

Your Very Loving Madeline

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This social and postal presentation primarily concerns the family of the Lord Lieutenant of Carmarthenshire and his wife, Madeline, in the late Victorian and Edwardian period, their correspondence between the two of them, and to them separately from relatives, friends, and other contacts.

With the death in January 1970 of Jimmy, the only child of Sir James (Joe) Drummond and his wife, Madeline, their line became extinct and their Carmarthenshire mansion, Edwinsford, fell into decay and ruin. Although apparently stripped of all fixtures and fittings by the late-1970s, an immense cache of envelopes containing all the correspondence for the period 1871 to 1913 was discovered in an estate outbuilding, and soon dispersed through the philatelic market.

This display highlights but a small part of the challenging and rewarding gathering together again of this correspondence and other relevant material, enabling an evaluation of Joe and Madeline's place at the highest levels of British society, and family involvement with military service in India and in the South African War. Additionally, there is a Victorian/Edwardian period love story to be told, of a 41-year old widow with seven children marrying a man nearly ten years younger for love.

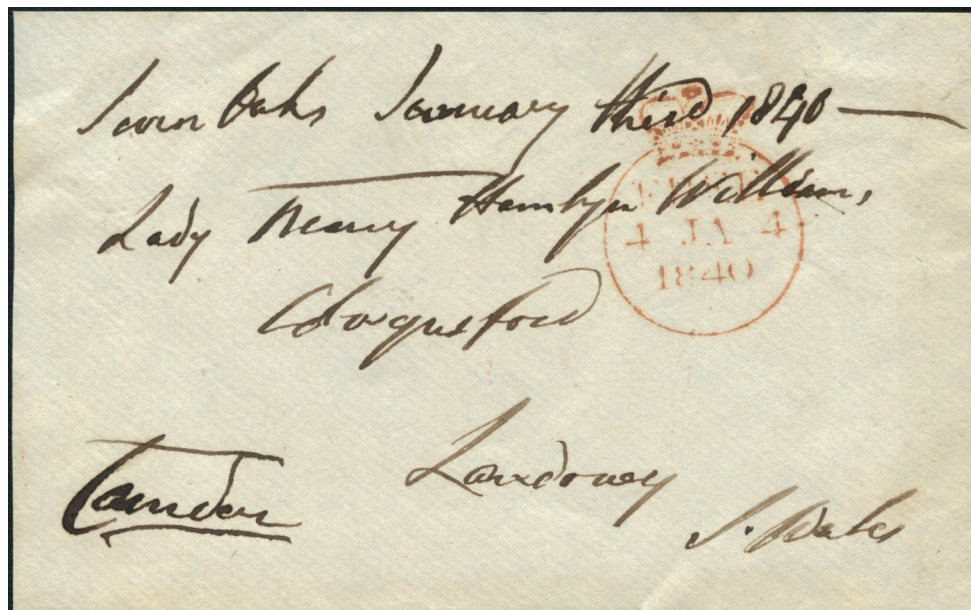
Within the frames are letters to the teenage Sir James Drummond expressing admiration and instructions to "burn this instantly" - fortunately he did not - and progress through letters to and from his wife, Madeline, as well as correspondence from Simla, India, and outside Ladysmith, Natal, in the important year at the turn of the century. There is correspondence from Madeline's close friends, Princess Helena, and Constance, Countess of Derby, and concludes with her unexpected death, and beyond. These all show various facets of mail transmission, including travel in a diplomatic bag, sorting in a Great Northern Railway train, and unusual and rarely found village postmarks of the period. A few postal items are shown from the related family at Edwinsford, Hamlyn Williams, who were maternal grandparents to Sir James Drummond. Lady Mary Hamlyn Williams was an autograph collector with the largest known surviving collection of 'O' code Free Fronts, comparatively recently dispersed.

The title of this presentation — '*Your very loving Madeline*' — reflects how Madeline ended her letters to her husband.

The Lady Mary Hamlyn Williams of Edwinstow, collector of autographs on entire panels, and also the original owner of the greatest known collection of Free Front 'O' codes.



With traces on the reverse of mounting from Lady Mary's album in the 1840s, this Free Front signed by James Scarlett, 1st Baron Abinger (1769-1844), was handstamped 'FREE / 4 JA 4 / 1840', with the single-rim morning duty stamp.



A Free Front, also with traces of the purple page on the reverse, signed by John Campbell, 1st Earl Cawdor (1790-1860). The last day of Free Frank use was 11 January 1840, an extra day from the day of postal reform.

