There are not many letters for 1875. Julia and Minnie were living in neighbouring villages and had no need to write to each other. Julia's chief correspondent was her father, but none of her letters to him survive. His letters usually contain a laconic chapter of accidents. "Mrs Latouche fell yesterday and broke her leg"....."Mrs Stewart's little boy of 14 went to his uncle's in Scotland fell into a Saw Pit or Water Mill and was cut to atoms, his little cousin had her leg cut off"....."I have just heard a man fell nr. the Hospital yesterday & was killed".

On the 2nd January he reports that the church collection for the poor having been most successful they had given away 80 loaves. "I had a

Policeman to keep order as Women are much worse than men to manage if they do raise a riot. All ended well. Aunt Pringle[1] begs me say she hopes Wiffy & Charlie got their letters for as she forgot to put Esquire she fears they did not reach".

On the 22 January Annie wrote to thank Julia for her letter of condolence on the death of George. She reported that her husband was slowly recovering but their head servant who had nursed him so well was now very ill and if he died it would be seriously hurt her husband apart from his loss as a servant. "We could not but feel love to him". Annie never intends to wear gay colours again and she has been sorting out clothes that might be useful to Una - a blue silk which would be very good if turned - a lilac old silk skirt with a tarlatan flower -"a white muslin Polonaise or some more lilac tarlatan if you could match it would make it a good evening gown for common/". She supposes the children will wear colours again after Easter, and mentions many other bits and pieces that she proposes to send - some rather aged, for example "one of my wedding gowns of india muslin....there is very little wear in it but you would make it do to go to Emily in of an evening". One cannot help feeling a little sorry for Una!

Long letters from St. Servan report the tragic death of Una's friend Anna Brinkley from scarlatina. She had been recovering but hearing her

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1. "Aunt Pringle" was a cheerful old lady. Wilfred always remembered that once, during family prayers at St. Servan, he looked up and caught her eye and she promptly made a long nose at him.

brother who also had it call out in the night she had gone to comfort him and got cold again. There were so many french people at her funeral that William Money read the service first in french and then in english.

On March 10 (only he writes it March 01) the garden boy at Hambleden wrote to Minnie:-

i Am very sory to Leave you Like that but i dont Like working and then he found fought an if he had told me to com sunder i would of com but as soon As i got there he suis how is this and wone word brogth A nother and then hupset me and that was why i com A way

Alfred writes that he has been in Naples and seen Spencer's grave in good condition with a rose bush and a violet plant at each end. He has also been in Sorrento "one of the loveliest places on this earth".

A bill for £3.19.6, dated April 12th 1875 has been carefully endorsed by Julia "Wilfred & Charlie's first Tailor's bill".

In August William Money writes to Julia that they are going to St. Malo for the grand festivities in honour of Chateaubriand with speeches and fireworks. "Would not Wiff & Charlie like to come and see them...Whenever you are tired of any of the troublesome ones, you have a headache & want quiet, pack them up in the empty basket (he had been sending pears over for Julia's birthday) & I will meet them at St. Malo". He seems to be contemplating leaving France. "I think before long we shall have a continental blow up of some sort, something like Spain, parties are getting furious. They love to tyrannize when they get power, and those who are kept down are boiling with rage and when the occasion offers burst forth like a stream of lava". In a letter to Una of probably about the same date he says: "The monument of Chateaubriand is in bronze in a meditative mood

not very pleasing altho' it may be thought artistic.....Not all the Genius of Chateaubriand can raise France nor all the eloquent orations in favour of Monarchy & Priestcraft. Without the Bible I look upon France with the deepest pity and dismay. Half Infidel and the other half Idolatry. What can one hope. I should have more hope if Charlie was President & Wiffy Pope of Rome".

In September he writes to Una "Sorry you got bit. Wretched Bee. I hate wasps and hornets. I hitherto felt a respect if not an esteem for busy Bee improving each shining hour but when he takes to biting or stinging my grand Child I would annihilate [him].

This letter contains a message to Spen, as have all the previous ones. It is not clear where he was all this time, whether he came frequently to Medmenham or was living there. But by November, when the next letter in (See page 34A) this bundle was written, he was in the U.S.A. In that month Minny took Una to stay with her at Wellswood with Uncle Henry March Phillipps. Una wrote to her mother:-

I think Uncle Henry's servants do just as they like, one forgot to wake him this morning and the other sent breakfast up an hour later than usual, but he doesn't mind and only says when he sits down at last "let's make up for lost time".....(Describing the journey) After Reading the country got so beautiful ....After Taunton the train began to shake so fearfully that all the people in the carriage had to hold on and I thought that one little man would have quite lost his seat, for his little legs could not touch the ground amd he had to steady himself with an umbrella. He was much frightened and kept chattering out through his teeth "We're going dreadfully fast". So we were for Uncle Henry says the express goes sometimes 70 miles an hour in that place and one old lady was once shaken to death by it.

