

Jan 19 (1844) Saturday.

Dearest Mother

On second thoughts I think I may as well send you a few more lines if I am able. Since I wrote the other letter I find that I am allowed a month to stay in Calcutta from the time I report myself, that being the case I shall have much more time than I thought I should in Calcutta.

We have received the Express and some English news. But the letters we may get tomorrow perhaps not even then. On Tuesday next E. goes out on a pig sticking expedition and takes me with him not that I intend to join in the above amusement but I shall take my gun and I daresay I shall find something to do. We are always either going out to parties or having those sort of things at home, I never was a great liker of the gaieties of the season anywhere. But I manage to get through it as well as possible. I have not been to any balls yet. And I really have no wish to do the same. Edward has a great

Ma
deal to do now. ~~She~~ showed me a list of between 60 & 70 people to whom he had to write on business alone. I send my letters by the Express which leaves in a day or two and I hope they will prove acceptable to all.

I am very glad to hear of the feat that you accomplished I do not think that every body would do the same on her 62nd birthday. I found a list of the Family birthdays here in a Portfolio of E's which I have copied out. By the Bye Sophy ought to have supplied me with one before I left.

I shall find some money from home very acceptable especially as I am going to Burrampoor which is a half batta station. I suppose however I shall not stay there more than 2 or 3 months, all the monies for me will I suppose be sent through Edward.

I hope you had a happy and merry pert at Xmas. I can not say I did. It was shockingly dull. E is generally away from after breakfast to near dinner time so I am left all alone. Truly the days pass long.

I suppose our thermometer was as much above "Temperate" as yours was below freezing pt. on Xmas it looked certainly very odd to see everybody in whites. My 3 companions go up to Dinapore and it is ten chances to one that we shall ever meet again. I should like to go up there with them, it would be comfortable to know someone. But E. is anxious for me to go up to Burrampoor because he knows some of the officers very intimately & he says he is sure they will be very kind to me.

Enough has been said I think of myself and now I will a little of home matters. In the first place what a pity it will be to lose Mrs. Pitcher. I do not think it will be possible to get another like her. I am glad to hear Uncle H^r is still in existence. I was afraid I should hear bad news in that quarter. I should like to have received the note you sent to me through Portsmouth. But "Better late than never". I suppose it had better be sent out to Edward and we can settle out here what is to be done with it. I fancy he thinks it ought to go to help me in any way. 500 Rupees would help me in my income.

I now for the second time must say good bye. I send you a long account of my voyage, I have put down anything remarkable as it occurred. And now with many & dutiful wishes for your welfare Yr aff. & dutiful Son Spencer says Good bye.

his Uncle the first Earl of
Hamorley

Jan. 29 (1844) Sunday.

Dear William.

I have picked you out from amongst my host of Brothers so that you may not all of you say that you have had nothing from me. You will see my Journal and all the deeds that I did during my voyage. I was very much astonished as my shooting I did not think that I should shoot so well as I did. On Tuesday we go up the country to some place (about 20 miles) and I hope to get some shooting there. I go to Burrempoor in the beginning of next month to do duty with the 1st N.I. E. knows many officers there.

We are expecting the letters from England every hour, I hope they will come before I close my despatches. I will thank you to let me see some of your handwriting if it be possible so to do. It is a very easy thing for many people to write to me But very difficult for I to write to many. I think I shall put all my brothers into a bag and shake them well and then write to the 2 first that make their appearance.

I think I shall have something for you to do. I should like you if possible to put your eye upon a nice set of fishing tackle, it is not at all unlikely that I shall write for something of that sort before long. Talking about fishing have you done anything in that line down by the locks at your favourite holes. I should like to fish there again some day. I suppose there is no chance of any more brothers coming out here, is there I wish you could make your appearance.

Edward is going to supply me with a pair of pistols of respectable size but tell George I shall make use of the little ones too. I have just sent them to be cleaned.

