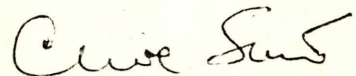


TRAVELS OF AN ENGLISH LADYThe letters of an English lady to her father1837 - 1842

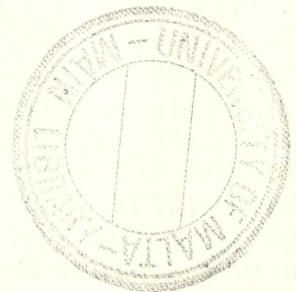
The eight letters which are reproduced here are part of the correspondence between Fanny Liddell, nee Sconce, and her father Robert Sconce. During most of these years, he appears to have lived in Malta and these letters were written to him whilst Fanny, her husband John, her sons Johnny and later Bobby, were travelling in Europe or at home in England. One letter was written by her in Malta when her father was in Switzerland.

They are interesting because of the warmth, attractiveness, and spontaneity of the writer's personality which still comes very much alive after the world has seen tremendous changes in the last century and a half. They also give a fascinating insight into the business of European travelling at that time. The various references to packet boat sailing and the time's taken then for various journeys may be useful to postal historians.

Unfortunately, these eight letters have now been dispersed. However, I am glad that before this happened, I had the opportunity to record this little vignette of life in the Europe of 140 years ago.



Clive Smith



178707

Entire letter from Malta to "R.C.Sconce Esqr/Posta restante/
Lausanne (crossed out and " a Verney" substituted)/En Suisse",
with :

- (i) Black boxed H/S "PAQUEBOTS/DE LA/MÉDITERRANÉE",
- (ii) Black H/S "MALTA POST OFFICE" in small size, large
and small capital letters.
- (iii) Black M/S "684" or "681", and
- (iv) disinfection slits.

"11th September, 1837

My precious Papa,

Three days ago I had the pleasure of getting two letters, one from you and one from dear Bob. Your description of your visit to the Monks amused me very much. I had no idea they would admit ladies into their convent. I think of all the places you have been at, I would rather have been with you there than any where else. I suppose by the time this arrives, Aunt and Bob with the two children (whose departure I don't at all approve of) will be on their way to England. I want to see the little dears very much, and I can't help wishing they had been coming back here, but I know it is the least thing that can be done for both of them to send them home. I am sure I hope they will discover what is the matter with Kitty, and continue to cure her. The cholera continues to go on in the same way as when I wrote last, that is to say about one or two new cases a day. I long to be able to tell you that it is quite at an end. Until I can do that, it is impossible for me to know the least in the world when to expect you, for I suppose you will not think of coming as long as there is any remains of this horrible malady. It has broken out at Marseilles, Rome, Naples, Genoa, Leghorn and in short at all the seaports except Nice, and there we hear there is to be a steamer sent in October to fetch Mrs. Duckworth. The Admiral came in yesterday morning, but whether he means to stay here or not I don't know -.

I began my letter some days ago, but since then we have had one of our delightful September sciroccos and I have really felt much too stupid to go on with it. The wind has not changed, and this must be my excuse for sending you this time a short letter. But I am obliged to write today because this is the day for the steamer to arrive from the Levant, and she will probably go away again tomorrow. Willy sends his love to you all and says he is quite well and growing very passionate. Maddalena is a perfect treasure. She has never given us the least trouble or annoyance in any way, for she seems always happy and contented; she is very quiet and takes great care of the baby. Give my love to Mama and tell her I say it very shabby of her not to write to me. We have taken the half of the box at the opera that Mrs. Christian

had last year and I hope that it will soon begin. They haven't got a tenore yet, but they talk of trying to do without one till the gentleman should make his appearance. They have got two prima donnas and perhaps one of these is to do tenore. I suppose you have heard from the Woods. They didn't seem to know at all when they left Malta where they would take up their abode. They talked first of remaining for some time at Falmouth, and then in their letter to Bessy from Gibraltar, they said they thought of going to Bath; but I should think that would be too expensive a place for them. Mr. Smith is still away- cruising; but the Medea is expected here in a few days. I shall be very glad to see the dear good man again. I have taken a fancy to chess lately, and my husband is trying to teach me. Tell Sally I sing away in fine style sometimes when it is not too hot and I have been practising some of our dear old duets to sing with her when she comes back. I am glad to hear she has been singing too.

Do you think you shall go to Geneva again? Because if you do, we want you to get us a nice pretty chimney clock for about ten pounds. If you had been going to Marseilles (which now you won't be able to do on account of the Cholera) we should have asked you to buy a glass for the chimney piece for us, for they say that is the place of all others to get them. But perhaps such things may be to be had too at Geneva. If you should see a pretty one for about ten or twelve pounds and five feet 3 inches in length (this is the exact length of the chimney piece) I wish you would get it for us. I think they are the two prettiest ornaments one can possibly have.

My husband says I must tell you that there hasn't been a case of the Cholera either in the army or navy for a month.

Kiss the two children who are still with you for me, and give my best of loves to my sweet Sally.