Julia says in reply:-

I was delighted to get your letter...How you will be spoiled. I can fancy (xxxx) coming back from Marlow about 10 & meeting you strolling down to

[continued 2 pages ahead]

1. The boys had to be taken to school in Marlow every morning.

On 3rd October 1875 Spen was certainly in the U.S.A. because he wrote to "My dear old Wiffs" from Virginia. It is possible that the previous letter from William Money is in the wrong year. Spen wrote:-

How is it that you have never written to me since I left, you old rascal? Is it because I have never written to you. Very well, here I am writing to you; so, as soon as you get this ~~kxxxxx~~ little letter or as soon as you comfortably can, just please sit down and write to me.

You were to have gone to school last Monday, you and dear old Charlie. Last Monday was the 27th. But when you get this you will I suppose have been to school three weeks nearly, so that you can tell me how you like it. How do you like it? I hope you like it very much. I am sure you must like Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomew, don't you? How do you like the undermasters? Mind you don't tease them. That isn't kind, or brave. I have seen a poor schoolmaster teased by his boys till he cried. It was a horrid sight. To see little people teasing big seems to me about as bad as to see big people teasing little.

I hope you have made some good friends. Don't make friends too quickly, but when you have made them, and proved them, stick to them. I don't want to bore you, old fellow, with what we used to call at school "along jaw" - though long jaws are somtimes useful: but I do want you to be a better boy than I ever was, and then I hope you will be a better man too. And don't forget what I said to you and Charlie at the Henley railway station when we said Good-bye. Tell dear Charlie I will write to him next time. My head aches too much just now. And soon I will tell you both about farming out here, if you would like to hear. Kiss dear Mamma from your loving Brother Spen.

breakfast & proposing to make up for lost time. Such a day it is - the boys ~~xx~~ are at home, floods up everywhere & rising still, not yet so high as before.....Charlie is fidgetting about wanting something to do he has churned the butter - sorted the library books, teased the cat & Mary & now Ive set him to tidy the books....I am writing to Spen to go to New York, to the consul Uncle William's friend, he will find him work or send him home, most likely the latter. Mr. Hill says he cannot be a village schoolmaster without passing an examn. & if he isn't up in arithmetic he will not pass.I have written to ask Mr. Price[1]'s advice about him..... I should fancy Spen will be home before Christmas. His passage money £20 will go to the New York consul & I shall settle Acheson's account with him myself. Any money you have keep for his possible expenses going about to seek employment for I shall have none left at all.

Una had become 18 that summer and was therefore in receipt of her own pension.~~xx~~

On November 14 Mary writes to Una that Mr. Price had offered Spencer a place as a Master at Westward Ho! "He will get £90 a year and bord and lorgeing....I am sure Spennie will like it because Mr. Price is a great friend of his". At the bottom of this letter are two long smudges "Puffs signature by the tip of her tail isant her tailwriting improved. I would put Delos's too only it would look rather funny".

Puff was the cat. Delos was the pony.

Una replies to her mother:-

I am so glad to hear about Spen. He will be quite off your mind now, for he can keep himself eyeglasses and all on £90 a year. What a pity he did not think of writing to Mr. Price before he went to America, but I daresay it will have done him good and it will be very jolly to see him again. I feel as if I had woke up from a bad dream and discovered that it was all nonsense, and I'm sure you must feel much more so. I am glad though

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1. Headmaster of Westward Ho School. He had been a master at ~~Haykxbury~~ Heileybury where Spen was at school.

that I am not one of the small boys committed to his care. In your last letter to me you said I had better not spend my money as it would be wanted for his travelling about etc. He will not have to that now....and there are such nice things here made out of Devonshire marble that I want to bring you and Polly.....so tell me in your next letter whether I need keep my money or not. His expenses to Bideford will be about £1.10 as far as I can make out from ours, if he travels third class, which of course he will do, if I have enough money to pay that in January (which I shall like to for it isn't fair that you should always pay for his fun) you dont mind my spending some of the rest here. I ought to pay for his journey I think, as I have had all the pleasure of a trip down here.....