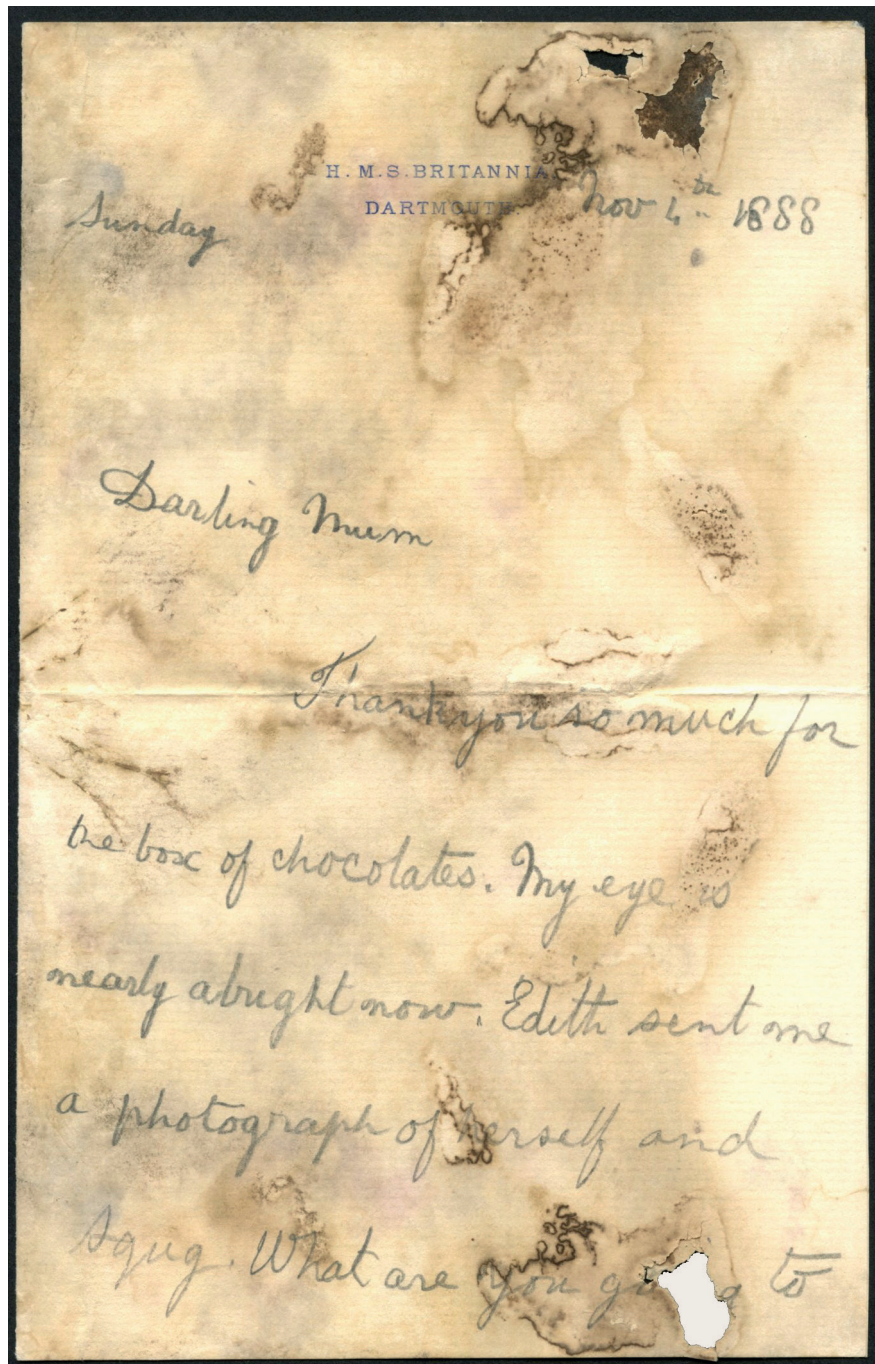
J. Drummond
 - during a long
 have been
 with the fibrous
 Craig near
 Galloway,
 & will be
 of the
 - through
 which. & were so
 delighted with
 that the children - they
 called a grand house.