Good bye my dearest Papa

15th Seper."

from Rome to "R.C. Sconce Esqr/Malta", with :

- (i) Black double -circle H/S of "ROMA/23/APR/40".
- (ii) Red H/S fancy "In ---"
- (iii) Black Malta Local Post H/S" 27 Apr 1d"

"Rome

21st April 1840 - Tuesday

My dearest Papa,

A hundred thousand thanks for your two dear letters which I received both together the day after we arrived here, which was on the 14th. I ought to have got the first one, dated the 3rd of April, at Naples, for the Hydra came in many days before we left, and we immediately enquired of course if there were any letters for us. John called on Captn. Robinson, and left his card and address, but we heard nothing more of either Captn. Robinson or the letters. For some odd reason or other he never came near us though he was twice at Naples while we were there. I hope he delivered my letter safe to you, for I wrote by him. He did however condescend to send your letter on to Rome. I got it with the other dated the 5th, to my very great joy, for I was longing to hear from you. The first thing we heard when we arrived here, was, that there had been a report at Malta of the Mensis being lost, and I was badly afraid you had been horribly frightened and I was delighted to find that you had heard nothing about it till you knew that we were safe. We left Naples yesterday week at 3 in the morning, breakfasted at Capua, dined at San Germano , which were about the only towns we passed through, and arrived about 7 o'clock in the evening at Ceprano which is the first Roman town, and a little more than half way. Slept there and started the next morning at five and got here by seven in the evening. You will be glad to hear that travelling agrees with me wonderfully, and I really was not a bit tired after my long journey. My darling Johnny too makes a famous traveller, and he gave us no trouble at all. He slept a good deal, and when he was awake, amused himself with the houses and our queer postilions. It was a very funny turn-out to be sure. We had sometimes six horses and sometimes seven, and whenever we came to a very steep hill, they tacked on two Bullocks. Our second days' journey was very pleasant, for the road was beautiful, and the weather fine, which the day before it was not. We are now looking out for a vetturino to take us to Florence, and we mean to start next Monday. Dr. Hill got us a very nice lodging which he took

.../2

for a fortnight, in the Via Babnino, close to the Piazza di Spagna, if you know such a place. It is one of the principal streets in Rome, and parallel with the Corso. We are close to the Pincian Hill which is a beautiful walk, and a nice place for sending Johnny to run about in. The first two or three days that we were here, we were of course occupied with seeing some of the Church ceremonies. We went to St. Peters the first thing, and though we had arrived too late to get tickets, I succeeded in getting one of the best seats in the Ladies' pew at the Sistine Chapel, and heard, what is considered very fine, the "Miserere". I didn't like it, for it was nothing more than chanting, which lasted from four o'clock till nearly eight at night, and I got most heartily tired of it. The next day, Holy Thursday, we went again to St. Peters, and got seats in the Colonnade where we had a capital view of the Pope's benediction. I don't remember if you have ever seen it. He was carried under a canopy into a balcony from whence he stood up and blessed the kneeling multitude amidst the ringing of bells, firing of guns, and military music. We saw the same thing again on Easter Sunday, and a most tremendous crowd there was, They say there must have been a hundred thousand people collected in the Piazza. In the evening we went to see the Illumination, and last night, to the fire-works at St. Angelo, which were splendid.

They tell us that it is quite practicable to cross the Simplon, so we have decided upon going to Milan, and trying that road at any rate. We don't mean to stay more than a day or two at any more places, for I am very anxious to get to England by the beginning of June. John thinks you had better write to me next to Geneva where we hope to be about the twentieth of next month. (here John takes over writing) We shall leave Rome about the 27th Inst; by a Berlino, that will take us to Florence in 4½ days by Sienna, where we will stay 3 or 4 days; and as Fanny's courage does not fail her, she thinks of crossing the Simplon that has been repaired. We shall therefore most likely go by Milan and Como, to Geneva, and thence to Basle, where there is a steam boat that will take us, sleeping at night at Manheim and other places on the Rhine in five days to London. The Berlino that we mean to hire to Florence is a light close or open glass carriage according to the weather, that we shall have all to ourselves, and promises to be a very pleasant mode of travelling, going about 40 miles a day. (here Fanny resumes writing) I just got up for a moment to give Johnny his lesson which he has said like a very good boy. It consisted of the Alphabet, which he can say through, and "Ding dong bell," "Pussy Cat's in the well". He is now gone to bed, so I can go on with my letter.

I couldn't contain my curiosity any longer to see some of the Antiquities, so on Saturday, we set off to the Colosseum, walked over a great part of that most magnificent ruin, saw all the numerous ruins in that neighbourhood, such as the arches of Constantine, Septimus Severus, Titus and Janus: the temples of Jupiter, Peace, Concord etc, and then went to the Capitol where we were not contented till we had been to the very top. This was a good day's work wasn't it ?