A few days later she writes that she is in the middle of the nicest book she has ever read, Froissarts Chronicles. She has read a great deal at Wellswood including"the log of Uncle Henry's ship the "Valiant" that he was in when he was a middy about the time when Napoleon 1st was emperor and there was war between France and England". Bici Froude has just left to join her husband with her baby and a courier "who..can do everything even, he says, he could hold the baby if it was necessary".

A little later still she is quite excited at the account of the floods at Medmenham. "Fancy the cottage being surrounded: how will you get to church? I hope it will stay till I come....."

Wilfred's letter to Una of the 21st November is quite exceptionally badly written and spelt, even for that family:-

i hope you are quite well uncle Willyoung is coming here for a coucpal of night. is'ent it lucky that Spenny has got such a good place As school-master.

(There follows a verse from the Canadian boating song)

Your loving brother Wilfard.

I. Mary was sometimes called Polly.

Many years later Una composed from her diary a "timetable for each day Autumn & winter 1875". It reads:-

6.45	Get up
7.30	Breakfast
8.30	Drive to Marlow with boys
10.30	Back & see to Delos' food
10.45	Look up garden & stables etc. (Church on Saints Days)
11	If no Church (or else at 9.30 if I do not go to Marlow) Do Latin or Algebra & begin Greek
12.	Work - mending etc.
12.30	Read with Mama & work if she reads.
1.	Lunch
2 - 5	Go out, visit Cottage, sometimes drive/or work in garden /to friends
5.30	Practise. Be ready for dinner
6.	Dinner
7.	Work for poor or help Mama
8.	Play with boys
9.	Read
10.	to bed.

In December Mrs. William Money writes to Mary "I should like to see your English home Mary dear...But during winter months I never will cross the Channel, if I can help it. A few years ago, I went over in January & was obliged to lie in Yarmouth Roads for two days & a night, & then had so rough a passage - I never expected to see the land again.

1876.

On the 1st January Mademoiselle Catel wrote to her "Chere Petite Mary" to wish her and all the family the compliments of the season. She added, knowing that it would be appreciated by the cat loving Mary, "Il faut que je vous dise que j'ai un chat qui est charmant et presque spirituel". Cats and birds seem to have been Mary's pets. The pony Delos was always spoken of as Una's, but later Una became the chief care when they took to dogs.

An undated letter which presumably belongs to the early part of this year is from William Money to his grandson Spenny. He writes:-

Dearest Spenny

Forgive and deal leniently with an old man's foibles & forgetfulness. I was enraptured with your Reminiscences of Virginia. Your hardships and energy delighted one, nit that I was delighted at your sufferings, au contraire, I sympathized with you and felt proud of a Grandson who had gone into the bush or backwoods and put his Shoulder so gallantly to the wheel & who by perseverence and pluck had conquered difficulties that Samson would have ~~xx~~ stunned.

I hope you may be enables thro' God's Grace to conquer intellectual difficulties as you did physical ones and all the arts & smiles of the young damsels who looked after the Dairy.

.....I went to the Funeral of a little child at 10 o'c this morning. Happy little Spirit. I thought while the Mother was weeping the Child was laughing.

I went to the Agricultural dinner at St. Servan Casino & sat next to the Principal du College, who I like very much, not because he whips little boys, but sends them to bed in the middle of the day & gives them Jam! He assured me he did not now put them to bed..... On the other side of me.....& Monsr. Durand Deputy. The latter made a most exciting speech, amidst all was one of the Grants waifing (sic) his arms & the Police tapping him on the Shoulder, & then up got a gigantic Frenchman talking nonsense midst shouts of laughter from 200 men - It all ended well. I shook hands with all the elite - drank

the Mayor's health in a Glass of Champagne & came away delighted with my reception, dinner & all.....I beg to add for your consolation I came away not at all screwed - as sober as a Judge, as Judge Eldon[1] or Erskine."

On 15 March Alfred wrote to Julia from Hong Kong. His son Eddy's attentions to a girl called Agnes Bickley who lived or was staying in the neighbourhood of Hambleden, or her attentions to him which is the way the family would have put it, were causing some commotion. His letter also suggests that Julia had been trying to supplement her income by taking in paying guests:-

Pray dont distress yself in the slightest in the matter of paying that money. You know I only alluded to it to check your killing yself in taking in Indian families - but you have learnt a lesson about that by nearly extinguishing yself in doing it. Many thanks for your two letters about Eddy's affairs. Your first was the earliest intimation I got.....I telegraphed to Minnie immediately as you asked me to do. She is frightened at telegraphs I hope mine did not alarm her. It was only "I do not attach the slightest blame to you so do not fret". It cost £8.0.0 but I was very glad to spend that or any sum to spare that "good sister" as you rightly call her any pain. I hope you may have a pleasant trip to Westward Ho and a good tenant of your cottage. Dont take any one who offers.....We dont know what will be "up" out here - there is always the chance of a War first in one corner and then in another.....What with anxieties & professional worrits out here and home troubles you may readily suppose I am not sleeping on a bed of roses.....