My darling boy.
 I am so sorry to hear
 you have had a cold - but
 glad it is a thing of the past
 now - & I trust you are
 keeping well. & working
 steadily. I suppose all
 the brooding & battling
 is over for this year -
 & you are only having foot ball
 now - I don't still go

With a 'Llandilo 467' duplex postmark of 13 October 1871 on the front of the envelope, and a Windsor arrival mark of the next day on the reverse, this is the oldest known surviving letter to the young Sir James Drummond, 14 years old at the time. Written by his mother, Mary, Lady Drummond, and sent to Eton College.

Sir James D. D. Drummond
 at the Rev. J. D. Jones
 Eton Coll.
 Windsor.

Llandilo 467
 OCT 13 11
 POSTAGE
 4 67
 ONE PENNY



Arthur Clifton, aged 14, writes one of his first letters to his widowed mother after being sent as a Royal Navy cadet to Dartmouth. Written on H.M.S. Britannia headed notepaper, Arthur writes on Sunday 4 November 1888 to Madeline Clifton, mentioning his older sisters Edith and Cecily, and his younger brother, Caryl. Their father had died in March 1880 when Arthur was aged 5½ years old.

The envelope has also survived, and both were part of the cache of lost and found letters at Edwinsford, hidden within a wooden box in one of the semi-derelict estate buildings.

Lytham Hall,
Lytham.

Dec 12. 1888.

My darling Joe

Yours is the only
letter I enjoy writing, though
I wish we c^d talk instead!
I am getting a tired of
receiving congratulations,
even my friend Joe, I only

write out a few
generally &
ending with

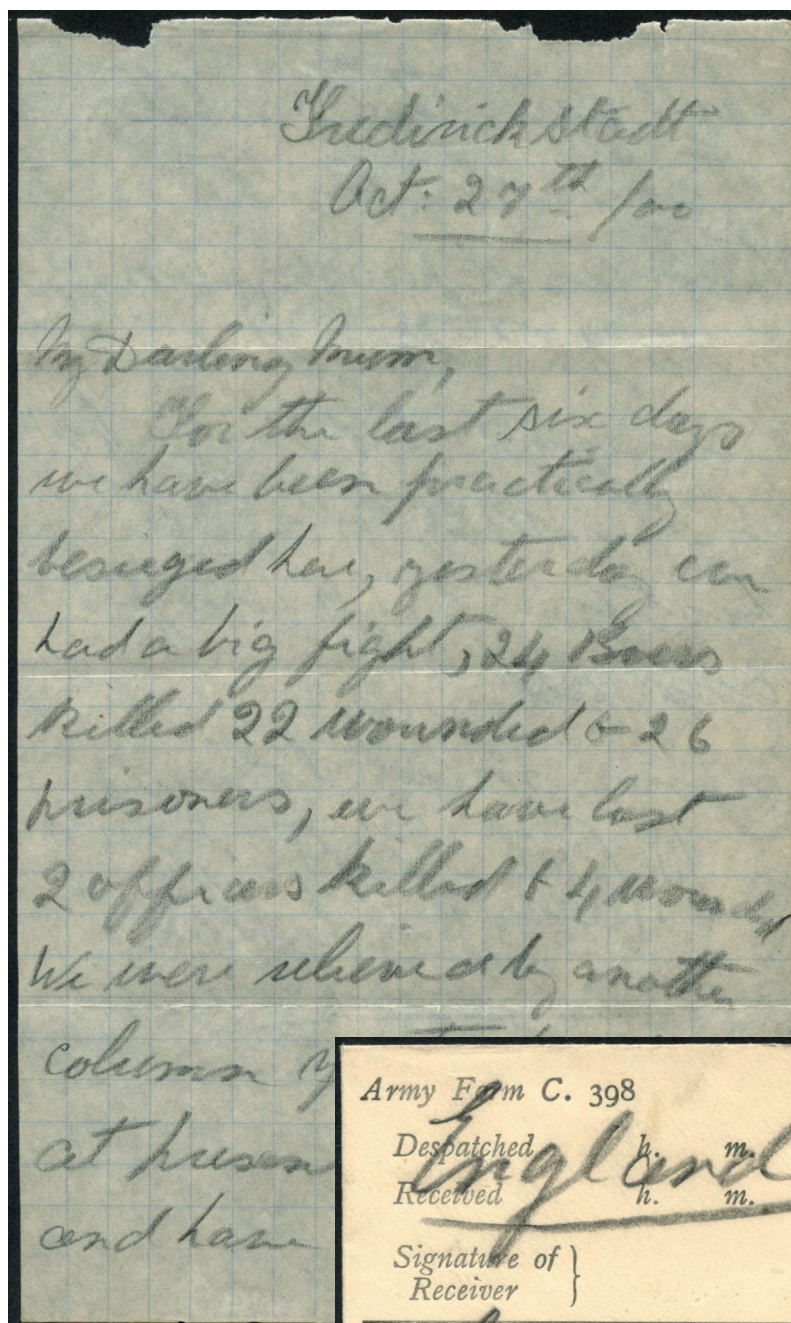
Lytham Hall,
Lytham.