Yesterday we went sight seeing again, but couldn't get into the Museum at the Capitol as we had intended; and as the Vatican isn't open till Thursday. So we had still a good deal more to do. Today we went to the Doria palace, and walked all round the magnificent picture galleries which you would have enjoyed and understood much better than we did. Oh by the bye, we have made two unsuccessful attempts to see your Romulus and Remus temple. The first day we couldn't make out which it was, and the next time the one they told us was it, was shut. So I can't tell you if the Virgin Mary is still talking to Pope Gregory. The present Pope seemed to be a nice sort of a gentleman; they say he drinks 16 bottles of wine a day, and his nose is as red as a cherry. As soon as I got Mama's commission about the broaches, I set out to look for some. I think we have been to every mosaic shop in the town. They seem to be all much alike, and all very pretty. I wouldn't buy any till I had seen the best, and today I bought three beauties, for Mama, and one which I mean to give to Aunt. I will get something else for her in England as a present for Mama. The broaches are 3 dollars and a half, a piece, ready set, and very neat. I haven't yet got Bob's seal, for neither John nor I understand choosing such a thing, and we think of asking a friend of Dr. Hill's who is a connoisseur, to look out for one for us. Give my best love to Mama. I wanted to send her a broach that she might see what sort of things I have bought for Lizzy and Sally, but I don't know of anybody going to Malta who could take it. Kiss all the dear children for their sister Fanny and don't let them forget my Johnny. Fancy his calling me always "Signora Mama".

We are living very snugly and comfortably here. We pay 20 dollars for our lodgings, the same as at Naples. And we have a restaurateur next door, who sends us in our dinner every day at six o'clock, for a dollar, which saves us all trouble. The only thing we have cooked in the house is a little plain broth for Johnny and Rosa, at twelve o'clock. I was very glad to hear that Mrs. Stewart had got her

Husband with her at last: pray give my love to her and the Mamas. Kind remembrance to Mrs. Duckworth, and all Malta friends, whom I can't enumerate each time. I have written a long letter to Mrs. Whitmarsh.

Wednesday 22nd. We bought this morning a little antique seal for Bob. It was chosen by a man who is very knowing Italiene, in these matters, and though I am no judge of such things, I think it very pretty. I will seal my letter with it that you may see the impression. I am sorry to say it is dear. It cost six dollars; but I know you wouldn't like me to get an inferior one for the sake of saving a dollar or two. The man who chose it is a Mr. Woodham (?) who has realised a prize fortune by choosing pictures and antiques.

I will write to Mrs. Stewart from Florence, and of course to you. I was in hopes of getting a letter today by the French Steamer but she is not yet arrived. It may come however before I send this away. We are all quite well. God bless you all my own dearest best Papa.

Your most affectionate
daughter Fanny

I forgot to say that the Broaches are both bunches of flowers on a black ground and as we bought two at the same shop the man let us have them for 6 dollars and half. So we have spent for you 12 dollars and half. We mean to get the seal set in England as neatly and as cheaply as we can.

- (i) Black H/S "FIRENZE",
- (ii) Annotated "Per le Pacquebot à vapeur Francais" in M/S,
- (iii) Red double-circle mark of "LIVORNO" of "3/MAG./1840", and
- (iv) Black Malta Local Post H/S "7 May 1d".

Siena.30th April, 1840.

My dearest Papa,

Here we are almost at the end of our journey. We hope to get to Florence about noon tomorrow, but as John thinks the post leaves there either tomorrow or next day and that I mightn't have time to write a letter then, we thought it better to write a few lines at once while we are being here, to tell you we had got so far safely, and also to let you know how well we have all borne the journey. Such numbers of people were leaving Rome at the same time as ourselves, that it was with some difficulty that we got a carriage to bring us on. We lost our Berlin because somebody else went and offered a larger sum than we had done and the owner cut us for the sake of 10 more dollars. So as we couldn't get that, we took the whole inside of a Vetturino carriage for which we are to pay 60 dollars, food and beds being provided for us. The coupeé is occupied by a Frenchman and his wife who are very nice quiet people, and it is just as well as having the coach all to ourselves.

We left Rome last Monday evening, the 27th at six o'clock. We stop every day for two hours from about noon till two, and have always arrived at our sleeping place at six or sooner, so that our journey has not been at all fatiguing though we are obliged to get up every morning at five.

Here, they say there is a Cathedral, and some other things worth seeing, so we have begged our Vetturino to wait till four o'clock that we may have a little time to look about us. John is already gone out with our French friends to see if there really be any things worth taking me to, and then will come back for me; for I am afraid to venture upon a random expedition as walking in the sun by no means agrees with me. The weather is getting very hot now, and I find my winter black clothes so oppressive that I must try if Florence cannot furnish something cooler. The day after I sent my letter away to you from Rome, I got yours. Many many thanks for that dear and most welcome letter. I got it just as we were on our way to the Vatican and of course made use of your valuable



