

My life is so precious to me
as beloved that I wd gladly
make ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~the~~ ^{the} sacrifice if I could
of any one.

I believe me, with all

love to you, Anna,

John & William to be

your ~~all~~ ^{all} affectionate

Margaret

Egerton Road

Wallowfield

June 9th 1886

Came here yesterday
making the journey most comfortable
& receiving a cordial welcome from
both Dr & Mrs W. & as I received two notes
from you almost immediately after
arrival - one from Anna & one from Elvira,
all bearing good news, everything conspired
to make the beginning of our visit pleasant.
Both host & hostess look remarkably well, the
latter even more handsome & beautiful
than on a previous occasion. As before
she has arranged to have a series of dinner
parties for our entertainment, this I quite

Count upon much quiet as she delights
in her garden & sits much in it, & it is in
beautiful order. The hothouses have a great
variety of orchids in blossom, & please Mr. Bernard
that Dr. W. is delighted with the lady's slipper
he sent him it has grown strongly & bore
a fine large flower, wh: however was over
before we came. He still wants much to
get some roots of *Trillium*. I suppose it will
be impossible to bring them successfully at
this season.

We had a most enjoyable ten days
in London between our visit to Mrs. Phipps
& coming here, but I shall go back only to
last Saturday as I believe I gave a sketch of our
doings, to some members of the family, up
to that time. Saturday was the excursion to Sir
J. Brassey's. A special train was provided & the
fare half price - Battle is near Hastings & on
the Chislehurst line - The weather was lovely the

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The party numbered about two hundred
^{the Colonists} almost exclusively Australians - a sprinkling
 of whom R. knew. Drags holding Companies
 of twenty, drawn by (each) by four horses were
 awaiting us at the station. Sir Geo. acted host
 most admirably - all being accommodated
 he mounted on hawback & rode to & fro as
 the Carriages drove on, saying a pleasant word
 or explaining about the locality until we reached
 Battle Abbey where we turned out & wandered
 about the lovely grounds & learned a great
 deal of its history. A drive of two or three miles
 brought us to Normanhurst Court - his Country
 residence, where a magnificent lunch awaited
 us. Many noblemen were present & a few excellent
 speeches were made before we ^{left} ~~went~~ ^{left} ~~went~~ ^{left} ~~went~~ ^{left} ~~went~~
 house & wandered about the grounds. The
 house itself & its fittings & furnishings ^{are} in the
 modern style but with a decided stamp of
 individual taste is superb. Description would
 do nothing towards giving any one an idea

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of it. We have now been in the houses
 of four noblemen - Duke of Westminster, Lord
 Rosebery, Earl of Salisbury & Duke of Devonshire all of
 them impressing one with ^{the stupor of} "Salerno", grand
 host dignity, but the Brassey's is I suppose the finest
 type of modern style of mansion filled with
 beautiful things gathered from every part
 of the world & has a cosy life-look about it
 that brings one more in this sympathy with
 its inhabitants. I was perhaps all the more struck
 with this as we lunched, in nearly the same
 circumstances, at the Earl of Salisbury's on Mon-
 day, at this place at Hatfield. The party was
 smaller & a much larger proportion of grand
 folks were present. We ^{personally} were conveyed from
 the station by young Lord Salisbury. Eva was taken
 in to lunch by Lord Lytton & the "wife of the President"
 by a great Colonel, the last part of whose name
 I only caught - the hyphenated frontispiece I
 am going to say is missing, but I was hobnobbing
 with Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Carnarvon &

in the most familiar manner. The
 dining hall where we took luncheon is a mag-
 nificent room, very large, very lofty, with
 really beautifully panelled & frescoed ceiling.
 I am told it is one of the finest in England.
 The Marchioness is evidently a woman of char-
 acter & ability; she hustles about amongst
 her guests with great familiarity & hosts
 she & her daughters gathered knots of people
 around them by giving the history of pictures &
 other things in a distinct lecture tone of voice.
 The Earl perhaps was "ta'en up with affairs of
 the state" for it was on the night of that day
 that the majority against Gladstone's bill was
 declared & the House was never known to
 have been in a greater state of excitement
 than on that occasion, but in his own
 house he was quiet & dignified. We have
 met his son Colonel, wife & daughters so often
 that we have exchanged cards & become quite
 friendly. He is of Sydney reputation, I think, but
 they have resided in London for his years

go to spend a week with a Miss Hill whom
 she met at the Wilson's in Toronto, & who
 lives near Liverpool, & then go on to the Crow's
 while I go for two weeks to Scatter & join
 her at the Crow's a few days before we expect
 to welcome you. I think they would be glad
 to have you visit them but we have been
 there — so many of the family & do after — that
 I think from wearing out our welcome
 & am inclined to advise a brief visit from
 you & myself — should you seem to be very
 acceptable. She might remain there longer, but
 we should go off to some pretty place. I think
 for two or three weeks of true & real quiet & rest.
 I should choose the Isle of Wight were it not such
 such a long & expensive journey — at this season
 too I am told that lodgings are high. I am going
 to ask the Williamsons about Wales — they
 have been in unfrequented parts there where
 I don't see things are moderate. Rankine
 seems willing to join us in such retirement
 after the middle of July. He did not tell me

whom ⁷ but I suspect he is studying with the object
of taking some further degree. I expect to be
Netty well worn out before that date. I glad
of recuperating under favourable circumstances.
It is not unlikely that I shall be unable
to write to any other members of the family
this week. So will you please thank both
Araene & Anna for welcome letters received
which I will ~~be~~ gladly respond to when opportunity
offers.

Eva is off this morning with a married
daughter of Mr. W., who is staying here at present,
& Mrs. Robert Williamson to play tennis. Tonight there
is a dinner party - tomorrow a luncheon & College
sports in the afternoon - Friday we dine with
the R. W. & so it goes on - no escape from
social obligations but all this is excellent
training for the great week in Sept.

I am grieved to hear of the state of Lyell Wilson's
health, it makes me wish that I was near
enough to be of use to her because I do not think
either she or Mrs. Wilson ^{wholly} understand how to nurse
properly. Any further part of the U.S. does not seem
to me a safe place in her condition. But can one say
so? It is also sad about the death of the Lewis son but

There are also Mrs Wilson & daughter, wealthy
people from Melbourne, that we have seen
something of - we have seen extremely
few Canadians that are known to us. I
understand that Col. & Mrs Rice from Ottawa
is everywhere, but we don't know their
appearance - of course Col. & Mabel Selwyn are
generally at these gatherings & they are mighty
out at dinner besides which we could
be sure you here. I forget half the invitations
we receive that we cannot accept
because of your absence. One has just
followed us here for the "Celebration of
Murcia's" for the 24th of July, but knowing
so little of where we may be at that
date I intend to decline it. but my time
for writing is now short & I wish again
to refer to what you would like to do
on your arrival. We still adhere to the
plan I have already mentioned of staying
here till the 18th, even will then probably