye to friends and in packing. On September 9 they moved to Brockhurst, near Gosport. On September 12 Mrs. Molloy writes: “I much regret to say that we are not likely to sail for the next fortnight—some say a month. I trust not. It is no jest keeping sixteen servants, horses, pigs, sheep, cattle, from July to the present time on hand.” Their ship, the *Warrior*, arrived at Spithead on the 17th of October. We take what follows from Captain Molloy’s notes:—

“On October 18 our cattle were embarked on board in safety in the boats belonging to the Marine Artillery. On Sunday Dawson took my luggage on board. Monday we

all embarked—men, women, and children. Our horses and cows were placed in stalls on the starboard side of the deck, enjoying all the trifling security men can accomplish to guard against common accidents likely to arise from an ill-selected and perilous situation. The charterer of the vessel, in direct breach of agreement, has filled up the stalls originally selected for them in the hold, whilst in London. Thus we were constrained to risk the loss of our cattle, or forego taking them out or going ourselves.”

The *Warrior* sailed from Spithead on October 21. “My thoughts many,” records Mrs. Molloy. The tonnage of the vessel is not stated. She carried 166 passengers, and doubtless the men, women and children, and stock were packed much too closely for comfort.

The stock suffered greatly, and there were many losses among them. [Captain Molloy’s notes of the voyage end with their arrival at the Cape, but, before they reached that place, four, of their sheep and five pigs had died, and the mare had cast a foal. On arrival at Swan River nearly all the stock were upset in landing. The horse and the rest of the sheep died in consequence.]

There was much discontent among certain of the passengers about the provisioning of the ship, and several of them were tried at Porto Praga for inciting to mutiny. Porto Praga and the Cape of Good Hope were the only ports of call.

The ship stayed a fortnight at Capetown—a pleasant break in the tedious voyage. The Molloy’s were the guests of Colonel (afterwards Sir Harry) and Mrs. Smith. The Governor of the Cape at that time was General Sir Sowny Cole, under whom Captain Molloy had served in the Peninsula. Colonel John Bell (also a rifleman) and his wife were settled at the Cape (he being Colonial Secretary). For the last time almost, Mrs. Molloy enjoyed a little social pleasure. They received and returned many calls—went to dinner parties, etc, made an expedition to Wineberg in the Governor’s “waggon,” and were much delighted with the trees, shrubs and flowers. They left Capetown with much regret on January 26.

From Capetown on January 25, 1830, Mrs. Molloy wrote as under to the Rev. R. Storey, Manse of Rosneath, Dunbartonshire:—

"My dear Brother and Sister,—I have scarcely a moment, but I must write to convince you that I am as much attached as ever to you both, and never pass a day without thinking of you one way or another. I have suffered very much and am very weak in consequence, and if I had been able would have written many letters on the voyage, but for two months I was incapable of exertion—first from violent sickness, then from heat and the weakness sickness had caused me—indeed, I often regretted my promise to keep a journal—as for some days I was unable to hold a pen. My letter to you, Keppoch, is more circumstantial than time will permit this to be, as we hourly expect to go on board. The accounts of the new Colony are varied—but I shall be able to give you a more correct account when we arrive there. I hear the Stirlings are very nice people—at which I am delighted. I like the Cape very much, and we have met with much hospitality and kindness. The Dalhousies were here, also the Bishop of Calcutta, and each party gave much pleasure. Pray remember me most kindly to all my Rosneath friends. Often have I lain in bed on board and thought of you all with my eyes shut, and could for the moment fancy myself at Rosneath. . . . Call me to the fleeting remembrance of John Anderson and his newly acquired spouse. If they are as happy as Jack and I they cannot wish for more conjugal affection. Molloy is a dear creature, and I would not exchange him for £10,000 per annum and a mansion in a civilised country. . . . Oh how it sinks me to think of the Manse—the Clachan—the road to Porthill in Mary's cart. I do not despair of soon leaving Swan River, if we do not find Governor Stirling's report true, which seems to be suspected—not from design but ignorance of the soil. The Governor and Lady Francis have so frequently expressed their wish to have us there. Do not be uneasy if you do not hear soon from us, as much delay must be occasioned one way or other. Be assured I can never forget you. Distance only enhances your value. Pray for us and our people, and believe me, with the most cordial affection—JACK and GEORGINA MOLLOY.

Note (doubtless by J.M.).—You, my dear Mr. Storey, spliced us so securely—we have not had the least difference of opinion yet.

The weary voyage of almost five months ended on March 11, 1830, when the Warrior anchored off Rottnest Island. Their first impressions seem to have been favourable. Mrs. Molloy describes the country as beautifully "wooded with aromatic trees and shrubs." When they left the Warrior they sailed up to Perth and remained there for some time. The town of Perth had only been in existence for a few months, and things were probably rather primitive, but Mrs. Molloy records their attendance at the Governor's levee, at which eight ladies and fifty-eight gentlemen were present. While they remained in Perth, Captain Molloy was occupied in visiting various parts of the country with a view to deciding where his grant of land should be. He made expeditions with the Governor to Canning, the Swan beyond Guildford, etc., and it was said that land in the Canning was almost decided upon; but Sir James Stirling had just returned from an exploring cruise on the southern coast, and advised them strongly to go there. Unfortunately, it was then a most difficult place for vessels to reach, being a dangerous coast, and there were no roads and bridges. It was complete banishment, and the Governor was so charmed with the beauty of the scenery that he did not realise what would be the position of the little colony of English people cut off from the rest of settlement. They went without having seen the place, and so were not able to judge for themselves of its suitability. Perhaps also the fact that Mrs. Molloy found the heat of Perth very trying tempted them to the cooler climate of the south.

Nearly two months elapsed after their arrival at Swan River before they set sail in the Government schooner for Augusta. Previous to leaving they had camped in tents at Fremantle. The military settlement at King George's Sound was transferred by the Home Government to Swan River in 1830, and Captain Molloy was given the command of the detachment of soldiers at Augusta, and also made resident magistrate of the place.

The schooner which carried the Molloys and their servants to the south took also Messrs. J. A. C. and S. Russell (fellow passengers in the Warrior), the Turner family and

their servants, Dr. Green, Sgt. Guerin, and a detachment of soldiers. After a passage of four days they arrived at Augusta on May 1, 1830. Before the ground could be cleared and houses put up they camped in tents, and in a tent with an umbrella over the bed to keep out the rain drops the Molloy's first child was born on May 24, 1830. It did not long survive its birth.

Unfortunately the records of these early days are meagre. Probably all were too much occupied to write. The work of clearing and erecting houses was begun at once, and, at the end of July, Captain Molloy reports to headquarters that the barracks were finished all but the doors. In August he states that from his garden he has received contributions for some time past, with every prospect of their abundant increase; and that Turner had cropped seven or eight acres of land. In November he mentioned fields of rye and wheat. On February 31 he wrote to the Colonial Secretary:—

Sir.—I beg to acquaint you that, from the non-arrival of any vessel at this port, no opportunity has presented itself to the settlers to lay in any stock of provisions. The whole pressure of supplying this want has in consequence fallen for a considerable time past on the public store. That source has now ceased, as all the necessaries of life have been issued therefrom except 30lb. of flour. In the present extremity Mr. Earl has undertaken to navigate the Eagle, a boat which has been lent by W. Middlemas for the purpose, to proceed to the seat of Government. I beg you will be pleased to lay before his Excellency this statement—I have the honor to be, Sir, yours most obediently, J. MOLLOY.

Another difficulty confronting the settlers was the clearing of the land, that part of the country being very heavily timbered. The aborigines were troublesome at times and given to pilfering, but, on the whole, the settlers got on well with them.

The Molloy's second child, a daughter was born in 1831.

### First Days at Augusta

The following letters tell their own tale of the experiences of their first years in the new settlement.

*From Augusta, October 1, 1833, to Mrs. Storey, Rosneath Manse, Helensburgh, Dumfriesshire, England:—*

My dearest Helen,—This I know will be seized upon by you both. . . . I was indeed grieved, my dear Nelly, to hear of the poor infant's death for your sakes, not for its own. I could truly sympathise with you, for language refuses to utter what I experienced when mine died in my arms in this dreary land, and no one but Molloy near me. Oh! I have gone through much, and more than I would ever suffer anyone to do again. I fear—I need not say fear—I know I have not made the use of those afflictions that God designed. . . . It was so hard. I could not see it was in love, and I thought I might have had one little bright object left to solace all the hardships and privations I endured, and had still to go through. It was wicked, and I am not now thoroughly at peace. . . .

Tell me all about yourselves—your dear little one. Did you call the dear infant after me? Mary told me of your affectionate kindness in thinking of it. The one I called after dear Mary was like a little angel. Its grave, though sodded with British clover, looks so singular and solitary in this wilderness, of which I can scarcely give you an idea. To all the neighbours remember me.

My dear Helen, I fancy myself newly arrived in the parlour, and standing at the fire. Then would you introduce your little flock to me, and I would show you Sabina, a darling, good little child, now nearly two years old. Oh! my dear and lovely Rosneath! My heart bleeds when I think of all the happy, celestial days I spent there; and all the violets and primroses are fresh in my memory. How does your garden get on? and did the Ayrshire roses entwine round the poles at the end of the garden? Oh! do come out! Oh! do come out! This land is really calling out for some one to show us we have another life after this is passed. I wish we had taken a den at Rosneath to be next you, my dear, kind Nelly and Mr. Storey. Molly sends her kind wishes for every species of happiness, and you know no one more earnestly returns her gratitude and love than—Yours, immensely affectionately attached, GEORGINA MOLLOY.

The foregoing letter, though of later date than the one which follows is given first, as it refers to the death of her little child in 1830.

From Augusta, November 7, 1832, to Mrs. Molloy's sister, Mrs. Besley, Long-Benton, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumberland, England.

My dear Eliza,—By our last despatches you will receive a short note. Last week brought Mama's and Mary's letters with Jonathan Leache's book, which I have not had time to peruse, but Molloy has seized every leisure moment and seems much pleased with it. To-day is my darling baby's first birthday and, as we are daily expecting the return of the Ellen, the colonial schooner, I am obliged to scribble, work, nurse, and put up sundry parcels, besides tidying the rooms whenever I can. You must consequently forgive a hurried epistle, if you agree with me that such a one is better than none at all. Dear Molloy and I rejoice to hear of Mr. Besley's promotion and preferment, and I quite envy you with your northern situation as, from what I remember of the banks of the Tyne, the scenery was generally pretty; besides, its vicinity to dear Cumberland would greatly increase my charm in it. Pray write me a long account of the parsonage, your neighbourhood, and everything concerning yourselves.

I am sorry to lose my dear Molloy. He and the Government Resident of King George's Sound are summoned to Perth to represent the affairs of that place and Augusta at headquarters. Sabina and I, therefore, will be very desolate with not a creature to speak to or even protect us, as the men-servants are at the adjacent island, called Dalton Island, on the Blackwood River, and none but our personal domestics left behind.

This is certainly a very beautiful place; but were it not for domestic charms, the eye of the emigrant would soon weary of the unbounded limits of thickly clothed, dark green forests. Our climate is heavenly, and while you are burning the front breadth of your frock, and the ribs of your shoes, at an excellent fire of Newcastle coal, I am sitting on the verandah surrounded by my little flower garden of British, Cape and Australian flowers pouring forth their odour (for the large white

lily is now in bloom), and a variety of beautiful little birds most brilliant in plumage sporting around me. These little creatures seem quite delighted at the acquisition they have made in our emigration, and are much tamer than any but the robin and sparrow in England.