I hope old Father Thames is progressing favourably. I do nothing here all day long except play at Billiards, read write and eat Tiffin. I am quite alone Edward goes to his office early and does not appear till just dinner time. I hope you and everyone will excuse my letters being so short. But as I have sent home a Journal of the whole voyage it would only be repeating things over again, to talk about that.

You will have news of a Glorious But bloody battle at Gwalior by this mail. The General opinion here is that Sir H. Gough knows no more how to lead an army than a pig and that the battle was won by English Bravery alone against numbers. I have just heard that the army of exercise is to be disbanded so I suppose that every thing is put down. I hope I shall not go away without seeing some service. Shall I find you have bettered yourself when I come home? I think If you wait till I have got

William never did
marry.

a tiger skin for your first born you had better give up all thoughts of marrying X

I think I must make an end of writing now. I will write to some one else perhaps & if possible of the male part of the family next month so till you hear from me again I will say Good bye and Remain Yrs Spencer.

Jan 20 Sunday

Dear Annie

I suppose I must send you something in the shape of a letter, so I will do my best, though I think I might have received a line or two from you. But I must not begin to kick up a row as soon as I get out of your reach. I was rather unwell a day or 2 ago and Ted thought it might be fever so he sent for the Doctor. But nothing came of it, and I am now as well as I ever wish to be. You will see my attempt at a Journal But it must not be seen by anyone not of the family. Where did you spend Xmas. I never spent one so wretched no one did anything to keep it up, for although it was on board ship yet I think some thing might be done. How does Uncle Harrowby get through the winter. I suppose he will hardly last out another. I wish you many happy returns of Last Friday (Jan 18) Your birthday if I mistake not. How would you like to send Georgia out here in about ten years time. I think it would be the best thing to be done with him if he ~~becomes~~ becomes a great scamp not but that they send some good ones out to India witness myself Ahem...

Now I think I have come to an end of all I have to say to you. I send this with the others for it is too small to go in a cover by itself. Give my best love to dear Grey and little G. I wonder whether he likes school as well as he did at first so now good bye Believe me Yrs Spencer.

What glorious news about Gwalior.

Tuesday. Feb. 6
Calcutta

Dearest Mother

I am still existing in this city of Palaces But on Saturday next I go up to Burrampoor to the 1st M.I.

Since I wrote last we have been on a little expedition Down to a place called Ontah on the Diamond harbour road, and a more infamous road I have never seen, quite impassable to a buggy -

so we road (sic) down. The next morning I went out on the Elephants which were to beat the jungles while the horsemen were on the look out for the Pigs outside. We saw an immense number of pigs but there was only one killed by the bye that is a mistake for that one was not killed till the afternoon. Well we came back, and I went out with one of the party to a snipe jheel and I managed to kill a couple my Companion shot 4 Couple of snipe and a Teal. The next morning I went out by myself but did nothing so I came home and went to sleep. But when the Pigsticking party came home I found they had accounted for 6 pigs 5 pretty good ones and one small one. One of these fell to E's share, it was his first and I wish I had been there to be able to give you an account of how it happened. But "Solim" carried him beautifully and took as much pleasure in the sport as his master. There was a Horikie killed by one of the party. A very handsome bird like a hen pheasant very beautiful plumage. Edward has been out shooting since then and had very good sport 12 brace of snipe.

My 3 friends went up ka on Friday to Dnyapora. I saw them off and so did Mr. Battye. There are now only 3 or 4 of the "Queen's own" (ladies) remaining here. Miss Greig went up to Mouranadebad on Sunday a long way off so I suppose I shall not see her again. She was a great friend of mine. I dined at her house some time ago and did my best to dance there. They had a curious custom there, after we had been dancing some time they went up to the Roof of the house and we all walked about for some time a beautiful moon and all the little &c of a fine night.

There was a large ball at the Town Hall I did not dance of course, I walked about & eat supper a very good employment there were some very pretty Fancy dresses. I suppose you had better always send your letters for me out to Edward & then they will be forwarded on as he will always know my latest movements.

