

17 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh 6 Jan, 1873

Mrs Dawson  
Dear sister

Walter Mercer  
Re Grandson-  
John Wm Babington

I think I should write you  
(if it were but a few lines) once a year  
at least, and looking over my correspondence  
Memorandums I see you wrote last  
of course I hear of you from time  
to time, Mrs Bell was telling me about  
your welfare lately & of Georges success  
in his studies and good prospects.

I suppose you also hear of us in  
a general way too - we have had good  
health thro the past year untill Decr  
when we both took a severe cold which  
still clings to us less or more

our grandson Johnny Ballantyne  
has we suppose now peeped out  
of our charge, his Father having  
now found one that he thought  
would make a good second Mother  
for him, and she really promises to  
do that, & is a most estimable person  
in every respect - she will also now  
likely have Money, as her Brother  
has lately died at the Cape of Good Hope  
leaving a considerable sum to which  
she & her Widowed Mother are the only  
heirs - Johnny has not yet  
gone home, we have put him meanwhile  
to a Boarding School at Peebles, of  
where he is doing very well.

My daughter Annie has had another  
Son & this one has come to our side  
of the house, being named, "Halter  
Mercer Mofman" The first one  
having been named Robert Cockburn Mofman  
to please his ago great grandmother Mrs  
Cockburn since deceased —

Mr. Mofman is stronger this time than  
she was after the first birth. They are  
all well and live near us so that we  
see them every day —

This is all you see about ourselves  
but I shall like as much for you  
just to do the same in reply when  
you can find time & tell me about  
your family individually —

Our little Church drops away

since Mr Horsburghs death it seems  
to have little or no cohesion we have  
had two left during the year & four  
have died so that our numbers are  
very thin and are seldom more  
than 20 at the ordinance

Dr Horsburgh keeps well Mr & Mrs Wood  
Mr Edmon Mr Shearer & these are likely  
about the only remaining members you  
know — I have been reading a good  
many of the Plymouth Brethren Books  
& find much in their general views of  
Scripture instructive & enlarging to the  
mind, but I cannot go in with their  
views of Church order & procedure  
and I feel as if I could not really leave  
our own far, and just desire to finish  
my pilgrimage among those with whom  
I began and years fly very fast now it  
is remarkable that as we get older this is the  
experience — wishing Mr Dawson, or yourself or family  
every thing to remain in you affly Watter Ureer