advice as to what was most worthy of our particular attention. But in the whole course of my life I never saw such a mean, unaccommodating set of wretches as these modern Romans are. We were told that the vatican was open to the public only on Mondays and Thursdays. Well, we went accordingly on Thursday about eleven o'clock. They said then, it wouldn't be open till three, but by means of paying, we got them to let us in in the morning; then, at twelve o'clock, if they didn't kick us out again that all the custodes might go to dinner. Notwithstanding all this ill-treatment, we had resolution to go back again at three, and after having seen what remained of the sculpture that we hadn't seen in the morning, and just as we had got into the room where Raphael's picture was, and where I fully intended to have spent an hour in gazing upon what you told me to gaze upon, a whole body of Swiss guards came and drove us out with the points of their bayonets. However, I was determined to see your picture so though the sight of so many soldiers was very terrific, and I didn't dare look back then, I persuaded John to take me again the next day when we spent the whole time we were permitted to stay in so sacred a place, in the "Stanze di Raffaello". The picture of the transfiguration is certainly beautiful, but I am so little a judge of these great oil paintings, that if you hadn't told me I must admire it, I don't know that I should have even looked at it. We got hold of Mr. Casolani, and made him take us to Mr. Overback's Studio. There was only one picture however that he showed us, and that wasn't finished. He called it the "Christian Arts .." There are some twenty or thirty figures mostly, por (traits?) of the great Italian poets and artists, with the Virgin Mary with our Saviour in her arms, and Moses and two or three other figures stuck up in the clouds. All these figures seemed beautifully done, and the faces very impressive, but I didn't like the picture as a whole, and I wanted you to point out its beauties.

Thorwaldson wasn't at Rome, but young Casolani took us to his studio where we saw some very beautiful things both of his own, and of one of his pupils. So you see we did all that you bid us, and a great deal more besides. Fancy my having actually gone up and stood in the ball of St. Peters. It was an under-taking, and one for which one is only rewarded by the pleasure of being able to say you have been there, for you see nothing and I think it is much better to stop at the highest gallery, where you may have a magnificent view of the church, and can best form an idea of its enormous size. We paid half a dozen visits to St. Peters, and if we had had time, I could have paid as many more with great pleasure. It is a most stupendous

place and next to the Colosseum and all the other antiquities, for these always hold the first place in my estimation. I admired it more than all the rest of the things in Rome put together.

1st May, Florence.

Well, we got here by one o'clock, but were about two hours before we could establish ourselves in an Hotel. We have succeeded tolerably however at last and have managed to get two rooms. I sit to pen the final thing to finish my dear Papa's letter, that it may be ready in case the post should go away tonight. We are all well, thank God, and I am wonderfully little tired after my long journey. I shall write again soon to tell you more of our plans. Our present intention is to go to Milan and cross the Simplon, but if we find there is any danger or difficulty in that route, we shall go instead to Pisa, Genoa and Turin, and cross Mont Cenis. Somehow or other, I hope we shall continue to get to England by the 1st June. Best love to Mama. Many thanks for her space in the letter. I hope she will write to me whenever she has time. Love too to dearest little Kitty and all the other monkeys. Make Kitty write to me. I will promise her a letter when I have a little more leisure. My sweet Johnny flourishes, and bears his travelling beautifully. We tried to get rooms in a boarding house on the Arno but it was quite full as well as all the hotels there but we are in a very good situation. Please give my best love to dear Mrs. Whitmarsh, Mrs. Stewart, the Munro's, Harveys etc. etc.. I am very glad for your sake to hear that the Dean and his brother are coming back to Malta. Tell Mama I hadn't forgotten your wedding day and I shall have the pleasure of drinking your healths next Monday. John sends his love to you both.

Your most affec.daughter,

Fanny

2nd May. From what John has heard this morning, we have thought it more prudent to decide upon Mont Cenis; and we are to be fifteen days getting to Geneva.- Fancy my extraordinary activity yesterday. As soon as ever we had finished our dinner we went and took a drive in the Cascino, a most lovely sort of park, and went to the opera in the evening. It was the Sonnambula and very well performed. I am not at all the worse for my

Entire letter from Genoa to "R.C.Sconce Esqr/Malta", with :

- (i) Annotated in M/S "Par le Paquebot Français à vapeur à Livourne"; also with M/S "Livourne".
- (ii) Black double-circle cancellation with blank centre and unclear "POSTES", very unclear "PAQUEBOT" (?) and space at foot with completely undecipherable word which might be "FRANCAIS" (? or similar?)
- (iii) Black Lazaretto of Malta cachet (24½ mm diameter) "PURIFIE AU LAZARET/MALTE", disinfection slits, and
- (iv) Black Malta Local Post H/S "4 June 1d".

"Genoa - 8th May, 1840

My dearest Papa,

We couldn't get such a carriage as we wanted at Florence to take us to Geneva, as we had thought of doing, so, at my suggestion (for I take all the credit to myself for this most wise mode of proceeding) we hired a very nice comfortable carriage to go as far as Leghorn only, and from thence we came here last night in a steamer called the Rcmalo (?). We left Florence after having spent five very pleasant days there, last Wednesday, the 6th at six o'clock, stopped two hours at Pisa on our way, to see the sights, and arrived at Leghorn at about 8 o'clock in the evening. We spent the whole of yesterday at Leghorn, and embarked on board our beautiful steamer at five in the afternoon. I went to bed immediately to keep off sea-sickness, which however didn't incommode any of us, for the sea was quite smooth all the way, and the wind being fair, we got here by day light. To tell upon the truth, I was very tired this morning after my voyage, and put off writing my letter, which I had intended to have been a very long one, till it is too late, and I am now much too sleepy to say any thing more than that we are all quite well, and getting on famously with our travelling, except that we are spending a terrible deal of money, and I am afraid we shall be quite ruined before we get to England. Fancy our paying 130 francs for our passage here in the steamer. This was merely for the beds, for the only thing we took which was a cup of coffee, we had to pay for besides. We have engaged the same vetturino that Mrs. Ross employed, and recommended to us, to take us from here to Geneva, and we leave this tommorrow morning at our usual hour of six. We are to be nine days on our journey, stopping half a day at Turin. I like what we have seen of Genoa excessively. I suppose you know it well, but I fancy they must have built several new streets since your time,

and there is one with nothing but palaces on each side, which is very handsome.