Sir James H. W. Drummond
Bart
Edwinsford
Llandilo I. Wales.

Letter and cover written 12 December 1888 by Madeline Clifton of Lytham Hall to her fiancé, Sir James H.W. Williams-Drummond, Bart, at Edwinsford, Llandilo, concerning the many congratulations and gifts they had received following their engagement to be married, and their meeting the following Wednesday.

Up-rated by additional halfpenny and with arrival handstamp of Llandilo dated 'DE 13 88' on the reverse.



Army Form C. 398

Despatched *England* h. m. M.
Received h. m. M.

Signature of }
Receiver }

Date. *27 Oct 1900* Rate. *1/6*
Act. *27 Oct 1900* Speed. *1/6*

To *Lady Drummond*
Edinburgh
Handelo. S. Wales.

This envelope to be returned to bearer.

Madeline Drummond (formerly Clifton, née Agnew) had two sons and a son-in-law fighting in the Anglo-Boer War, and lost her son-in-law at the British defeat at Magersfontein in early December 1899. At the end of the following October, 23-year old youngest son Caryl Clifton writes in pencil to his mother, saying "for the last six days we have been practically besieged here, yesterday we had a big fight, 24 Boers killed 22 wounded & 26 prisoners, we have lost 2 officers killed & 4 wounded".

He later says "will give this scribble to someone in the train as it passes", and adds "No stamps available. Active Service. C.C.C." on the Army Form C.398 envelope which later received a '27 OC 00' postmark.

brother & poultry
 my dear Joe
 that things will
 be pretty comfortable
 for you my dearest
 I am
 all for -
 so happy here -
 I cannot think how nice
 everybody seems.
 I'll be there always
 I'm up Aunt Gussie
 Uncle John has been
 at shooting, so has deputised me
 to thank you for 8th letter. & he
 begs you will on receipt hurry
 away from Edwina
 shall only expect
 Bit the end of