There is a small bird called the Australian robin, with shiny black back and head and the breast of a very bright scarlet; also a little bird of a complete blue colour all over resembling cobalt, with short green wings. The honey eaters are so minutely beautiful I cannot describe them. They have a long curved beak, which they insert into the calyx of the different flowers, and the symmetry of their form, which is perfect, accords with the elegance of their acts. You see them perch on the most slender flower stem, and apply the beak to the blossoms, every moment expecting the flower to drop off, but their light weight does not in the least affect this.

The native flowers are all exceedingly small but beautiful in color, although that flies when the flowers are dried. I only know three kinds, and those are two white and one blue of the herbaceous plants possessing any odour. Many of the shrubs are powerfully sweet, some like may, some like bergamot. Another remarkable feature in the botany of this country, S.W. Australia, is the numerous kinds of leaves with the identical flower, some of the leguminous ones. I know one purple pea flower with three different kinds of leaves, one of which is a creeper, and called the blue vine (probably *Hardenbergia complanata*); the other an erect shrub with no smell and leaves like holly (probably *Hovea chorizematifolia*); the third is also erect, with leaves like the privet (probably *Hovea trisperma*), and in shady places the blossoms emit a scent about three in the afternoon like allspice or cloves. Another sort in yellow and straw colour, of which there are five with leaves utterly distinct, but I fear this last page may be somewhat tedious, as you are not likely to behold all these aborigines.

I fear we are thought inattentive to our friends, but it must always be remembered that we are a hundred and fifty miles from Fremantle, the port on the Swan, and vessels only occasionally touch here to supply the

wants of a few settlers; but we have never yet omitted writing whenever there was an opportunity, although our letters must always appear egotistical, as our lives afford no other subject. We continue to like Augusta very much indeed, and so do all that have visited it. The retrenchments that the Home Government are making have been inauspicious to our infant colony, but we are in hopes the Governor's presence may effect some brighter prospects. At all events, we are freed from many unpleasant circumstances now existing in Britain. I hope the Almighty will have mercy on our irreligious land and not smite according to their ill-doings.

I sincerely trust the cholera morbus had ceased before your removal to the north. I think Irving's great prediction to take place about this period must startle many. Tell me what you think of the present state of affairs in England. We know nothing but what we glean from the newspapers, and these so old that a Revolution might be begun and ended long before we could know.

Baby cries to go to bed, so I must say "Good-night until to-morrow." . . . I believe that I described Sabina in my last letter to you. She can walk a little, and amuses us very much when we sing Pantaloon in Hart's set; she stamps her little feet and really keeps time wonderfully well.

Molloy has had heavy and frequent losses in stock. Our fine cow in calf he paid £40 for Staples tethered on a declivity. She was cast on her back and, the rope being entangled round her neck, she strangled herself. We have besides lost 25 pigs, goats, sheep, without number, and Jack, the pony, who has been this last year kicking up his heels in the bush, is miserable as soon as the dry weather sets in. Animals are bad property to begin with: they require constant attention, or they stray away. This said horse decamped with a neighbouring mare about ten months ago, and the other day they were discovered with a fine colt in addition.

I have sent for a piano from the Cape, and hope to send you some most beautiful and melodious airs from a Mrs. Smith, a Spanish lady who plays divinely on the

guitar, and is wife to Colonel Smith, late of the Rifles. [Note.—Sir Harry Smith wrote occasionally to Captain Molloy, and in one of his letters of a later date says:—"Juanita is grown stout, but her ankles are as beautiful as ever."]

Remember to address to Captain Molloy, Government Resident, Augusta, Blackwood, S.W. Australia. Commit to the Post Office. If requisite pay the accustom'd sum, but do not frank or endanger Mr. Sullivan's security, as we receive all letters sent direct, but, if sent by a circuitous means they are delayed and perhaps never more heard of. With our united best love and sincere wishes for very special happiness. Believe me, my dear sister, your sincerely attached sister, GEORGINA MOLLOY.

The settlers at Augusta soon decided that the difficulty of communication with headquarters and the fact of the country being so heavily timbered as to render it unsuitable for pastoral pursuits made it advisable that they should look about for land better adapted to their purpose. In January, 1832, Captain Molloy, Mr. John and Mr. Alfred Bussell and a party of soldiers of the 63rd Regiment started on foot on an exploring tour. They were away nearly a fortnight, and the result of the expedition was that Captain Molloy applied for and was granted 12,400 acres of land on the Vasse River. Mr. Bussell obtaining a grant on the opposite bank of the river. The location duties for Captain Molloy's grant were to date from July 13, 1832, but it was not until 1839 that he and his family moved thither.

### Regrets

From Augusta, January 12, 1832, to Miss Margaret Dunlop (afterwards Mrs. Chervasee), Keppoch House, Dunbarton, Scotland.

My beloved Maggie.—I received your and dear Mary Kee's letters of September, 1831, in October, 1832. You do us an injustice to censure us for a moment for not writing and thinking of you. Never a day passes that we do not speak of you; and, as I have all along told you, so few vessels call at this port except to barely supply us with provisions, that we have not frequent opportunities of sending. Besides, I always hesitate to send a single letter, knowing the expense thereof.

We have all been quite well since writing. In November Molloy went to the Swan on business, where

he remained a month, and was brought back in H.M.S. Imogene by Captain Blackwood, perhaps a friend of Robert's, as he is a nephew of Sir H. Blackwood, from whose name this river is called. He is a very nice gentlemanly man and connected with the Grahams, of Netherby.

Molloy again went last Monday to view his large grant of land on the Yasse—a most pleasing country and answering with truth to the description given of its park-like appearance, with long waving grass, and abounding also in kangaroos.

In the interim a vessel has come in, which has given me not only my own, but Jack's letters to write—which I am almost unable to do—as at the beginning of the week I was confined to bed from over-exertion. For in truth, Maggie, I have not time to say my prayers as I ought—I must unbosom myself to you, my dear girl, which I have never done—but this life is too much both for dear Molloy and myself. And what I lament is that, in his decline of life, he will have to lead a much more laborious life than he did in one and twenty years' service. He does not despair, but I never knew or heard of anyone having his losses to bear—but who would?

May God have mercy on us and poor little Sabina Dunlop who is remarkably well. As I lay in bed on Monday she all at once got up and began to walk. She came to my bedside and said, 'Mam, Mam.' She keeps going backwards and forwards the whole day long with some thing for me. Never cries, though I dip her in a tub of water. She is a great blessing. I need not blush to tell you I am, of necessity, my own nursery-maid.

By this I write to Mary and Mrs. Caldecott. I have had seven letters of Molloy's relating to business to answer, besides my own correspondence, to weigh out rations, attend to baby; and, although needlework of every kind both for her, Molloy, myself and servant is required, I have not touched a needle for this week. I am now exhausted and the day uncommonly hot. I told you how it would be: I should have to take in

washing, and Jack carry home the clean clothes in a will. The last of this has not yet happened, but, between ourselves, dear Maggie, the first is no uncommon occurrence, but time will show. What goes to my heart is that dear Molloy has so much exertion bodily and mentally, but I am repaid with interest when any part I can perform eases his burden. The Lord is good and has shown Himself to us in many wonderful instances, but we are sadly forgetful of His love and bounty amid the hurried concerns of this life.

Oh! my loved sister! I cannot contain myself when I think of the past. I never, never trust myself to think of all we have said to one another. What is all this about Irving and the super-natural gifts and strange tongues? Please tell me. My head aches. I have all the clothes to put away from the wash; baby to put to bed; make tea and drink it without milk as they shot our cow for a trespass; read prayers and go to bed besides sending off this tableful of letters. I wish I had you here to help me. What golden dreams we used to have about your coming to stay with me! How would you like to be three years in a place without a female of your own rank to speak to or to be with you whatever happened?

Sabina has just toddled in, hiding her little face in her hand in play. She is sometimes so lively she is neither to 'hand nor to bin,' as James Angus would express it. My kind love to Robert and accept the same with unabated affection from your sincerely attached sister

GEORGINA MOLLOY.

[P.S.—Mr. P. Salmon would not look at poor worn out Mrs. Molloy. The thistle seed never came up; please send me some more quite new.—G.M.]

From Augusta, Nov. 20, 1833, to Mrs. Besley, The Vinegar, Long Benton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Mrs. Besley died in March, 1833.

My Dearest Eliza.—I cannot express my anxiety to hear from you. I much valued your kind note by Mamma's box but quarrelled with its brevity; pray write us a very long account of yourselves. If you knew what I have to do and attend to, you would never offer the hackneyed term, "I really have not time." Accept my grateful thanks for your kind, useful and

handsome presents, being made up they were doubly valuable. I stitch my fingers to the bone to keep Molloy, Sabina and myself in constant repair. I think you would like little Miss Molloy. She is a remarkably good child and never cries, not even when she falls, and seems more composed at the dirt her hands and clothes have contracted than at any personal injury. She speaks so plainly that we can hold conversation with her.

If ships went from Newcastle, you would be of great service to your forlorn brother and sister in executing our commissions and so forwarding them—either to London or to this place. Before I close, however, I shall give you an opportunity of serving us materially, and, if I mistake not, I can apply to no one who will more readily acquiesce. But whatever you buy for us, let it be reasonable as will suit the nearly exhausted pockets of the "Poor Swan River Settlers," but endowed with enviable quality and durability.

Mr. Battin is having some money of Molloy's to expend on two hogsheads of porter (one for his poor wife, who is now skin and bone), some cheese, and other things. I hope Mr. Battin will prevail on Mrs. Caldicott to get him a box of common English preserves such as jams, bottled gooseberries, for Sabina rarely tastes anything but hard salt meat; fruit we have not seen ever since we left the Cape in 1830.

One very good way of packing trees or plants is by putting them in tanner's bark enclosed in an iron pot or pan well closed down. Some fig or vine cuttings arrived here the other day for the Bussells packed in this manner and the figs had shoots on them of 3 or 4 inches.

You could not send old Georgy a greater treat than some seeds, both floral and culinary—but they must all be seeds of that year's growth. In return I will send you some Australian seeds. I should have last time, but Molloy forgot where he put them. I hope ere this you will have received some little memento per Cygnett. I send you a bunch of emu feathers given me by Mohin, a native chief. You will perceive that

they are covered with a sort of red earth. Thus they paint themselves with, and mixed with fat they extract from their food, they besmear the hair, which is turned up "à la Greque" and confined by many strings of the opossum hair, which the women spin.

The natives are very fond of all the settlers at Augusta and we live on the most peaceful terms. But at the Swan, from the indiscretion of several persons and particularly their servants, they are hostile. The natives call Molloy "King Kandarang" and me "King-bin." They are delighted with Sabina and she is not the least alarmed at their black figures and rude voices. She will dance opposite the native children with great glee; and an old native woman seized her by the leg the other day and embraced it, without producing the slightest emotion of fear.