It seems a tremendous time since I have had a letter from you, and I most cordially hope to find one for me at Geneva. The next, I suppose you had better add up to the care of Mr. Stilwell, as we expect to be in England by the 3rd or 4th of June. And very glad we shall both be to find ourselves there, and our fatigues all at an end, for there is a great deal of fuss and fatigue in travelling after all, and a little repose afterwards is very agreeable.

Give my best love to Mama, and all friends. I long to hear that you are all quite well.

I am almost ashamed to send this letter, and I shouldn't have attempted to have written at this time of night, if I hadn't thought you would have been disappointed when the steamer arrived, at finding no letter from me: and I know how glad you will be to hear that I continue quite well and strong, so that I haven't found travelling disagree with me at all.

I will write again from Geneva, where I shall have a little more time, as we think of spending a week there. Good night my own dearest papa. Excuse this scrawl, for I am half asleep. I have got to get up at five tomorrow morning. Love to the dear children from their affec. sister, and your most affectionate daughter,

Fanny"

(annotated "Genoa 9th May. all well. off at 7-")

Entire letter from Haslar (England) to "R.C.Sconce Esqre/ Malta", with:

- (i) Annotated "Via Marseilles Par le paquebôt a vapeur Français" in black M/S, and "2-8½" in red M/S.
- (ii) Red "tombstone" type H/S of "G/PAID/13 AUG13/1840".
- (iii) Black circular H/S of "GOSPORT/AU 12/1840".
- (iv) Red double-circle cds of "ANGL.CALAIS/I5/AOUT/40".
- (v) Black double circle cds of "MARSEILLE (12)/20 AOUT/40".
- (vi) Black Malta Local Post H/S of "27 Aug Free".

"Haslar 12th August

(1840)

My dearest Papa,

This is to tell you of the birth of my little Grindelwaldina; but Grindelwaldina has unfortunately turned out to be a boy, and a great big and happy boy too, as big as Johnny was at two months old. My little man was born last Wednesday morning at 4 o'clock, the 5th day of the month, after giving me as little trouble or notice either, as it was possible, and he and his Mama are doing as well, or rather, much better, than could have been expected. I have an excellent appetite, and consequently plenty to give my little gentleman. He is to be called Robert Spencer; Robert, after you, and Spencer, after poor Sir R.Spencer. We have asked Capt'n. Frederick Spencer to be one Godfather, and we think of asking Mr.Le Mesinur (?) to be the other, and my dear Mrs.Whitmarsh has long since been engaged to stand Godmother..Pray send her this letter with my best love, I know how glad she will be to hear of my son's safe arrival, although I am sure I shall get a scolding from her for its not having been a daughter.

John says I managed my affairs very badly, or you might have heard in nine days after the event had taken place, if it had only been one day sooner; that is to say by the English packet from Marseilles. This will go by the French steamer, but still you may get it a day or two sooner than our letters by the English packet which will go next Saturday, the 15th. I was at an evening party at Dr.Mortimer's, on Tuesday night, and didn't get home till eleven o'clock. I then went very quietly to bed, although I did suspect that something might possibly be going to happen; at two o'clock I called John, and at four my baby was born, and all this without Aunt's knowing one word about it, for when she came into the room,

which wasn't till Rosa had been to tell her what had happened, she found my child squalling and kicking about the bed. We had no time to send for the nurse, so Rosa had the honour of dressing a new-born infant for the first time. My precious Johnny isn't a bit jealous of his new brother, but kisses and talks to him in the sweetest way in the world. I can't attempt to tell you who my little Bobby is like, because I see no likeness to any body yet, but I think he has very much the same look of face that Johnny had at 3 months old.

A thousand thanks, my dearest Papa, for your letter of the 22nd July. It arrived yesterday, and it is quite extraordinary with what punctuality they do always arrive, every other Tuesday. You were all pretty well when you wrote, except the children who seem never to intend getting rid of the ophthalmia (?). Dear Clement left us the day before yesterday to go to the wedding, and being almost quite well, Aunt thought it would be best to let him go to school again, and Sally takes him back with her today. Aunt is to return to me this evening, and will spend another fortnight with us before she goes to Chelmsford to dispose of Aunt Van (?).