There was a subscription got up among the Passengers by Mr. Battye for a piece of Plate to be given to Capt. McLeod instead of 1 piece of plate, a whole Breakfast Service was obtained excessively handsome and the Capt. wrote a very nice letter on the subject.

Feb. 7 I have just sent off my heavy Baggage by boat to Bernampore and I follow "Dewk" on Saturday. The 1st has been ordered up to Dinsapore instead of Benares I should not mind going up there too as I should see my 2 companions who are gone up there. But E says it is useless going to the expense of a tent so I shall stay at Burrampore exchanging into the 46th which relieves the 1st. There is an officer of the 1st staying

~~Mussak~~
x sak (post)

here now (Mr. Hickey) a great friend of E's they are Rival Shots. He is I believe the Crack shot of Bengal.

Edward tells me, if I pass in the languages, in a year, he will give me a horse, But I am afraid he is quite safe. As there are 3 languages to be learnt. Hindsee Bengalee & Persian. However I will do my best. I have not had a Moonshee yet But I shall begin when I get to my Regiment.

You Recollect a set of fortification plans (Vauban's designs I think it was) that I had with Straithes Work, I have not been able to find it anywhere so I suppose I must have left it at home if it is in existence I should (like) it to be sent by some means or other out to Edward. I find your last Packet was left at E's office so I must wait till I can get it to Answer your letter.

Feb.9. I told E to send my letters But he has not done so, so I suppose I must do without. I have just drawn my pay to the amount of 217 Rs and a few annas or £21.14s. Edward will be my agent in Put. and will draw it for me.

I find that in all probability I shall March up to Dinapore with the 1st. It is a better station than Berhampore because it is "Full Batta" and I shall see my friends there. I have just been out to pay 2 or 3 visits to some of my Lady Friends and have come back to set to work letter writing for I must have all my letters written before I go as they will be sent by the "Hindustan" on the 15th by which time I shall be at Berhampore. I hear there are tigers down near Diamond Harbour and 2 or 3 Gentlemen have gone to shoot them in but tube, rather an odd way of attacking a Tiger.

They bury a large But about a quarter in the ground and get inside and are then fastened in. Branches are put over it and they lay the carcass of a Bullock not far off and then when the Tiger comes near, why they stop him.

I hope Dick will make up for my not being at home as far as fishing goes the Finny Tribe must miss me. I suppose in a Month or 2 I shall be able to send you something in the way of another journal I hope my first proved acceptable. I must now I am afraid say good bye to you for the present hoping you are enjoying such weather as I am, though that is impossible so good bye

Yr aff. and Dutiful

Ben Spencer

Feb 22nd (1844) Thursday
Bernampore
1st N.I.

Dear Mother

Here I am at last something in the way of a soldier, all I have to do and indeed it is no little, drill and Parade. Every day I get up in the morning before sunrise $5\frac{1}{2}$ or 6 and Drill for an hour or if there is a parade it lasts 2 hours then again in the evening Drill or Parade for the same time at 5.

I am living at Mr. Hickey's quarters (I think I have mentioned the name before. He is a great friend of Edward's and is very kind to me - the officers are a very nice set. The 1st have been ordered up to Dinapore and I shall march with them. We expect to start about the 5th of March it will be tremendously hot.

I left the Ted in good health and spirits on the 12th and came here by Dak in a palanquin, and fearful work it was - hot & dusty - and I could sleep very little of a night stopping every 3 or 4 hours the bearers changing and asking for the Buckshish or present altogether I was heartily glad to get ~~up~~ to my journey's end - it only lasted 38 hours But that was quite enough. I have seen my 3 friends they stopped here a couple of days as they went up the river and I shall see them at Dinapore as they go there also.

There is a Mr. Sealy at this station not in the army related to the Greys he told me, Do you recollect the name. He asked after Annie &c I write you this bit now though I shall not send it for nearly (?) because I thought I had better write you something from this at once for fear I should forget anything. I shall see E again soon as he passes through this place on his way to Rajmahal where he goes on a tiger shooting expedition.