You are, I presume, acquainted with the existence of the Bussell family. They have lately been so unfortunate as to have their dwelling house, composed of mud and wicker work, burnt to the ground and their property much injured by the flames. Janny, the eldest girl, happened to be staying at the time with me. No lives were lost, but all their shoes, needles and thread destroyed, which in this far distant climate is really irreparable. They have a cottage at Augusta and thither they have all repaired, bringing with them their goods and chattels, amongst which Bessy's piano is placed in my sitting-room.

You may well conceive my gladness at this acquisition, as I have not heard the sound of music for four years. Sabina at first was a little afraid, but in an hour soon overcame it. She seemed to think it was an animal, and insisted on tying a piece of cord round one of its legs, hearing us speak of the legs of the piano. She put her fingers to the opening in the front board where the silk is visible, and exclaimed "Oh Mamma, it's coming out! It's coming out!" Hearing the vibration at night when eating her supper, she said, "If the piano had a mouth, Mamma, I would give it some sop." In time she has become fond of it, and her great delight is to sit upon the music stool. She asks



me to sit by her and strike the keys and attempts to sing. It is most ridiculous to see her. She sings "Come a Rose, my brave Tossy Boy (Come arouse thee, My Brave Swiss Boy)," "Little Boppeps from Ingelie (England) I come," "Buy a Brioom," and "There was a Bonnie Briar Bush in One Kail Yard." Yesterday morning on entering the room she asked Mrs. Dawson, the servant, "if the piano was awake yet?" I should perhaps suppress all these juvenile details; but, my dear Eliza to Molloy and me they are not only amusing but instructive, more especially when we rarely hear the sound of any loved voices but our two own.

The Bussells always intended leaving the Adelphi, their residence up the river, but this accident has obliged them to halt at Augusta instead of going to the Vasse, where Molloy and they have taken their large grants.

I am now, whilst writing, leaving loads of needle work neglected, but I cannot bear to think of giving up one's "objets cheries" for these necessary employments. I had a person of the name of Kitty Studon in my service who greatly assisted me in this department, but she has lately joined her husband, as she became too ill to work. She has of late been seized with the most awful and alarming fits, and so she followed her own choice of joining her husband on an island of ours eight miles up the river and bearing the name of Dalton Island.

I am overpowered with work and expect an addition to my family in the spring, and have not a cap to put on the child's head.

February 21, 1834. My Beloved Girl,—Nearly four months are fled since this was commenced. On December 5, dearest Molloy left this for the Swan, expecting to be absent for three weeks. He has been prevented from returning, but I have had one opportunity of hearing from him. His absence is agonising and from his valued letter he is as uncomfortable at his separation as I am.

Many events have occurred since he went—which have loudly called on me to act a more conspicuous

part than I could have desired, knowing my insufficiency. Kitty died on the island in a most lamentable state, totally deranged and unapproachable saving by her husband, from disease which the climate made more offensive. Her funeral duties I was necessitated to conduct. She had to be buried by torchlight. Her poor frame was so highly decomposed, it made two of the bearers ill for some days.

The harvest then ensued, which was favourably stacked and proved the best in the settlement, owing to the seed wheat being washed in brine, and for want of lime. This operation I performed in June previous to the sowing time. All the other settlers' wheat was much smutted and full of darnel.

The island being troubled with natives who, though amicable, required watching in case of theft, I ordered a guard of the 21st Fusiliers to prepare thither to preserve stock and dwellings, I then set Dawson and the oxen to plough. The Ellen, the Colonial schooner, arrived one day when I was almost dead with expectation. I set off in the cart, left Sabina asleep in her cot, and when I got to the landing place, was told Captain Molloy had been prevented leaving Perth owing to the delay H.M.S. Alligator had caused to the Government. I returned very much disappointed. No letters, *as usual*, from England, but two most kind and voluminous epistles from Mary Kerr, Rio Janeiro. From that period, nearly a month, I have hourly expected my honoured husband.

A barge was seen off here last Friday wishing to come in, but a strong breeze from the S.E. prevented her. This we surmised was the Governor and suite on their way to Swan River. Therefore my much loved one will again meet with detention. When he returns he says he will never leave me again unless it is to enrich ourselves and procure more comforts than we have hitherto enjoyed. True, we have drunk many dregs since we embarked on this fatal Swan River expedition, fraught with continued care and deprivations. God bless and protect you, my darling Liz, Your devotedly attached sister.—GEORGINA MOLLOY.

## Threatened by Natives

[From August 1st, December 8, 1834, to Mrs. Storey, Rosneath Maunse, Helensbury, Bumbartonshire, Scotland]

My dear and much beloved Helen,—Last Friday, December 8, the box containing your much valued letters was given to me through the medium of Mrs. Bussell, to whose care Mrs. Taylor entrusted it. A strange fate awaited it. The vessel on which all Mrs. Bussell's goods were placed has never been heard of and, it is presumed, is lost, as it was only a small craft and a gale came on three hours after she left Fremantle. However, this parcel has been put up with their books, the only property they have saved from all they have brought out.

When I last wrote you, my dear Helen, I believe I complained of multiplicity of business, but, on the 16th June this year, my third daughter was born, and I have not only to nurse and carry her about, but all my former occupations to attend to, having only Mrs. Dawson as a female servant. I do not hesitate to say that I am overwhelmed with too much labour, and indeed my frame bears testimony to it, as I have every day expected to see some bone poking through its epidermis.

My beloved husband much assists me and more than many would do, except such treasures as yours and mine, dear Nelly. You will fully believe me when I say I must either leave writing alone or some useful requisite needle work undone. The latter I would not attempt for Molloy's, myself and the children's sake, but there is not a person to be had here to do any. I never open a book, and if I can read a chapter on Sundays, it is quite a treat to have so much leisure.

In February, while Molloy was away, one morning when Dawson was the only man about the premises, about 20 natives came about and, seeing potatoes in the garden and being instructed in the use of them by one who had been domesticated with some of the settlers, they were anxious to attack them. The women, more notorious thieves than the men, came to my dwelling at some distance from the kitchen (I had Sabina in my arms—no servant—or any one near me). One of them

endeavoured to snatch a worked up rug from the table. I perceived this and made a sign for them to retreat from the verandah. They seemed unwilling to obey. The women went out, and two men began to play with Sabina, then little more than two years old. I did not like their manner and said "Ben-o-wai (begone)." I called Dawson and met five others between this and the kitchen. On Dawson's joining up one of them, a very tall strong man, flourished his club or hammer over Dawson's head, and pretended to hit him with his wallabee stick (a short thick stick). Dawson parried this and shook him off. Dawson grew very pale and, turning his back, went towards the kitchen.

As soon as Dawson's back was turned this same man—and another a little lamer—came up to me and took hold of Sabina's legs and shook their spears at me. I was afraid to show fear and smiled. The tall man, perceiving that I was not intimidated, cut the air close to my head with his wallabee stick. I stood it all, taking it as play, but I heard the whizzing and expected either Dawson, the child or I should be struck. Dawson and Mrs. Dawson were keeping them out of the kitchen, but could not see this transaction. I called to Dawson not to go but not to interfere, as I knew their numbers much exceeded ours and I was unwilling for a breach. He (the native) then, seeing that I cared not for his manner, drew a piece of broken glass bottle close to my cheek. I smiled and trembled and said "Dirila" or glass, meaning that I knew they used it for sharpening their spears. He rubbed his forefinger in his hair until it was covered with the fat or red earth with which they rub themselves and poked it right into my face. This I could not stand and, but for Sabina, I should have knocked his insulting hand away. I then left my ground, and for some time he dogged me—not letting me go one way or the other. I told Dawson to disperse them and call in the dogs. Not one of them would even bark (the servants are in the habit of correcting them when a forbidden stranger appears). About this time there were 30 altogether, and Yarnier, a great thief, pointed to the potatoes, and wanted Dawson to give him some. Of course he did not. I never once thought in my alarm

of the firearms but, when Dawson was drawing water for the natives, brought out a pistol and Molloy's rifle, and laid it where they could see it as soon as they returned. On finding these weapons, they one by one dropped off and went over to the Miss Bussells, where they hung about for some time.

After their departure, Miss Bussell missed four cut glass salt cellars. They came to me and said the salt was emptied out and the cellars gone. I instantly despatched Dawson (an old soldier in the rifle brigade) armed, to the barracks, and desired Sergt. Guerin would pursue the natives with the detachment and endeavour to procure the stolen property, only to use no violence. They seized the women and found the cellars in the kangaroo skin pouch that they carry their children in on their backs, and their only punishment was to make the women kneel down, and threaten to bayonet them. The woman on whom they were found was the identical one that had attempted to steal the urn rug. The man who behaved so ill to Dawson and me we have never seen again.

This was on Friday, and, on the following Sunday, many came down with wallabies (a kind of hare) and gave one each to the settlers, which we accepted as a peace offering. I am sure if Dawson had not been present, Mrs. Dawson and I and the poor children would have been murdered or otherwise injured, for it seemed that man's full intention to prevent me leaving my own premises. It gave me a great fright.

Although I felt uncomfortable at Molloy's prolonged absence, I had so much to do I was a stranger to ennui. I was reading Sir Edward Seaward's narrative—a delightful book and one much suited to this strange life. In the evening, after the heat of the day, I would daily sit on the beach on a line with Cape Leeuwin watching the running bar and the ever agitated waves of the Southern Ocean. Dearest Sabina would be picking up cuttle fish bone (and rubbing it together with a nutmeg grater) with which these shores abound. We repaired thither with great constancy, hoping, perchance, to discover the masts of the vessel that was to bring back dear papa.

One morning about 6.30, we heard a ship's gun in the Bay, and shortly after dear Molloy appeared in his rifle jacket looking quite fat from the gentlemanly life he had been leading at Perth.

I shall begin a letter to Mary Kee as soon as this is finished, but this very morning since I began this, I have fed the turkeys, made a pudding, fed Dart and boiled another mess of rice for him, washed and dressed baby and written part of this with baby in my arms, and attended to poor dear Sabina, who is now fast asleep on my bed—and baby in her cot.

In September I received letters from Mamma and George and one from dear Mary Kennedy, the import of which I can scarcely believe, remote as we are from the land in which it occurred. You are, by this time, I doubt not, in possession of the circumstances to which I allude, and know my poor dear sister Eliza has passed the awful limits of time, and began last March never ending Eternity . . . . .

We enjoy health and our children will perhaps have more than a competency, but Molloy and I have to work as hard and harder than servants will. In March our servants' indentures are up, and we are literally expecting to be without, and we shall be unless some vessel most unexpectedly brings people here. I know I cannot do without a woman servant, however bad she may be, especially when there is no one to be got to wash, even, and I have to carry baby. So fat she is, she makes my back quite ache. As to Molloy, he is a perfect slave; up by daybreak and doing the most menial work sometimes, so that all the former part of our lives was all lost time, and even reading and writing there is not time for here.

In November, poor darling Sabina was seized with a remittent fever, which came on suddenly. At last, at 2 o'clock in the day, I perceived her very drowsy, and she would scarcely leave my side, though at another time I cannot get her to remain with baby and me; we are too quiet. Well, before 10 she was in a warm bath, her head shaved and blistered. She was quite incoherent, and, at one time, convulsed and before this she had never been half an hour ill from her

birth. We were greatly distressed. Molloy and I prayed the Lord Almighty to spare our dearest hope. She was only three on the seventh of the month, and on the 30th Death rose—certainly hovering near her. As she sat on my knee to have her head shaved, she said "Mamma, you will bring baby in" and kept continually talking about baby, of whom she was very fond.