Bob and Lizzy are going to Paris to spend their honeymoon, and then are coming to stay with us little while. Aunt will write by the packet and tell you all about the wedding. I quite long for her to come back, that I may hear about it myself. Only fancy poor dear Bob a married man. Pray, when you send this to Mrs. Whitmarsh, tell her that I would have written to her too, but I musn't send two letters by land, and I will write to her by the next packet. All her family are quite well. I saw her sister Sarah this morning. Pray, also, dearest Papa, whenever you are going to write to me, continue to get information concerning Rosa's mother, and I should be much obliged to Mr. Gibson if he would write about once in a month, or every two months, on a little bit of thin paper that you might give him, so as not to occupy too much of your precious room; and give me a long account of all her family which would please her immensely. I wrote a letter for Rosa by the Cambridge, but I fear that won't arrive for many a long day. Rosa is quite well, and sends her love to her mother. Give my best love to Mama and kind remembrances to Mrs. Barnard, as well as all other Malta friends. John's love to you and my own.

Your most affectionate daughter,
Fanny".

Entire letter from Haslar (England) to "R.C. Sconce Esqre/
Malta", with:

- (i) Annotated at top "Par le p^âquebot de la Mediterran^ee" and at bottom "Via Marseilles".
- (ii) Black circular H/S of "GOSPORT/MA12/1841".
- (iii) Red "tombstone" type H/S of "F/PAID/13MR13/1841".
- (iv) Red double-circle cds of "ANGL. CALAIS/(date unclear)".
- (v) Black double-circle cds of "MARSEILLE (12)/21/MARS/1841".
- (vi) Red "P-D" in oval.
- (vii) Black Malta Local Post H/S of "27 Mar Free".
- (viii) Annotated "2.8½" in red ink.

"Haslar - 11th March 1841"

My dearest Papa,

As last time I wrote to you, I had had a little return of the spitting of blood, I know you will be anxious to hear from me again; and so we are going to send you a letter overland, as the only way of making sure of your getting it before the one we mean to send away on the second of next month. I mean to be very careful not to give you too good an account of myself lest you should think I am telling a fib; but really I find it a little difficult to know what to say. Of this I am sure, that I haven't spit any more blood since I wrote last; that my cough is decidedly better, though I am never quite free from it, I sometimes have rather a violent fit; that I am stronger and better altogether as far as my general health is concerned, that I am very little thinner than I was before I was taken ill, much fatter than when I left Malta; and my appetite & digestion are tolerably good. I don't think I can have much the matter with my chest at present, because I have never had any pain there, except two days before my second attack came on. But with all this, as I know what ticklish things lungs are, I can't & ought not to feel quite secure; and as of course my opinion will go for nothing, I don't mind saying that I don't expect ever to be quite as strong as I used to be. Of strength, however, I have never had much right to boast, and though I don't like to complain without having anything particular the matter, & perhaps I did draw rather flattering pictures of myself; for many months before Baby was born, & certainly all the time I was nursing him, I used to feel miserably weak, and though I have always had the credit of being particularly strong about the chest, yet I never was quite of that opinion myself, for I have often found it quite an effort to speak, and frequently have really not had strength to read the

responses at church. And two summers ago, I recollect having had a cough for two months. But I think I have said quite enough, or rather a great deal too much, about myself, especially as I mean John to write too, but I just wished to tell you what I thought; and I hope you wont be alarmed or think that I am about myself. It would be a great happiness to me to be able to see & talk to you, and I wish the situation at Clarence Yard, which is likely to become vacant, were a better one, that you might get it. John will tell you about it. I was in the house once, and all that I saw of it & the garden looked exceedingly pretty; and it is within a mile of Haslar.

I can't understand why you hadn't got your letter from Bob & Sally, and I am rejoiced to think that I sent you mine. We received yours & the Whitmarshes letters by the long packet, yesterday & tomorrow, I hope to hear again by the Great Liverpool. Thank Mama for her share, & give her my best love. Pray tell her not to be uneasy about the music book, and I hope she will keep it till I have a daughter to teach out of it. There is very little music to be had at Portsmouth, but there is a bookseller there, who will send to London for anything one wants, & gets it down in a couple of days. I hope I shall be well enough to execute all Mama's summer commissions, & if I did but live in a place where there was more variety in the shops, I should be very glad of the opportunity for displaying my taste in the choice of pretty muslins & ribbons.

I must now answer Kitty's little letter, & leave the rest of this sheet for John. You didn't say anything about the children in your last letter, therefore, I hope they were better, & that little Kitty's eyes hadn't been giving you any more uneasiness. Best of loves to all of you from your most affectionate daughter Fanny.

(Here John writes)

Dear Sconce, I do not know by whose accidental inadvertence Fanny's last letter left without a line from me, but the omission makes me the more anxious to get this away overland, which we conclude will reach you on the 27th - I can add little to what Fanny has said of herself; nothing more tangible about her complaint that there was when I last wrote to you; nothing the existence of which we can affirm; nor indeed does her state suggest more than a vague dread. Her cough has nearly ceased & I don't think I have heard her cough for the last twelve hours. In looks, & flesh she holds her own. Her appetite is fair, she eats two slices of toast, a mutton chop, & coffee for breakfast, a good meat, vegetable & porter dinner, & she sleeps the whole night, without waking above once; has no quickness of pulse nor heat of skin. The weather for the last few days has been as warm & soft as the finest Maltese Nov^r. & she has had a short walk today in the garden. You are aware that spitting of blood is a less formidable complaint in women than men, & cases must have occurred to you, where it subsided without any harm resulting.