Hickey has gone out today to Moorshedabad to see the Palace of the Nawab & I am left here all alone.

I sent a letter to you by the Hindostan. She struck on a bank going down the river and stuck there for 48 hours But was got off without damage. The Mail has come in But we have not got our letters yet, up here. We expect them every day I hope to receive a large packet. That is all I have got to say at present so till I get to Dinapore I will say good bye.

March 6th Wednesday. The 46th are to arrive here on Friday and we shall begin our March on Sunday!! so we shall have the whole of this month and $\frac{1}{2}$ April for the March it will be

fearfully warm.

I sent your last letter back to Edward to read and he has never sent it to me again so this will be shorter than it otherwise would have been. I find that E will not come up till late so I suppose I may not see him at all. What a happy party you must have had at Xmas I should like to have taken a peep at you. How do you like my attempt at a journal I suppose you have received it now. The Postings are very numerous so I suppose my turn will come soon in another Month or 2. Every thing is being packed up now that we shall want on the march, to be sent (by) boats, and I have a good deal to do so with my best love to all your party believe me

Yr aff & dutiful

Son Spencer.

March 1st
Bernampore
1st M.I.

Dear Richard

I am much obligated to you for your letter, and I will do my best to send you one. You seem to have had a pleasant time of it at Dresden Drinking coffee, smoking and music are no doubt very nice occupations for an evening. I hope you are none the worse for it. I keep the bill of our last Dinner at Vergo in the pocket book that Annie gave me. You must have been very merry at Itzas. I certainly envied you, for I was on board ship and there was nothing done to celebrate it.

I hope you will one day see me whipping the stream at the same place I most certainly shall if I ever return to England's shores with the same love of the rod (which I have now exchanged for the gun) as when I left it, But there is beautiful fishing to be had up the country and if I get there I shall most decidedly send home for some apparatus. I hope I shall have much sport in that line to tell you of.

The Road to Dinapore lies (for several miles at one place) through the thickest jungle I do not mean the whole way But in several places. There dwells the grisly Tyrant of the woods ready to snap up anything from a general officer to a cooly (They are of the lowest caste in India) I hope they may not meet with your humble servant. I expect some good shooting on the March But the weather will be fearfully hot, of course I shall not go out in the heat of the day. I wish I had been with you on your tour. I am sorry I have never seen European beauties before I left it. I think I should have enjoyed

visiting the old battlefields as much as you did yourself.

My sea sickness was over soon it was never very bad and in the heavy gale we had off the Cape I was not affected at all But I stood on the quarterdeck watching the enormous waves as They came tumbling after us doing their best to come up with us and if the wind had slacked for a moment a wave would have caught us which would have sent my any unfortunate individual, myself for instance who was on deck into eternity. But where ignorance is bliss tis folly to be wise so as I did not know of any danger there I stayed and only thought of the grandeur of the sea. Then when I was in bed I always swung in any wind the ships rolling would bury my port deep under the surface and I could see sparks of light dash by the port and then it would rise and I would hear a few drops of water Trickling down that had come how or other found an entrance. I used to manage to sleep pretty well though considering.

How you would have liked to see me on Horseback for the 2nd time in my life mounted on one of E's Arabs a beautiful white one called the "Cobbler" - & a very nice beast it was however I suppose I shall do better in time and I must if I wish to get a staff appointment for I shall have to ride whether I like it or no. I hope you still continue to bully the fishy Tribe though this is rather early for them yet. I wish you could manage to land one of those flinn Trout out of the "Pool" it gives me great joy to hear of it. The fish up the country The (Maraceer) grow to an enormous size - sometimes as much as 10 or 20 lbs. I will now say goodbye hoping you all success in the examination* and by the by I was near betting anyone at Charterhouse that would you would get a 1st and so I think still so do not disappoint me. Good bye and believe me

Yrs Spencer.

March 1 1844
Berhampore

Dear Minnie

I believe you have written to me so I will send you something in return. But I can only find one Bit of Oct. I think I received another but where it is I know not.