Molloy commanded me to go to bed, as baby, who lies all night on my arm, would be restless. I went, but not to close my watchful eyes. Molloy, dearest creature, sat up with Sabina, who remained in the same state till about three, when, God be praised and glorified! the medicine took effect, and the instant this occurred she was better. Her pulse, which beat at 130 and had never been lower than 120, fell. She began babbling in her usual gay manner. She had a relapse a few days after, but, thank God, that was the last, and, though still very weak and ill looking, I trust she will shortly regain her strength, though she is not the same looking child she was. I felt peculiarly grieved for though the medicine man thought that it was a stroke of the sun, Molloy and I were persuaded that the symptoms were more those of remittent fever and I had, for some time, been lamenting my total inability to look after her—she who had always been my sole object of care. I know she ran about too much for her tender years; she was often so tired. Then, when the poor child sat down to dinner, she would almost fall from her chair with fatigue and be quite asleep. Her spirits, which are very great, are too much for her strength; and, in the winter, she would be running about without cap or bonnet from six o'clock to five, then, having baby to nurse and attend to, the darling child was neglected. I wish now I had a proper person to take care of her, and when I know there are so many that would be glad of such an asylum as my house would be to them, I bewail my smallness of means that I could not offer to pay their passage money. I wish we were nearer good instruction, for I am persuaded many good and precious minds will be lost for want of it.

January, 1836. On speaking to Molloy about someone to look after Sabina, he desires me to say he would be very glad to pay the passage money of such a person, and, if agreeable, would settle land on her, but that, as soon as a vessel arrived with an unmarried woman in it, the beach was crowded with candidates handing in written proposals to her—let her be the plainest woman ever seen. This I must expect in any single person I have about me; but the welfare of my unconstructed child goes near my heart, and instead of being able to direct and look after her I am obliged to perform the most menial offices. Tell anyone accepting the situation I name that she cannot be dressed too plainly. I never wear anything but dark cotton and a muslin kerchief, and a lighter print for Sundays, plenty of shoes and boots, for they are expensive articles here. Plaid of stuff are best for winter, but indeed it is so cool at Augusta that I make no change from England, and have a fire always in the evening.

I shall be most thankful for a sensible and pious young woman, or even a widow, that would teach the children good habits and assist me in any way, either as a servant or companion. Her salary, though not large, would be sure, and you know us too well to think we should not be very kind to her.

The caps come in most opportunely for Sabina, but you will think me altered when I thought them so gay that I divided the number of bows and keep them for their best caps. I hope if you hear of emigration you will recommend its votaries to Augusta, and let them be supplied with woollen goods of dark colour. Shoes and even clogs would be good here in the winter, which lasts from May to September. This is the height of summer: I am writing in the nursery with a fire in the hearth, and the thermometer about 71. We are now reaping the Killites, the hill behind the house.

If ever we leave Australia, I think it will be to settle in bonnie Scotland. I often dream of the garden of the manse. I used to take so much interest in it, and that of our ever happy Keppoch. It is a month to-day since I began this. I have written it

at the expense of needlework, and in great haste, so pray excuse its many errors and imperfections, but if it bears testimony to the unabated affection and regard for you both and all connected with your dear selves, it will fully serve.—Your ever faithful and attached brother and sister, JOHN and GEORGINA MOLLOY.

P.S.—January 5, 1835: I am often tempted to write on Sundays, but, as yet, I have and intend abstaining from it.—G.M.

### Botany and Grief

Here there is a gap of more than two years in the letters. The next is the first of a series to Captain Mangles, R.N., a cousin of Lady Stirling's. Hearing of Mrs. Molloy's love of flowers from his cousin, Captain Mangles, an enthusiastic collector of botanical specimens, he opened the correspondence by a letter requesting seeds of native plants in exchange for others.

A son was born to Captain and Mrs. Molloy about April, 1836.

From Augusta, March 21, 1837, to Captain Mangles, R.N. 1

My dear Sir,—Much to my surprise in December last, I received a particularly choice box of seeds, and your polite note requesting a return of the native seeds of Augusta. In truth, my dear Sir, I much fear you have bestowed your liberality on one whose chief pleasure is her garden, but who does not enter the lists as a florist, much less a botanist. If we were nearer I should much hesitate to accept so magnificent a present of so many long wished for seeds, and as all my former pursuits have necessarily been thrown aside (by the peremptory demand of my personal attention to my children and domestic drudgery), I feel that it will be long ere I can make any adequate return in Australian products.

We have already collected some seeds, as your box just arrived at the proper season. I am not even acquainted with the names of the native plants. I will, however, enclose a leaf and description of the flower in each paper. I had some dried plants by me

from the Vasse—a country apparently possessing some exquisite floral beauties, which I feel most happy in being able to send you, and, when I obtain a sufficiency to make up a small box, I will despatch it and retain the large one until I am blessed with more leisure than at present. Another impediment to our being able to procure seeds is our approaching removal to the Vasse, where Captain Molloy's larger grant is situated, but if you do not hear from me shortly, I trust that you will not consider me negligent or unmindful of your humble request.

It is with much regret I leave dear Augusta. Our climate is so heavenly and the scenery so superior to other settlements, the flowers scentless but minutely beautiful. I am told we possess many unknown in other parts of this colony.—Permit me to subscribe myself, yours much obliged, GEORGINA MOLLOY.

From Augusta, January 25, 1838, to Captain Mangles, R.N. 1

My dear Sir,—Having at length complied with your desire to obtain flowers and seeds from Augusta, I send you the result of my labours, which at one time I had not the least hope of being able to do in a satisfactory manner.

Under the afflicting but unscrutable decree of an all-wise Providence we have recently been overwhelmed with the most bitter loss of our darling infant and only son of 19 months old by drowning. Painful as it is to record—distance of place compels me.

Captain Molloy, myself and his little sisters had been playing with him watching his vigorous and frolicsome mood just after breakfast on November 11, 1837. We separated each to our necessary duties (that morning I was preparing to bake and churn) I left dear little Johnnie in my only servant girl's charge. She imagined from having seen him with Mary and near his father that he was still there. Mary appeared without him, which instantly struck us, as they were inseparable. Charlotte had put the dear child in his cradle, and not finding him where she last saw him, she asked Molloy, then me. I had not seen him, but answered: "He had his bell on" (a little bell he

wore round his waist, in case of his straying into the bush). I instantly ran out, and on her running up and down and not finding him, I exclaimed: "Have you been to the well?" and became quite alarmed. Captain Molloy said, "Do not frighten yourself; he never goes there." The fatal truth stole over me, and on Charlotte going to the well, she said, "Here's the boy," and pulled out the darling precious child, lifeless, his flaxen curls all dripping, his little countenance so placid, he looked fast asleep, but not dead; and we did not believe he really was so until some minutes after. But the medical man was at the Vasse, and we did not know what to do. We tried every means of restoration, but to no effect. And that lovely healthy child, who had never known pain or sickness and who had been all mirth and joyousness the last time we beheld him together, was now a stiff corpse, but beautiful and lovely even in death. The well is in full view of the windows, about a stone's cast away, concealed certainly by the virgillea and mimosa trees. He had not been absent ten minutes. Had any medical man been here, I am fully persuaded my little Johnnie might have been saved.

Forgive me, my dear Sir, for thus using towards a stranger the freedom and minute details that friendship, warrants and desires. Our children are our necessary occupations and fraught as they are with un contemplated interest, engross the attention and exertion of my excellent husband and myself. Acute indeed was the blow, and when you reflect how dead we are to the world, and how completely weaned from that sphere of pursuits, actions and modes of life in which we used to move, I trust you will pardon and excuse my entering thus egotistically and minutely into our present affliction.

Since my dear boy's death, my leisure has been much extended and I have, up to the present time, daily employed it in your service. We have but very few flowers until spring, September and October, all our most delightful months. The purple creeper begins to bloom in July, the red in August. In these two months the wilderness indeed begins to blossom like the

rose. The stiff and inelegant grass plant even is decked in borrowed colours, from the purple red creeper and clematis (or Kennedyya, I believe). The former appellation I gave it in ignorance of the proper one. Where the bush has receded and left an even surface of grass and weeds, appears the "enamelled carpet" of which we read. I am of the opinion that these flowers are not so interesting as our own, and, after the novelty is passed, soon cease to please. These possess no associations, nor does anything about them attract but the lustrous colour. Very few have any scent, and I quarrel much with their excessively minute corolla in this; they constantly remind me of the *Laurestinus*. I do not know the name of any one of them, for dear Augusta is quite out of the world and even the limited society of S.W. Australia, and very few bestow a thought on flowers. The only person I have ever met with here was one lamented Mr. Collier, and his visits were so transient I had little opportunity. Grubbing, hoes, beef, pork, potatoes, onions, anchors, and anchorage, whaling, harpooning, are the chief topics of conversation. Therefore I am persuaded that any observations respecting a flower garden would be ill-timed and not agreeable to the generality of my guests.

I have not sent you every flower we have worth sending, and many I fear you will consider worthless, but having obeyed the "Golden Rule," I have ventured to introduce some literal weeds. Often in hearing of foreign countries, I have wished to be acquainted with their most common plants, having more curiosity to see its weeds than the finer productions.

What can have led you, my dear Sir, to have selected me as a collector, much more to imagine I had botanical knowledge, I cannot divine. The latter accusation I am fully absolved from. Some of the duties of the former in a desire to comply with your laudable desire, and curiosity to possess a knowledge of our floral productions, I have discharged faithfully, and jealously, especially in the collection of matured and perfect seeds. Allow me to state that, fond as I have been of gardening, I have always avoided the

tedious operation of gathering seeds, therefore inexperience must apologise for their not being so cleanly and neatly executed as I could desire. Another reason was my not knowing the time they ripened, and on searching I found some shed, others green, and perhaps before I returned for them a native fire or a hot day had accelerated their ripening, and I found the seed scattered. This is my first attempt, a second one I should, from experience, be able to discharge more satisfactorily to us both. A third very important cause is the universal badness of the seed. In this temperate climate and uncultivated land, insects and reptiles have unrestrained licence, and the seeds of such plants afford sustenance to some of the animal creation. Consequently, the seed vessels of each are generally inhabited by some worm or grub. This is particularly the case with those contained in a silique. I had several large quantities to gather and open before I could meet with the small packages sent you. I have minutely examined every seed, and I know that they are sound and fresh, as they have all been gathered from December 15, 1837, to the present day, January 25, 1838.

I have no hesitation in declaring that, were I to accompany the box of seeds to England, knowing as I do their situation, time of flowering, soil and degree of moisture required with the fresh powers of fructification they each possess, I should have a very extensive conservatory or conservatories of no plants but from Augusta. I do not say this vauntingly, but to inspire you with that ardour and interest with which the collection leaves me; and cordially thank you for being the cause of my immediate acquaintance with the nature and variety of those plants that we have exchanged for the productions of our own country and which also benefits my children. From necessary duties, but for your request, I should have bestowed on the flowers of this wilderness only passing admiration.