A grant, in the May(?) estimates, has been obtained of £10,000 to erect a steam engine for baking biscuit in Malta; & Mr. Grant of the clarence yard is to superintend it, which will be a job of three years; & tho I have not the least authority for saying it, I entertain no doubt that if you both were willing to exchange duties, the Govt would agree to it, leaving you to enjoy your salary of £600 as store-keeper of the clarence yard til they could find something more suitable for you; as it would be a saving of some hundreds. It is a very very quiet snug appt. & you would have nothing to do but be responsible for stores, & would not be more bothered with superintendance than you are at Malta. I should think that it would require no more than a line to Sir J. Pichill or Mr. Muk to say that you would like to change, retaining your £600, for Mr. Grant's salary I believe is only £400; but you seem to have resolved & I think wisely, to stay where you are while your health continues good; & you see that the great & indeed only object of our change, Fanny's health, has unfortunately not been realized. With my best affections to you all, Believe am your's ever
J. Liddell

12th March

(Here Fanny writes)

Your letter isn't arrived yet, but we can't wait for it for fear of being too late. Pray give our best love to the dear good Whitmarshes. I shall write to Mrs. Whitmarsh by the Oriental. No Asia ept.(?) & no Capilands & no oranges.

Entire letter from Marseilles to "R.C.Sonce Esqr/Malta", with

- (i) Annotated "Par le vapeur Francais" in M/S,
- (ii) Red double-circle cds of "MARSEILLE/1/MAI/42",
- (iii) Red boxed H/S "P.P."
- (iv) Black Malta Local Post H/S "8 May 1d".

Written on notepaper embossed with "BATH" in a decorative frame, at top left.

"Hotel de Beauveau.Marseilles -30th
April -Saturday morning
(1842)

My own dearest Papa,

Here we are, John and all, safe and sound and merry, all well and as happy as we can be. My Johnny too was quite well when his dear Papa left him on the 24th. We have had a beautiful passage, fine weather all the way, and no sea sickness. We anchored here at day-light this morning, and John, who had arrived the day before, was not long in coming on board. Of course I didn't sleep a wink all night, so that I was up and ready to receive him. Sweet Bobbino was the most sailor among us. The first night, he woke up about eleven, and cried most desperately for a long time, which I attributed to Rosa's leaving him; but presently afterwards he was very sick, (which means that he vomited,) and I discovered that that was the principal cause of his uneasiness. All the other nights he has slept perfectly well, and got a quite accustomed to me. Mrs. Whitmarsh, as you may suppose has had more than half the care of him, and together we have managed exceedingly well. We found our cabin very comfortable and our fellow passengers, especially Mrs.Spock, who is an excellent little woman, most kind and agreeable.

Mrs.Baxter's maid; Imail, came as stewardess, and we found her very useful. By the bye, this said Imail told me a funny story about Mr. Lillingston that I think will amuse you. She said he must be a clergyman, for he had been preaching and distributing tracts amongst the sailors. No, said I, he is not a clergyman, he is a private gentleman. "Ah", she said, "I know he is not a protestant, but I think he must be something in the methody line".

I hope dear Mama has got rid of her headache by this time and that little Charley and Mary have got quite stout again. Give my best love and kisses to them all. I am going out presently to buy Kitty's chocolate drops and the lamp and Quinine. We think of staying here quietly till tomorrow evening and then setting off to go as far as Aix, which will take four hours, and next day, go on to Avignon a journey of eight hours, both, in the coupee of a diligence. I will tell you about the rest of our journey by and bye, but as yet, we have had no time to decide upon any thing. Travelling in France doesn't seem so very dear as John imagined. His journey cost him just five pounds, the items of which he will write down and enclose for your benefit. It is hotter here than at Malta and today is quite oppressive. We are all together, including Mrs. Whitmarsh, at the Hotel de Beauveau, and having just had a delicious breakfast of Café au lait and ommelette, and we are sitting here writing while sweet Bobby is taking his nap. When you see Rosa, pray tell her all about her child. He says Rosy, now quite plain. He has been as good as gold all the time, though far from well. The sea-air doesn't agree with him, and notwithstanding the quantities of physic we gave him, we couldn't get him to do what he ought to have done, all the way from Malta to Marseilles; so that the first thing his Papa did for him, was to give him a calomel powder, which I hope will set him to rights. John tells me he wrote to me by the last French steamer, as I expected he would do. If you get the letter pray burn it, for it was only to say that he would do as I bid him, and be at Marseilles to await my arrival, like a dutiful Husband as he is. He looks very well, but most abominably sun-burnt, which spoils his beauty. Fancy John being only five days coming. He left Haslar on the 23rd in the evening. It seems so very funny to have him sitting by my side again that I can hardly believe it. How does my dear little Kitty do? I mean to write to her soon.