I have never heard a harp since your last and I do not know whether there are such things to be found in India give it my love and I hope it is in as good health as the Damp will allow it. The India Mail must take up a good deal of time before it is read through, now there are 2 writers instead of one. I hope all the neighbours are in good health Mrs

* Richard was at Wadham
College, Oxford.

* Mrs sister Emily

Hinde and her amiable daughter in particular pray give my best regards to them all. Are the old ponies still in existence I suppose they will soon go the way of all flesh! I hope you intend to replace them in some way. Do you keep up the orchid bed still I hope so. This place is a very dull station. There are only the 1st here but I daresay there are many places such worse at which I may be placed. I have had no shooting here yet. There is a place about 7 or 8 miles off (Rangamutti) where there are many black partridges. They are beautiful birds the male especially with a neck like that Himalaya pheasant the Bouchier's have got I have never seen one alive yet but I hope I shall on the March. Mr. Philcott is a very nice man and I do not doubt you find him so, I suppose he has long talks with Mother about me. I think I must now say good bye

For the present and Remain
Yrs Spencer.

Friday. March 1
Berhampore.
1st M.I.

Dear Sophy

Here I am doing at last something in the way of duty which is attending drill twice a day or Parade Do. The 1st have a very nice set of officers I wish I could be posted to this Regiment but there is no vacancy. One of the officers is Lieut. Hickey and a great friend of Edwards. They are great rivals in snipe shooting. He is very kind to me. E. has put me under his charge, and I do not think he could have see chosen better. I live in his quarters. I want to know something about the Dawson family, who it was that married Aunt B. There is one of that name here who comes from Dorsetshire. He says he has many relations in Leicestershire. The Pool Dawsons.

I dined with the General (General Saper he is staying at this station but has nothing to do with the Reg.) last Monday. The whole Mess were asked & there was a large party 8 or 9 Ladies.

We march up to Dinapore in about a week and as we shall be marching at the time when the mail goes out I shall send these off to Edward before I set out.

I should like to have joined you in the charades, for I flattered myself I did my endeavour very passably on board the Queen. What a merry party you must have been. It will be

*His mother's eldest sister
Susan married Edward
Dawson of Hobart.

fearfully hot on the March. March and April is about the worst time for travelling. We shall get up about 2 I suppose and spend the whole of the day in Camp. There is beautiful shooting all along the line. I hope I may have some sport. Edward will not be up here before I am gone so when I shall see Him again I don't know it is possible that you may see him before I shall.

A day or two ago we had an Indian storm not Thunder and lightening But a hot wind which is very warm down here though we shall have enough up the country it was a sort of sandstorm the air filled with it so thick that we could hardly distinguish the houses on the other side of the square.

We had a review here in the square a day or two ago for the Ladies & the Mawab of Moorshedabad (about 8 miles off). There was lots of firing. The Ladies did not like it much because they had heard many stories of men leaving their ramrods in the musket and sending them off by mistake. Hickey in the first thing of the sort that he was at during the firing heard something whiz by his head and presently heard a man cry out that he had lost his Ramrod pleasant certainly. It was a very pretty sight as it continued till dusk (it began at 5) and the flashes looked very beautiful. I wonder whether I shall ever see anything of the sort in earnest.

Hickey has bought a Tatee (pony) for me to ride on the march I have heard the comfortable intelligence that he bites and kicks the sides (grooms) in a fearful way. I have ridden him once and he seemed to go pretty well altogether.

I miss the look of flowers as there are none to be seen here. I suppose there is something pretty already in the garden Crocuses &c. I hope I may find you still there when I come back if that ever happens. I think it is a very remarkable circumstance that out of all "The Queen's own" There should have been no matches made though the thing is not impossible yet, I believe it nearly happened in one or two instances. I do not include myself. I don't know how it is I never can write long letters but I shall (write) several so that will make up. So till next mail I will say good bye.

Yrs Spencer.

Send my best love to Halla and tell (?) I like being a soldier very much.