My two remaining children have been much gratified in the undertaking and have really been of great utility, as their eyes being so much nearer the ground, they

have been able to detect many minute specimens and seeds I could not observe. For in our impervious bush, it is really difficult to find what you are in quest of. Sabina I shortly found to be infinitely more anxious at discovering and remembering the abode of plants than I was myself. I have known her unexhausted patience to go three and five times a week to watch Nos. 83 and 74, lest they should open and shed. She is only six years old and such a pursuit is highly delightful to her young mind, beside the pleasing accompaniment of a distant walk.

Here the children are bereft of most of the amusements of a highly civilised country. Sabina has already imitated me in forming a collection of dried flowers fastened by ligatures, and Mary, who was also very serviceable in discovering and collecting, to say nothing of pulling, flowers for Captain Mangles, has made up several of the most strange parcels for your acceptance, ever since your box arrived in 1837. You do not know the ridiculous articles presented to me for you. Every time her hair was cut a proportion would be enclosed for you for the box.

I found your *Flortus Siccus* too small for the number and size of the specimens I wished you to possess. Having brought out a book of my own for that purpose, imagining that I should have a superfluity of time, I have much pleasure in appropriating it to your service. Many flowers from the Vasse were gathered for me by Captain Molloy. Of these I have not been able to furnish an account, but on our removal thither, if you express a wish for their seeds, I shall be happy to send them as well as any other seeds my time will permit me to collect, but I much fear I shall be so much employed in the odious drudgery of cheese and butter making that I shall not be able to attend to the formations and culture of my flower garden, for I am my children's sole instructress, seamstress, and that in conjunction with innumerable other peremptory duties. Any particular seed you desire and those I have imperfectly been able to transmit, I shall feel happy against another season to repair. I must apologise for not pursuing your suggestions by

lying in the specimens, but have fastened them, so that they may be drawn out and at pleasure botanically arranged. The colour of the flowers is much more evanescent here than in England, but this a botanist will excuse, as long as the character of the plants is exemplified.

I have British plants now by me, with a more vivid colour (dried since 1825 and even 1823) than many of the flowers of your *Hortus Siccus*. The best idea of the brilliancy of colour and richness of petal of the latter would be to paint the flowers on rice paper, even then I should give but an inadequate idea of their minute beauty. I long to see again a large flower; we do not possess one. We hourly expect a vessel, the *Champion*, or colonial schooner, and this will be her last visit for some time. I am, therefore, anxious to send the box off, it arrived at an untoward season of the year, in December, 1836, and, under all circumstances must have remained a twelvemonth for flowers to blow and ripen. We have scarcely any flowers but the specimens sent from November to June and July. At the *Vasse* we may perhaps have more vessels in, but this year and in general we are not visited here more than three or four times in the year. All Chinese and Cape plants thrive luxuriantly here; many annuals of England are biennial, and sweet peas and *Hybiscus Africanus* survive the winter. The latter bears very large blossoms, and grows to the height of 3 to 4½ feet. I am endeavouring to procure a double flowering plant, which I think would be very magnificent. All English flowers possess more brilliancy of colour in this delightful climate. Were Captain Molloy a rich man, I should incur great expense in ordering numberless flowering plants and shrubs. As it is, I must be guided by prudence, but I am convinced no situation can be preferable or more congenial to the vegetation of all countries than our present locality. The peaches and melons of *Augusta* are said to possess a stronger and more exquisite flavour than those at the *Swan* or *Vasse*. The weather is not so hot and the soil very different, black mould in general, with only occasionally a mixture of sand. I have some inferior single pinks, and wish

much for better seed: that you sent me did not come up. The anemone, from being a native of the East Indies, would answer well. I am anxious for blue flowers and those possessing odour.

I have frequently endeavoured to introduce the native plants among the exotics: they do not succeed from want of native shelter. The purple creeper alone has consented to being domesticated and has associated its beautiful purple flowers with a very elegant pink climbing plant from the *Mauritius*. I never saw it in England, therefore have sent you some seeds to entwine round the pillars of a conservatory; it is ever flowering with us. I wish you would send its proper name. These two creepers cover one side of our verandah, and the purple has so peremptorily usurped the external framework of my window as to darken the room, but increase the beauty of the prospect. The said window looks immediately up the Blackwood. The preceding points give it almost the appearance of a lake. In the background is the boundless and evergreen forest. On the other side of the verandah of rustic branches, which is Molloy's work, grows the *nasturtium*, which is of deeper orange than it ever attains in Britain. It is not at all affected by the winter months. It has been sown since 1833, and has formed an almost impervious and cool shade of almost incredible beauty from a profusion of brilliant blossoms and grey, light green foliage. I must here thank you for the beautiful crimson species you sent me, which form a very handsome variety in the union.

Indeed, your collection as an introduction of select and desirable seeds into this infant colony was most valuable, and demanded all the care and attention possible. Such I rendered it, to the neglect of other concerns. Often has Molloy looked at a buttonless shirt and exclaimed with a woe-begone visage, "When will Captain Mangles's seeds be sown?" and recently he has laid aside all his own operations and accompanied the children and me for a day's search in quest of seeds and flowers. We have had three or four gypsy parties on your account, with which Sabina and Mary were much delighted. Indeed, my dear Sir, I have been more frequently from my home this year in



making up your collection than in the whole of the nearly eight years we have lived at Augusta. Ever before my darling child's death we went three times up to the granite rock and opposite side for flowers, and I have not been in a boat before for three years. Since then we have returned for the seeds, so that I have spared neither time nor trouble in serving you.

Our best fig trees were slips from the specimen which gained the prize from the Horticultural Society at Winchester, and these cuttings were inserted in tanner's bark, put into a camp oven, enclosed in a deal case of various articles, and immediately struck as they were planted and have since improved every season. Vines thrive remarkably well, and Captain Molloy is desirous to obtain some purple grapes of good sorts. We have, from necessity, raised all our grapes from raisin seeds. Although they bear abundantly they are white grapes, and there are very few red ones in the Colony.

Our peaches also are from stones brought from Cape Town. We have but one sort, and that I am thankful to say is universally esteemed. Had Molloy been at home, he doubtless would have accepted your kind offer to send us some good kinds; as it is, I must await his return lest he should be ruined in freight and other damages. But the shrubs and seeds I subjoin in the list I have gained his permission to send for—at the same time telling him he has no milliner's bills to pay, therefore may very well spare me a little indulgence in what is more beautiful and durable. You must not think from this that Captain Molloy is parsimonious: quite the reverse, but great prudence is required when heavy and un contemplated losses have been experienced. I think I have communicated all that I wish to impart relative to this all-engrossing subject and more than you perhaps deem justly requisite. With many apologies for this voluminous epistle, permit me to subscribe myself, yours very truly,  
GEORGINA MOLLOY.

P.S.—I do not imagine it to be a novelty, but send you some cape-gooseberry seed, the only fruit we have in abundance.

[Supplemental, Sept. 8, 1838.]

I never thanked you for the very nice and instructive books you kindly presented to me. Domesticated animals I particularly value from the strain in which it is written, as references to the Holy Scriptures tend much to impress their importance and indisputable authenticity on the minds of youth. It contains a beautiful stanza from an Arab to his steed which pleases Sabina very much to read. I was delighted to receive a work on natural history on her account, although a little too advanced for her early years.

September, 1838.—I am quite grieved, my dear Sir, that you have not long ere this received our collection of seeds. I lament every day I have them in possession, as their departure has been so unfortunately delayed owing to the absence of the Colonial schooner and, indeed, any other vessel. The flowers and shrubs are again beginning to bloom, and when I behold them, I exclaim, "Poor Captain Mangles! How I wish he had received those last year."

In June baby was born, and she has engrossed so much of my time, I have scarcely leisure to teach Sabina and Mary, of whom I wrote to you some months since, or rather I should say, of whom I spoke at the commencement of this volume. With the last six weeks Mary has begun to read, and I am unwilling that she should escape one day. So between the three and my usual employment, I know not what to do first. I am only just recovering from a dangerous illness occasioned by the mournful event of my darling boy's death, and consequently am scarcely able to exert myself in either body or mind. Baby, fortunately, is very good.

My flower garden has hitherto been quite neglected, but, as the season advances, I hope yet to be able to work in it. Many of the plants from the seeds you kindly bestowed have stood the winter, and last week I was transplanting some of them. I have enclosed a small cheque on Captain Molloy's agent and would be particularly obliged by your procuring me a garden rake fit for a lady's use, as I am obliged to borrow one of Captain Molloy's with the most formidable teeth

spreading destruction and next to annihilation where it is applied. The handle I can affix when it arrives, and it must not be too fine. I shall feel much pleasure in sending you any plant you may desire. I hope you received my letter of March, 1837, otherwise you must entertain anything but a favourable idea of my civility, but when it arrives I hope it will give you such a pleasing impression of Captain and Mrs. Molloy, but especially the latter as a pleasing and obliging person, that any derogatory feeling may be removed. With this assurance I remain, very cordially, your friend,  
GEORGINA MOLLOY.

P.S.—If the box you send me is large enough, a watering pot and rose (the patent wire) would be of the greatest use to us, as ours are worn and destroyed after eight years' service. I now enclose your box and letter. Of course, I cannot but send it away with many fears and much, very much, interest of a manifold nature. So many of its contents were collected under the extremes of joy and acute sorrow. It has beguiled many a moment, and I hope you will receive most success and satisfaction in sowing your seeds. With every kind wish, I finally conclude and remain, very sincerely yours, GEORGINA MOLLOY.

There is a letter from Mrs. Molloy to Captain Mangles dated November 21, 1838, telling him that the box was finally sent off on the 16th of the same month, and giving more details about the seeds, etc.

[From Augusta, November 1, 1838, to Captain Mangles, R.N.]

After the silent reception my last of March, 1837, met with, I am reluctant again to address you, but am so chagrined at the delay my collection of flowers and seeds for you has received, that I am anxious to acquit myself of a seeming disregard to your requests, so handsomely made, and to inform you that I have had two "Hortus Siccus" and your box ready to despatch ever since last March, and in consequence of no vessel being in, it has been thus delayed. I trembled, lest, after all my particular care, they should fail, and as I write with baby on my knee, and my time is much absorbed, I should not be able to replace them, although the season for collecting has been revolved, but

I am endeavouring to obtain those seeds I omitted from ignorance of their time of ripening—to gather last year. I sincerely hope they will arrive before the germinating power be suspended.

I cannot describe to you the present brilliancy of the surrounding wilderness, and this year, when I ramble with my little children running like butterflies from flower to flower, every one I behold is fraught with the associations of those I have collected for Captain Mangles, and then the galling remembrance that the seeds are still at Augusta makes me quite sad.

My own garden is at present in its gayest attire. Some of your seeds have survived the winter, and on the 1st of November in this heavenly clime in full bloom. The tall white lily, "Lettum Candidum," the pink gladiolus from the Cape; oleander ditto; single pinks of every hue; sweet peas now fructose; Captain Mangles's dark nasturtiums, mignonette, geraniums, and a very many more I have not space to mention, all in full bloom and their colour much heightened by a warmer sun and the dark green of the grass plots which I have interspersed to give a solace to the eye and a contrast to the beds of flowers.