We have just returned from buying the lamp, which I fear you will think no beauty; but they warrant its burning well, and I hope it will be useful if not ornamental. The pretty ones are only sold in Paris, and come to 6 or 8 pounds. The price of this will be about 40 francs. My best love to Mama. I shall never forget all her great kindness to me, nor yours either my dearest Papa - Mrs. Whitmarsh will give a long account of us all. I don't know when I shall be able to write next, but it won't be very long I hope.

Ever your most affectionate Daughter
Fanny"

Entire letter from Paris/Le Havre to 'R.C.Sonce Esqre/Malta', with:

- (i) M/S "Par le paquebôt à vapeur de la/Mediterranée"/ and "Par Marseille",
- (ii) Red boxed "P.P.",
- (iii) Black double-circle cds of "LE HAVRE (74) 15/MAI/42".
- (iv) Black double-circle cds of "MARSEILLE/21/MAI/(18?) 42" on reverse,
- (v) Black Malta local Post H/S "27 May 1d", and
- (vi) M/s "11" plus an undecipherable blue double-circle cds

7
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18

On notepaper with embossed "HOTEL MEURICE, RUE DE RIVOLI NO. 42"

"Thursday 12th May, Paris
Hotel Meurice.

My dearest Papa,

We arrived here yesterday afternoon at five o'clock in the steamer "Parisienne" from Montereau, a voyage of about 7 hours. We went all the way from Aignon to Châlons by steam, so that we have had altogether five days steaming. We then took our places in the (coupee) of a Diligence going to Autun being the only one that starts in the day time. We left Châlons at 6 in the morning and got to Autun at one, but there we were rather in a puzzle for there were no more diligences to be had, and no other sort of carriage but a dirty shaky cabriolet in which we were jolted on as far as Saulieu. There we slept and next morning, had to proceed still in a cabriolet, but rather a better one, to Auxerre. Here, we got a carriage with fast horses and after having changed both horses and carriage eight times, we reached Fassart (which is close to Montereau, the place from which the steamer starts for Paris) in time to sleep on the night of the 10th. I am now waiting on board another steamer on our way from Rouen, where we slept last night, to Havre; and tonight we cross over to Portsmouth and please God, tomorrow morning I shall have my beloved Johnny in my arms.

We heard from Mrs. Richardson at Châlons and at Paris, and he was then quite well. I told you we arrived at Paris on the afternoon of the eleventh. Well, we could not make up our minds

to spend more than one day there, and yesterday morning, the 13th, we took our departure in a Diligence at seven in the morning, and arrived at Rouen at 7 at night.

While we were at Paris, John took me to see a Dr. Andeat (?) one of the most famous physicians there, to ask about the Eaux Cannes (?) which, if you remember, Mrs. Allnutt had been taking for her cough. We heard that he understood all about them, and he recommended them for me, so we got a box containing 20 bottles, at Paris, and if they agree with me, we shall get them sent regularly. My cough is very troublesome at times, but I have made a capital traveller on the whole and can stand any thing but a crowded Diligence.

Sweet Bobby continues quite well and has grown already very fond of his Papa. He has learnt at last my right title and is so proud of it that he is bawling out perpetually "Mama", as loud as ever he can. I hope my Mama is quite well, and all her seven young ones. Give my very best love to them all. I shall write to dear Kitty as soon as ever we are settled. I trust dear Mrs. Whitmarsh is safe at home again by this time.

John means to write to her from Havre if he can find time, but in case he does not which I think is very likely, pray give our kindest love to her, and tell her all about us, especially about these waters, for she was very anxious that I should try them.

I forget to tell you that we called on Madame Riboul, but we had so much to do and so little time that we could only pay her a hurried uncomfortable visit. We only saw herself and her daughters but she said they were all quite well and all her sons with her except Harry. She was very kind and seemed very glad to see us.

We met the Harveys again at Paris, and they expected to be in England about the same time that we are. Mrs. Harvey seems quite well and is enjoying herself thoroughly.

Pray remember me very kindly to the Dean and his brother, Mr. Portillio (?) and all your other neighbours, but especially to the Doctors. The ship shakes too much to write decently so I had better leave off and my next letter will be probably by the "Oriental".

Adieu, for the present my dearest Papa. John's best love to you and Mama.

Your affect daughter -Fanny

Saturday 14th May - "

(In another (John's) hand)

"Post office Havre - 14th May - arrived safely after 5 days steaming and 4 coaching - Fanny has borne the journey upon the whole very well. We had no dust and got to bed every night about 9 o'clock. The weather is very fine, - we go to night in the Monarch steamer at 9 o'clock and we shall breakfast in our own house tomorrow at 8 o'clock J.L. ".

Dia Marsailles. Par le paquebot

23 Jan 1870

M. L. Source Esq.

Malta



M. L. Source Esq.

Malta



8 May 1 c

Per la signora Francis.

M. Serrano Lopez

Mattat



27 May 18



Handwritten scribbles and numbers, possibly '27' and '18'.

Par le paquebot à vapeur de la
Méditerranée.



M. C. Sance Esq
Malta

Par Marseille.