Her father writes delighted at the thought that if she lets her cottage she may come over to St. Servan for the summer. The Moneys evidently could not manage either unless they had paying guests. As often as possible they had their daughters, or their daughters' children but when none of them were available they had to take in outsiders.

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1. The D.N.B. says of Lord Eldon that "In later life his capacity for port wine was prodigious".

In June Una went to stay with the Henry Ryders in Brussels and Julia tells her that Mary has now got a jackdaw who comes when she calls Jack "and that is all day long. I forbid him the house - but he is as bad as the cow & the horse [who had both been misbehaving] and I caught him coming up the back stairs to-day after Mary or worms or something".

Mary reports that "your rubbishy Delos is all right and flourishing". The boys reports had come and Wilfred was top in history and Divinity and conduct good. Charlie's conduct was only fair "which means I suppose that he did'ent prepare his lessons very well". Julia says all three children have bad coughs, but later she reports that they are better "and we are going to the Regatta....I am almost asleep as I was up often with Wiffs in the night & once with Mary Bird. Jane appeared in my room trembling about 1 o'clock. If you please ma'am, I dont know what it is, Mary's gasping for breath". So I went up & found she was hysterical. I told her to shut her eyes & go to sleep which she did & awoke quite well. I expect she is in love. I am trimming the boys' clothes, brown holland with a dark blue braid for the Regatta. The 2 Ridleys appeared yesterday about 12 having come of themselves to luncheon & to ask me to chaperone them to the Regatta.."

On July 5th she writes to Una to say that all the children have whooping cough rather badly and she is up so much of the night that she is too sleepy to write much. Charlie has been waking up in a fright, & rushing about the passage knowing no one. She thinks Una had better come home in a week's time as she hopes to let the cottage and they could then all go over to St. Servan together. She does not want to fetch Una home just to help look after the invalids but "if you were here you would be

1. maids

very useful and I know you like that". She says that Uncle Tom had asked Lord Sandon for an inspectorship of schools for Eddie but Lord Sandon cannot help and Eddie has no hopes of anything in particular. She writes several reports but is very tired with the constant nursing. "Wilfred is most attentive to him (Charlie) you would think they didnt know how to quarrel". The hoped for tenants think the cottage is too small for them so the plan of letting falls through. "Agnes Bickley is so gracious to me - one would think I wanted to marry her nephew & she'd forgiven me. I shall adopt her instead of you. I suppose this is some new dodge to placate Edward". It is never made plain what the objection to Agnes was. Mrs. Hill, the wife of the vicar of Medmenham who took pupils, seems to have been implicated. Possibly Agnes was a relation of hers. In one letter Julia says that, hearing that Mr. Hill was laid up, angry though she was with Mrs. Hill she relented and sent half the asparagus for Mr. Hill.

There is nothing more till October when the chief excitement is the approaching marriage of Julia's brother Ernle to Alice Drummond. Cussie, who, as she is also out in India is the only one to have met her calls her "a dear unselfish girl" and says that "He is so happy darling Ernle". His mother however says "We still think our darling would have done better to wait two or three more years without a wife" which has a familiar ring. It was said in each generation of Moneys and Ryders - very few of either married prudently! The WilliamMoneys have left Maison Versailles and are now living in a house called "Trinity Parsonage", the new church being built.

At the beginning of December George Ryder evidently stayed at the Medmenham Cottage. In his letter of thanks he says:-

I trust you forgive my wilfulness about calling on the young Scott Murrays. My conscience rather pricked me about it, when soon after I met

Lisle (his son) he asked me whether I had called, evidently hoping I had. I said Mr. & Mrs. S.M. were not there, but only the young people, & that the rain put calling out of the question. Upon this he remarked they had had some fine days in London. He wd. have liked me to have called.

But though I should dearly like to have him nicely married, & shall feel very much obliged to any one who contributes to bring this about I know I have no turn for such matters myself. I have two md. daughters but in neither case had I anything to do with the choice of their husbands. I endeavoured to choose in Alice's case a year or so before her actual marriage but was unsuccessful & after that limited myself to objecting or acquiesing. Lisle joins me in love to you all".