Now, my dear Sir, I am inhaling all these, while I much fear you are enduring the requisite pain and almost fatal influence of an English winter, but from this pleasant retreat I am soon to be torn, as it is decided that we repair to the Vasse in February next. Please the Almighty this long to spare us, but I look forward to again visiting Augusta in the evening of life, and very much regret that the rest of the world have abandoned it, as this is the cause of our being obliged to do so. I wish very much, both on your account and ours, you had visited us when you were at Swan River, then you could have really condoled with me. Captain Molloy is at present at the Vasse making preparations for our departure.

I have lately had to bewail the loss of my *Gardener's Magazine*, and the transactions of the Horticultural Society for 1827, by white ants. Since my illness they were laid aside and with them perhaps many others of

perhaps greater moment are now completely destroyed. Many notices and remarks in the magazines were highly useful to us in our horticultural labours—to say nothing of their interesting matter. I am anxious to form a quick growing hedge and observe the *Hibiscus* *Althaea* *Fontex* is recommended. I wish you would kindly procure me some of the seeds, also those of the horse chestnut and the *Magnolia* *conspicua*.

Baby thinks I have written too long a letter. Lest you should form the same opinion, I conclude, subscribing myself—Yours very sincerely, GEORGINA MOLLOY.

1Dr. John Lindley, Botanist, to Captain Mangles, R.N. (undated). 1

My dear Captain,—Your friend, Mrs. Molloy, is really the most charming personage in South Australia, and you the most fortunate man to have such a correspondent. That many of her plants are beautiful you can see for yourself. I am delighted to add, many of the best are quite new. I have marked with an X the seeds we shall be most grateful for.—Most truly yours, JOHN LINDLEY.

1The Captain, Mangles, R.N., from Sir Joseph Paxton, of Cheshamworth Gardens, Abingdon, Designer of the Crystal Palace, June 14, 1839. 1

Sir,—I beg to inform you that I have despatched by the mail of to-day a box containing your valuable collection of dried plants from S.W. Australia, with the map and five letters which accompanied them. I have read the letters with considerable interest. They have been written by one who is devoted to the production of botanical interest in this country, and zealously able to fulfil the task of collecting seeds, and, as a proof of this, there is a promise held out for the future to forward seeds from the Vasse inlet, the interesting quarter where your correspondent is about to settle, which, to judge from the dried plants already received from that quarter, will be productive of much finer plants than have been seen in this country as yet.

It is most invariably found, in collecting botanical treasures in an unexplored country, that localities not far distant from each other, owing to some natural agency, elevation, climate and soil, abound with fresh objects and afford renewed interest at almost

every step to the wandering botanist; and this will be the case with Mrs. Molloy there can be no doubt, since Captain Molloy so lately returned from that locality with such excellent floral information. There are some splendid things in the *Hortus* *Siccus* of Port Augusta, comprising many new species of *Hovea*, *Chorizema*, *Daviesia*, *Boronia*, *Epacris*, and *Kennedy*. In the *Hortus* *Siccus* there appears to be many other fine plants which appear to be new. This last collection of seeds you were so kind as to send us are far superior to any that we have received at Chatsworth. I trust the whole collection will be raised by those who have been so highly favoured in sharing its treasures. The examination of your dried plants has afforded great pleasure, and will cast off the gloom which generally is attendant on raising unknown seeds. Now there is a stimulus: we know they are good and from a good quarter.—I have the honour to be, your obedient servant, JOSEPH PAXTON.

1From Sir Joseph Paxton to Captain Mangles, R.N. September 3, 1837

Dear Sir,—It is with great pleasure that I am enabled to communicate so favourable a result from your invaluable collection of seeds. Several hundreds of the two last lots have vegetated. Amongst them are several *Kennedy*, *Chorizema*, *Mimosa*, *Amigoanthos*, *Hovea*, *Daviesia*, and everlasting, besides several *Epacridae* and the "Floral Gem," which the infant botanist, *Sabina* Molloy, took so much pains to watch and collect, and which you are anxious should be named after her.—I have the honour to remain, yours very truly, JOSEPH PAXTON.

#### At the Vasse

In May, 1839, Captain Molloy, his wife, and three children left Augusta. The detailed account of the journey promised by Mrs. Molloy is not forthcoming. It would appear from the following letter that the journey took four days, first by boat up the Blackwood River, whence the travellers rode. Early in May their future neighbour and friend, Mrs. John Bussell—then newly arrived from England—looking across the Vasse River saw the little party of pilgrims from Augusta wending their way to their new

home. Captain and Mrs. Molloy on horseback, she with the baby in her arms, the little Sabina and Dorothea following on donkeys.

A house had been erected on their grant of land, on the bank of the river. Soon after they took possession Mr. and Mrs. John Bussell were invited to spend an evening at "Fairtawn" (as they had named it). Mrs. Bussell describes the visit as follows:—

"A boat was sent for us as there was no bridge in those days. Mrs. Molloy, whom I now met for the first time, was standing on the bank when we landed, with her baby in her arms. Her complexion was very fair, and she had a quantity of fair hair. She was dressed in a dark blue print very plainly made. We walked up to the house together. In the parlour was a bright fire. Tea was ready, and on the table was a beautiful bunch of wild flowers, for her garden was not in order, and she could not be without flowers in her room. The little girls were seated on each side of the fire on low seats. There was a small piano in the room on which Mrs. Molloy played when tea was over, and we spent a pleasant evening."

Mrs. Molloy to Captain Mangles, R.N., from "Fairtawn," Yasseo,  
Geographic Bay, January 31, 1840.1

Dear Captain Mangles,—I received your long wished for letter of the 10th December, a day or two after the box. Words fail me when I attempt to return you my grateful thanks and acknowledgments for its useful, beautiful and handsome contents. I stood quite amazed when Captain Molloy took out the different things, wondering at your disinterested liberality and kindness to those whom you had never seen and who are not able to make any adequate return. The books are invaluable and most admirably selected, so many of them that I have so long wished for, and what we should ourselves have purchased had opportunity occurred. "Uncle Phillip's Conversations" I saw named in the quarterly, and had set down with "The Language of Flowers," Parley's "Conversations," and some others in a list for Captain Molloy to get when he performs his long talked of visit to England. I saw them there highly recommended. Among the

new publications I greatly desired to see "The Greenhouse," but knew both it and Keith on "Prophecy" were too expensive, and, therefore, abandoned the idea of ever possessing them. By these facts you will be able to perceive the extent of your bounty upon us isolated beings. Indeed, I am ashamed to think of my accepting so much at your hands. Not only to ourselves but our grandchildren will your munificence be perpetrated and the superiority of the feeling that pervades the collection (to please and gratify the parents and at the same time to be instrumental in the improvement and edification of their children) does not pass unnoticed.

In my few stolen moments of leisure I run to my box of treasures and take a glance at some of the books with which I am really delighted. The beautifully executed illustrations of "The Greenhouse" and "The Language of Flowers" I could look at repeatedly with unwearied pleasure not a little increased by calling them my own. I often, after a day spent in servile drudgery, from the want of domestics, sit down quite exhausted with one of your beautiful presents in my hand, when I receive great refreshment and great relaxation. When leave is granted for Captain Mangles's box to be looked at, a clean cloth is spread and Sabina and Mary are permitted to regale themselves with the sight. Captain Molloy is much pleased with many parts of "Australia," and has long wished to read Major Mitchell's work. He is an old brother officer of Molloy's, and from all accounts a most zealous and indefatigable person, and an excellent draftsman, and, on the Peninsula would be absent for weeks together among the hills with his sketch book without a companion.

But I must concentrate my many subjects as I have much to say, and short space to write in. Imprints, when I last addressed you it was at dear Augusta. I left it with much regret on the 5th May, 1839, having the previous night taken up all my favourite plants and shrubs and placed in a basket which was hung to my crutch. My feelings, on leaving my much beloved retreat, are best expressed in those beautiful lines of

Milton, when he represents Eve driven from the garden of Paradise. At Augusta, as your cousin knows, we suffered much in every way, and also enjoyed much undisturbed happiness. I was reluctant to leave it, but would gladly return, only prudence forbids.

We were taken thirty miles up the Blackwood River in a whale boat belonging to the ship "America," Captain Cole, then lying in the bay. Beautiful our row was up that magnificent and peaceful river; but it was a great struggle to both of us. I had not been so long from my home for nearly 10 years.

We stopped at the Governor's bivouac, and here I must really leave you and finish my account in my next, or, if I thought it was not interesting, would commence the little red book you sent out, "Floral Memoranda," and give you a sketch of my proceedings, from that day until the present. Suffice it to say that we arrived (three days after we took leave of Captain Cole at the Governor's bivouac) at the Vasse, a terrible change. After dinner I sought out a moist situation where I might deposit my poor plants. Torn from their native soil, they seemed to participate in the feelings of their mistress, and had evidently met with some terrible reverse. We found the Vasse much colder in the nights and mornings, but hotter in the days. June, July and August passed without much interest. The latter end of August the flowers in the wilderness began to bloom and I was astonished at their loveliness; much finer than at Augusta, and many new varieties, and some that I had never seen there and vice versa. I had no books to put specimens in had I dried them, or could not procure even paper to make one, for they must have stiff backs.

The present Governor paid us a visit in November. From him I heard of a botanist named Preiss, a German, and one employed by the Austrian and Prussian Governments to collect the natural productions of this country. He is really a botanist, and I thought might aid me in information respecting the plants of this country. I had, besides, another motive, I will confess, in which you were not a little considered. I accordingly invited him to "Fairlawr" and he stayed with us about a month. Being so pleased with the

country and its many new floral productions, he has resolved upon visiting us again. When here he collected many specimens and, of course, tendered me some of the results of his labours, but so rough and ungainly were many, I could not deface the Hortus Siccus with them, so had recourse to fixing them on stiff paper of which I was minus, and, after asking every probable person, I at last obtained an old log book from the captain of the "Palestine," an American whaler, then in Geographe Bay.

Your name has created a great sensation in this district, which you unfortunately avoided. The soldiers who used to pass between this and Augusta unencumbered with anything but their knapsacks, are now seen to bring from thence specimens of all sorts of plants under their arms. The native herdsmen are also employed bringing in some desired plant or fruit which until now they have never perhaps looked upon, for they dislike flowers and will not suffer any to be placed on their heads. I think, perhaps, from the common custom of laying them upon the dead. I never knew any but one of the name of Battap who permitted me at Augusta to place a large piece of the crimson Anterthium on his locks.

Last Thursday "The America," Captain Cole, arrived in the bay, having (to use a technical term) filled up. She proceeds instantly to America and I am anxious to send what I have been able to obtain for you. Since Saturday last I have been engaged in your service. The children have had a week's holiday and so have I. Although I have necessarily been very assiduous, always working from after breakfast till 12.30 at night, this seems incredible, but first I had to fix the specimens, to arrange them to paste on labels on that forbidding old log book, which looks anything but neat and clean, then write attempts on character, make the bags and cases and now, Friday night, commence this interminable epistle. I do not know how the specimens will arrive, but at least they will afford amusement to your botanical friends, and will, I believe, be the first in Britain from this part of the world. My anxiety that you should possess them rouses all my energy to

prepare them for embarkation on Monday, February 3, 1840. The seeds Doctor Lindley wished for I obtained from Augusta as far as I could. I would with all my heart have ridden over myself for them, and really have liked nothing better, as being in the bush is to me one of the most delightful states of existence, free from every household care, my husband and children about me.

Captain Molloy proposed this mode of sending by America, thinking it the most expeditious way as the intercourse thence to England is so rapid, and being anxious you should receive the earliest acknowledgment of your kindness. Captain Molloy and I are going out this evening for the seed of the *Isopogon* to be able to send it off tomorrow. Alas! the horses have run into the bush, and, after many attempts, have not been caught. I must provokingly defer sending the seed—the vessel sails this evening.

Captain Molloy desires his best regards; and hoping that you have not had any return of indisposition and that I shall shortly hear from you, I remain, my dear Sir, very sincerely your friend.—GEORGINA MOLLOY.

Here follows a list of 106 species collected by Mrs. Molloy.

The following is an extract from a letter of Doctor Lindley to Captain Mangles:—"What a capital correspondent your friend Mrs. Molloy must think you are! If she sends you treasures of Nature I am sure you make more than a return in treasures of Art."

Mr. G. Hailes, of Newcastle, England, wrote to Captain Mangles:—"The fine Kennedy, Heichrysum, several acacias, Patersonia, Sabina and several others are now fine plants with me."

(From Mrs. Molloy to Captain Mangles, R.N., written at "Fralawa" on March 14, and April 18, 1840—extracts)

If I again return to Augusta I shall have my garden more beautiful than ever. As Sabina and Mary are so much older they can assist me greatly. I have two Cobeas Scandens up in a box and intend them for the outside of a building Molloy is erecting or me as dormitory and nursery. The seeds of Kingia and Nuytsia you shall have. This is their precise time of ripening. The last named grown here in a great abundance,

and splendid it is. It looks so rich among the sombre Eucalyptus of the present season. It represents to my mind the rich and luxurious trees which adorn Paradise. How many many years these treasures have blossomed in this country without one eye to appreciate them. It strikes me so forcibly, riding through the surrounding wilderness, that the hand of God is indeed impartial, for the uncultivated parts of the earth are as much loaded with His bounties as the most frequented parts.

My excellent husband and I lately took a delightful ride for the seeds of the *Isopogon*. I have found a whole bag full. I found in bloom a bright red species of *Verticordia* with such rich tufts of flowers. I beheld a tree of great beauty of a dark green and prickly. Its flowers gave character not only to the tree itself, but to the surrounding locality. They are of the purest white and fall in long trusses from the stem. Some of its pendulous blooms are from three to five fingers in length. These wave in the breeze like snow wreaths and are of such a downy white appearance and emit a most delicious perfume resembling the bitter almond; and, like all mortal delicacies, how quick these flowers fall from the stalk! (Probably *Pimelea spectabilis*.) I was, however, able to gather a good many, and on near view found the buds much more beautiful than the full blown flower. (I regret they have assumed, in drying, a yellow hue). The native name is Danja. I rather think it will turn out to be *Halkea*. Captain Molloy returned last week from Augusta, and brought me a whole arm full of specimens of *Melaleuca*, the colour richly preserved. *Mitrosideros* and other plants I am unacquainted with, amongst them a magnificent specimen of this *Danja* which he dried under a stone and left until his return.

We have had six American whalers in since Jan. The sailors are charmed with the bay. They are of great use to us, and as yet, have all been temperance ships, the best qualification they could possess; indeed, we have no public house in the district. Heaven grant this may long continue! This is a fine country, very rich; but give me my "lovely thatched cottage" again, and my sweet flower garden on the magnificent

Blackwood. Imagine to yourself the unrivalled beauty of a magnificent oleander 10 feet high, covered with Maurandia Barclayana—the seed you sent—each disputing the palm of colour. With Captain Molloy's kind respects and the little ones' best love to Captain Mangles, believe me, your very sincere friend.—GEORGINA MOULLOY.

Mr. Long, of the Zoological Gardens, London, wrote to Captain Molloy, subsequent to the above letter:—"I exceedingly regret the dangerous illness of Mrs. Molloy, to whom I am, thro' your very great kindness, so much indebted. I trust she is ere this perfectly restored."

(Mrs. Molloy to Captain Mangles, R.N., from "Fairfax," June 1840)

In all my illness and real suffering, I did not forget you. As Spring approached I lamented not being able to gather the flowers as they came out, and little Mary Dorothea, in her rambles with Amelia (not two years old), was desired to bring in all the first flowers, *which she did*—a very dwarf species of Drosera, just like No. 110, only white instead of orange, and a powerful scent resembling the snowdrop; positively no delusion, no association, but bona fide fact. Some at intervals of ease I dried, some Dora. Once Molloy in kangaroo hunting brought me a bouquet of beautiful scarlet flowers also dried, and which, please God I ever get about again (a fourth daughter was born early in this year) I shall send and mark. I was surprised during my illness to receive a nosegay from a native who was aware of my floral passion. These are under preparation for you.

We have had the American whalers in since April. They are much pleased with Geographie Bay and say it is the finest bay on the coast. Indeed, as a place to land goods, nothing can exceed its tranquillity. To use Molloy's phraseology, "you might land them in a washing tub!" But in beauty it is not to be compared to Flinders's Bay (Augusta). The land all round is very low, no back ground, and, saving Cape Naturaliste, no point or promontory. Toby's Inlet, which is in our grant, makes no projection, and my mountain-loving eye looks in vain for a rise or hill. This place

is by no means so healthy as Augusta, but I trust by the aid of kangaroo soup, porter and port wine, soon to be restored.

Our having so many things to attend to—and no hands to be obtained—we are yet without a place worthy of the name of a garden, and this wounds me when I think of the one I left at Augusta, and how your beautiful gifts were thriving.

Judge of my mortification on hearing that my Cobea Scandens, which were growing so well before I was laid up, and which, if I ever forgot, I used to get up in the middle of the night to water, were removed from under my verandah in the box, and some luckless calves ate them up.

January 22.—Thus far had I written, when on Saturday as I lay but little amended, a party came in from the Swan, via Port Leschenault, with despatches, bringing many letters from England, amongst the rest your truly kind and delightfully long letter. Dorothea has just brought me in a large bunch of purple Kenedyas. The Champion having gone to India, we have only received letters from you, but the "Lady Stirling" is soon expected down with the relief troops, and then we shall have the boxes. I only wish you could witness the unbounded pleasure that is evinced on the opening of a box all the way from England. I assure you young and old are equally anxious and pleased.

January 29.—Molloy is fencing in a piece of ground, so that, by the time the box and seeds arrive, we shall have a safe place to put them in. My room windows look on to it. It will be ill off for irrigation in the summer, but by means of a watering engine this might be amended. Please God to give me back my health and strength to get about. I can run backwards and forwards from baby to my garden, now the only pleasure I can avail myself of. I assure you first and foremost stand you and your cause, both from positive inclination and real feelings of gratitude. Molloy cannot forbear smiling at the unparalleled devotion of all my spare moments to this all engrossing concern, and the frequent mention made of Captain Mangles and

the specimens. Dorothea was six years old on June 16 and, as Sabina has been daily employed in my sick chamber, the pastime of flower hunting devolved upon Dorothea and she, as I before stated, has both collected and dried the specimens.

The children will be quite delighted with the mouth organ. It is called a sort of organ-piano united; it is like a work table in appearance and, being a wind instrument, has the advantage of not getting out of tune. This the children often dance to and at dear Augusta I used to take it out on the grass plot, and play till late by moonlight, the beautiful broad water of the Blackwood gliding by, the roar of the bar ever and anon, the wild scream of a flight of swans going over to the fresh water lakes, the air perfectly redolent with the powerful scent of virginia stock and *Oenothera biennes*, clove pinks, and never fading mignonette. We used always to have tea outside and, for our own amusement and interest, I had sown the *Oenothera* tre-trap and *Oenothera biennes* profusely in the borders that we might see their expanding blossoms.

I have much pleasure with the space Captain Molloy is fencing in, and, as soon as it is laid out, I hope to put in the seeds you sent me. By that time the box and its valuable contents may have arrived.

Molloy and I cannot leave home at the same time, and you may imagine how ill off I am sometimes for a companion in my rides in search of specimens. When I urged upon an American captain to accompany me before Mr. Press came, and made the poor man dismount at every plant and shrub in seed I saw from horse back on the ground, he asked me at last if the pods of *Kennedya* were good to eat.

August 1, 1840.—To-day I have been employed in your service. After breakfast the children and I went in search of flowers; it has been a beautiful day, and I have not been so long a walk for months.

We went a very nice ride a few days ago in a southerly direction, following a small tributary stream to the Vasse. The banks were thickly studded with banksia, acacia, and she-oak; the ground was adorned

with crimson flowers of *Kennedya* (*Kennedya prostrata* or red runner) but not so profusely as it will be in a week or two hence. All at once, after going through an interminable grove of *Jacksonia*, we came on an open plain of many acres in extent, scarcely a tree on it, and those that grew, large and fine. I discovered a plant I had been almost panting for—a very small, neat, white blossom, on a furze looking bush. We found a large quantity of it. A little further on a further enigma was solved, the beautiful white blossomed tree whose flowers I sent in my last, I found to be the identical tree which bears the wooden pears or nuts. The fruit was hanging on the tree, but was too high for us to cut. I was quite happy to make such a discovery.

As the shades of night were commencing we reluctantly turned homewards when other "agreements" met my eye; what, but a grove of *Nuytsia floribunda*! I thought myself really blessed that they should place themselves before me. You will think that I am romancing when I tell you that out of the *Nuytsia* swamps we came upon one as thickly and universally covered with *Kingia*, if I understand rightly what *Kingia* is—the grass plot with many short heads branching out, whereas the *Xanthorrea pistilis* are very tall and upright. These four things had occupied my mind many a long day, and I was quite exhilarated at finding these treasures so unexpectedly. Before I was working blindfold.

I have received both your delightful boxes by the "Chieftain" and am delighted with the many beautiful contents. Mrs. London's "Flower Garden" is elegant and beautiful beyond description. I feel highly indebted not only to you, but to that superior and gifted lady for the exertion made to strike me off an immediate copy.

August 14.—I have been out again to-day for *Nuytsia* and *Kingia*, and could only find the former by suckers from the parent tree. I have got many roots which I have dug up myself, also the fruit of the *Xylomelum* (native pear). The season is most delightful. I should like nothing better than to kindle



a fire and stay out all night as I should be asked, as I should be ready for my work early in the morning without coming so far. I was looking for *Nuytsia* on the 12th, and was led to the spot by the different bright colours we saw in the distance. We had to pass through a swamp of *Hakea*. The sunny evening and perfect stillness which prevailed, with the total absence of other human beings besides ourselves and a single native who accompanied us, and the recollection that I was employed in the delightful service of so kind a friend, made me feel singularly happy and free from care.

I went out yesterday with Captain Molloy and a native to get the seedling *Nuytsia*, *Kingia*, etc. I rode, Molloy walked so as to be able to get the different desired plants. I unfortunately could not cross the ford, which took Kate breast high not in the deepest part. I knew she must swim and it would not be prudent for me in my infirm health to venture, so we had to relinquish our intended project, and dear Molloy, who was at the other side of the stream, was obliged to come over a fallen tree which took him in parts knee-deep. You would have smiled to see me urging on my horse in the middle of the river, and the native Calgood, calling out "*Lady Molloa*, *Mochlia*, *Mochlia*," (too much, too much). We returned on Calgood's promising to find a more fordable part, which never occurred. However, we did not lose our purpose, as we saw that no time must be lost in collecting specimens.

January 20, 1841.—Since my last we have been an excursion to Cape Naturaliste, Castle Bay and Rock. We spent a week there, and in the evening, a lovely Sabbath evening, two American ships came to anchor—the "*Zette*" of Salem, and the "*Ducas*" of Falmouth. I spent almost all the days off Castle Rock on the shore gathering seeds, as flowers were very few. I rode and partly walked one day to Cape Naturaliste, a most bleak and barren headland, a distance of 16 miles. We returned by a boat to Toby's inlet on our own land, where the Governor—Fidicott—was wrecked. There we pitched tents and remained two days, and returned to "*Fairlawr*" having been one week absent.

A most delightful trip. This is the climate for such excursions—no apprehension of insecure weather or danger of taking cold.

Our operations begin next month in the garden; and after the potato crop is taken up, my garden will be laid out, and your seeds of last year consigned to the native element. The *Nuytsia* is now in flower. I will watch its progress and send you the first seed that ripens.

Molloy will subjoin a ground plan of what our house is and is to be, when workmen can be procured. The house is situated about 100 yards from the River Vasse, a very small sluggish stream. We have no hills or any rising ground, being so surrounded with trees we are scarcely able to see the clouds unless we look above our heads. We never see the sunset for the surrounding forest. We are two miles from the sea, a track made by the bullock cart being the road from thence.

We intend having a winter and summer garden. The summer one will comprise the land and gentle slope between the river, and paling in front of the house. The flower garden (that is to be) lies on the very verge of the river. I intend, please God, to cultivate China asters according to the Chinese mode. The rich carpets they present to the eye will be pleasant to look upon from the dwelling which looks immediately on to the garden. I have sent to Mrs. Pocklington for seeds of the *Derwent water lily* and have desired her to send you roots of both—white (most fragrant) and yellow (most lovely)—to plant in your canal lake. Do you know the ice plant "*Diamond ficoides*?" I believe it would look well on your fountain.

The natives are much better auxiliaries than white people in flower and seed hunting. They ask no important questions, do not give a sneer at what they do not comprehend and, above all, are implicitly obedient; and, from their erratic habits and for penetrating every recess, can obtain more novelties. The grand desideratum. The river is fresh, except in the three hot summer months and then it is brackish.

Dr. Carr, who has lately come out west with the Australindians, and is a medico pro tem, has undertaken to reclaim the bones of M. Vasse, the gentleman from whom this river takes its name. Some society in Paris has offered a reward or present for them. These natives know where they are (in the vicinity of Cape Naturaliste) and are now employed in getting them, or, for what I know, have got them. This event happened about thirty years ago. This unfortunate gentleman came on shore to explore and was seized and killed—a spear, going into the side, struck his heart, so runs the story. However, till Dr. Carr made enquiry he was never heard of. They represent him as being tall and thin, according to the French description, and, when they bring his bones, he will be easily identified, as their heads and teeth are quite different to ours.

April 10.—This is the third Friday three weeks running, my dear friend, that I have been employed in your service. It is a lovely luxurious morning, cloudy with gently falling showers, and beautiful gigantic peppermint trees, in front of where I write drooping their graceful form, my windows (or rather calico blinds stretched tight on square frames) down, my doors open, the children playing on the verandah. I could not refrain from putting some seed in and, just before I sat down, sowed some mignonette (just sent) for winter flowering and some hiac and nasturtium seeds.

How very singular that you should form so high an opinion of Castle Bay! I am now about to tell you what is known to none but Molloy, Captain Plaskett, the Governor and myself. We were all so very pleased with Castle Rock and Bay, I, in particular, from its rich soil and resemblance to Augusta. All the American captains, five in number, concurred in declaring its valuable situation, not only wood and water, but the position. Of this I understand nothing. But the beautiful congenial scenery to me is exquisite and should be enjoyable in this part of the world. And, so pleased was I with this enchanted valley—a ravine of about 100 acres in extent with a rapid stream in winter, then (the first week in the new year) dried up—I conjured Molloy, nothing "en publique," to apply,

for it would have given us the first choice of all supplies, the first intelligence, and as the vessels proceeded to Geographie Bay, time and leisure to answer all letters. All vessels pass it for the Swan and Leschenault, and banks of the richest black mould rise abruptly from the ravine, now straddled with your choicest greenhouse shrubs—Hoveas, Kennedya, Helichrysum, Macrantha Thysanotos, white Kennedya, and the tall handsome blackboy or grass tree of Augusta. This is the face of the boundless ocean, for, in the Bay, you cannot perceive anything of Cape Naturaliste.

This dell is confined by high granite rocks, just, as it were, poised ready to fall, very high and extending up the valley, gradually rising from the beach until they attain a height of much above 400 feet. What a view for a breakfast-room! A cottage with a circular verandah entwined in this shelter spot with choicest fruit and flowers! The land of all others for the vine, as its root would strike rapidly into the bed of this torrent! Then a well laid out garden on each slope and the eye to be raised to these beautiful rocks. Standing in the room or verandah, the summit could not be seen, consequently leaving so much more to the imagination.

Several of the captains dug wells there, and were much pleased with the result, as they were close to the beach. A granite quarry exists in this dell. There are seven fathoms of water close into the shore at the side of a very large rock where Captain Plaskett sent his boat daily for fish, which is there abundant. Captain Molloy could not, at present, purchase any land there, but is much inclined to do so. I have often wondered who imported the dark crimson China rose to Swan River, and, to my surprise find, by a note of yours in Peter Parley's, you did in 1835, and from it here have three trees, the others having perished in moving from Augusta. I planted one on the grave of my dear infant when I came away, so you see your energy in bringing out this charming plant, so well adapted to the country, has not been lost.

June 14, 1841.—My dear friend, I wrote about the 20th of last month. Captain Molloy was about to

depart from Leschenault to bring our new domestics, which he speedily effected without material inconvenience or delay. In his absence I applied myself most assiduously to my garden, got in acornions, peonies, pinks, etc., and, in part of my own ground, some onions, carrots, peas, etc. These are a sort of apology for having a preponderance of flowers and the consequent absorption of time. Our winter has now begun in good earnest, and I am sitting before a large fire composed of peppermint and Jacksonia. My window shutters are open (glass windows I do not possess) and Molloy is laying out my flower beds with geometrical precision. If you only knew how interesting and useful Marnock's Magazine is in my horticultural pursuits, you would have some remote idea how obliged I am to you for the book. It is so universal in its remarks and gives the most approved and modern culture of new plants. I take it up as a *bonne bouche* the last thing at night when the house is in deep repose—and very frequently, would I breakfast in my own room. I consult it previous to my sowing of all sorts of annuals. The wallflower is a great favourite of Molloy's.

My diary is finished, and I will get Mr. Northing to sketch you a view from one of the adjoining rooms which I will convert into a sitting-room for the winter, whilst some repairs are going on in the drawing-room, with the "Maurandia" trained festoon fashion in my verandah, the shrubbery, flower and kitchen garden, the river as the most distant object. In this room I have ordered your most kind remembrance of "book shelves"—laden with your manifold gifts—to be put up.

I have spoken to many of my acquaintances to procure me the skins of birds. Fortunately I have plenty of dust shot which in the season I intend to give to a native named Banny. He will shoot the birds with all the dexterity of a marksman. When Mr. Preiss was here for the use of my preservative soap, he promised me many stuffed birds, but none have as yet arrived. He is still in the country surveying on the Canning, I believe. How much pleasure should I have had if anyone had taken an interest in these things! When I

first arrived in the colony nothing was to be heard of but beef and pork. I sought in vain for anyone to speak to on the natural productions of the country. The only persons I met with to take an interest in my pursuits were Dr. Johnson of the "Sulphur" who was fond of flowers and curious about collecting seeds, and a Mr. Thompson, fond of preserving birds. He had been in Paris and gave me a treatise (in M.S.S.) on the art.

I shall be at a loss to know what to send you of novelties this coming season. Seeds, I know, I can never do wrong in supplying you with, but they ripen at such a broiling time of the year that it is almost martyrdom to procure them. I had two very pressing invitations to go down to the Sound, and nothing would cause me sooner to go there than to be able to send you specimens from thence.

I have long said Augusta is only in bud. Its time of expansion may not be far distant. There is a rumour that the Governor—who is some sort of a Secretary to the Australian Company—is about to purchase land near Augusta for the establishment of another such Company. How happy I shall be if this is really the case; it is as yet only an "en dit." I have just heard my letters must be ready by daylight.

The natives are at variance with each other—two being mortally wounded (speared), four being nearly as bad. I must say farewell. Captain Molloy desires his very best respects, with the children's affectionate love. Believe me, your sincere friend.—GEORGINA MOLLOY.

(Here follows a list of a 100 varieties of seeds sent.)

From Mrs. Molloy to Captain Mangles, R.N., from "Fairlaw'n," Yasse,  
April 11, 1842

Dear Captain Mangles,—I have been four times out in search of Nyctasia and send you the small, small harvest. The seed is very difficult to obtain if not there the day it ripens. Again I have had four sacks of capsula (or seed bearing branches, more properly speaking) put gently into a bay, a cloth spread under the tree; but I am never able to find more than two seeds in a capsule, and many I take to be male flowers.

The quantity speaks for itself. I have twice sent a native, once a white man and native, gone four times out myself, twice with a servant and twice with Molloy, and yet as you see the Result!

In December of the year in which this last letter was written a fifth daughter was born. Mrs. Molloy who was very ill at the time never recovered her strength, but lingered in great weakness and suffering till the following April, when she died.

Often as she lay ill her thoughts turned to her native land and those she loved there, wishing that her five little girls, so soon to be motherless (the eldest only 11 years old) were within their reach. To her friend Mrs. Stewart Ker, she sent this message: "Till her I loved her as dearly on my dying bed as when I said goodbye to her on the quay at Greenock."

Over the spot where her body was laid to rest was built later the Church of St. Mary at the Vasse. The grave of her husband, who survived her nearly 30 years, is in the churchyard of the same.

Of the old settlement of Augusta, there remain but few traces. The fig tree, spoken of in the foregoing letters, survives, and the bella donna lilies, and gladioli, planted by Mrs. Molloy, have spread over nearly an acre of land. In their blossoming season the pink lilies may be seen from afar, linking the past to the present—the memorial that would best have pleased the lover of flowers. She found in them her chief pleasure and recreation in the varied experiences of her life in a new land.



## The Western Australian Historical Society

(Incorporated)

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- 1—Collection, classification and preservation of records and articles concerned with the history of Western Australia;
- 2—Publication of selected records from time to time, either in special bulletins or in an official journal of the Society;
- 3—Interchange of information among members of the Society by lectures, readings, discussions and exhibitions of historical treasures;
- 4—Encouragement of the study of Western Australian history;
- 5—Creation of a public opinion favouring the preservation of worthy historical relics and the recognition of notable anniversaries in Western Australian history;
- 6—The promotion of social gatherings of members at determined intervals;
- 7—The securing of premises which could be used as a social centre for members, and a repository for the documents of the Society;
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