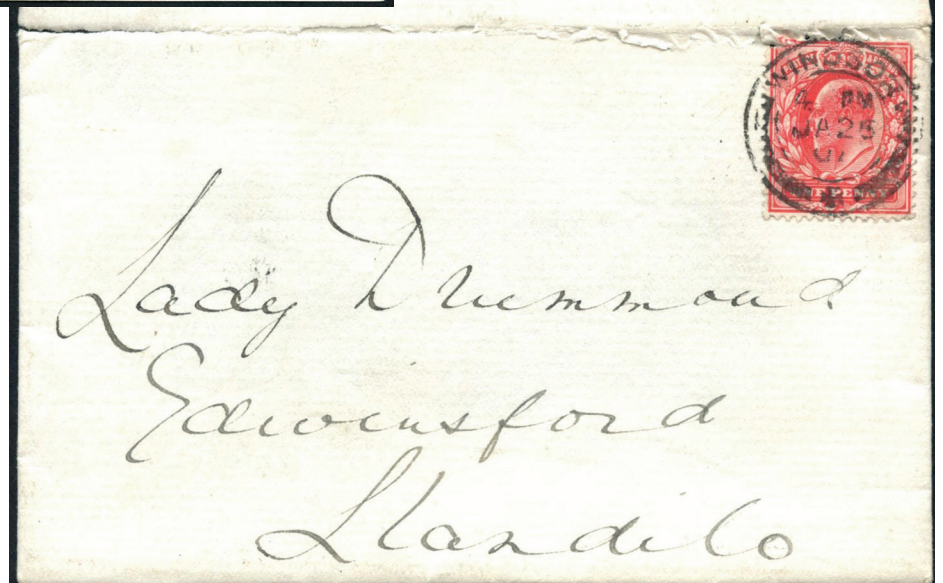
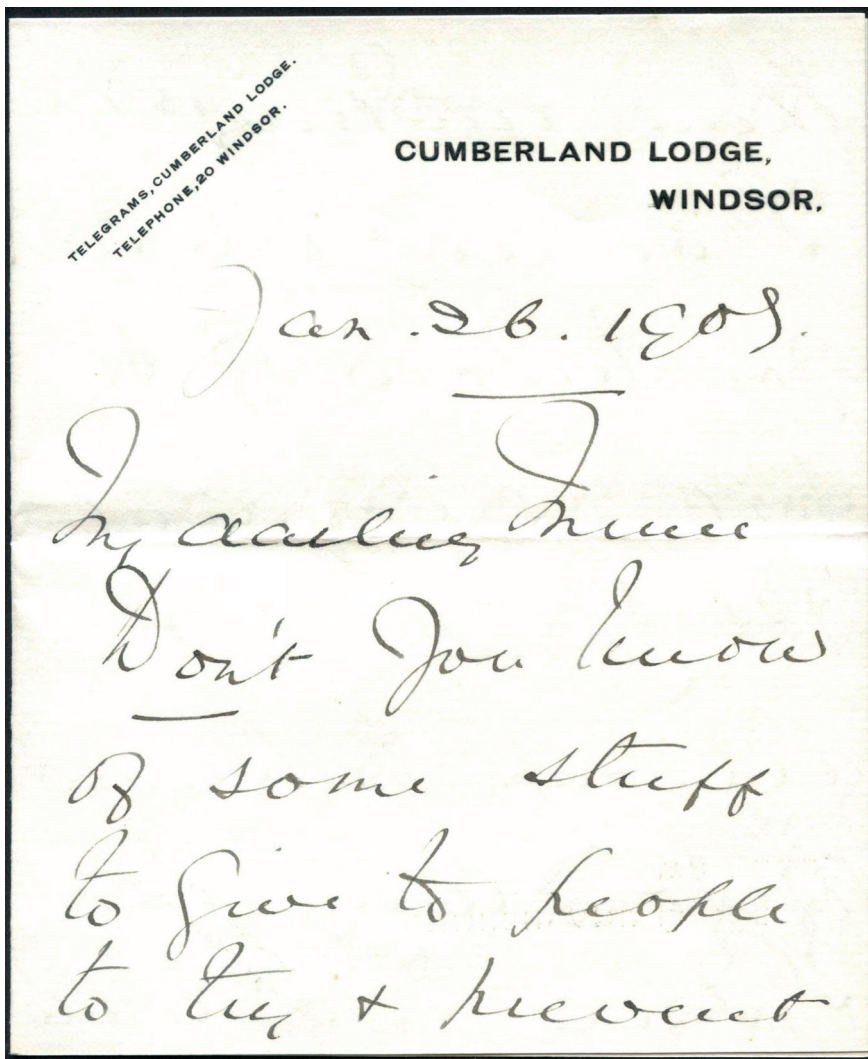
After the death of both parents, Annabella, Joe, Henry and Dudley Drummond were orphans aged from 18 to 9 years, their mother's will nominating her younger sister Edwina Augusta Ferguson-Davie as one of their guardians. Aunt Gussie and Uncle John kept in constant contact as surviving letters show, and gave much advice and help through the years. Their only child, Mary, had died in infancy. This letter of 1875 to Joe from Aunt Gussie is written from the home of the Hood family, St. Audries, where they were staying.



Contemporary postcards for the visit of Helena, H.R.H. Princess Christian, to West Wales to stay at Edwinsford, the home of her friend Madeline Drummond, in April 1905. Lady Drummond had worked tirelessly to lead the drive to raise funds for the West Wales Sanatorium at Alltymynydd, but died in 1907 before it was completed.

Princess Christian returned to open the Sanatorium in 1908, and to honour her friend whose legacy is this building and its purpose to help others less fortunate. It is now an Old People's Home.

The widowed Cecily Cumming-Bruce (née Clifton), Woman of the Bedchamber
to H.R.H. Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, writes from Windsor.



Cecily Cumming-Bruce writes to "My darling Mum" in January 1907 from Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, home of her employer, the Princess Christian (Helena). Apparently, Princess Louise urgently required "some stuff to give to people to try & prevent them drinking Prs. Louise is v. anxious to know of something - so I said I wd. write & ask you". One wonders whether this was for her husband - the marriage was not a happy one.

Knowsley,
Prestol.

Miss Eve.

My dearest Madeline

I must write you
a few lines to wish
you & yours every possible
happiness. for Miss &
the two year. & I hope you
will have but few cares
& no anxieties dear.

During 1895

a family pe

5 tons & day

Knowsley,
Prestol.



Lady Drummond

Edwinstow

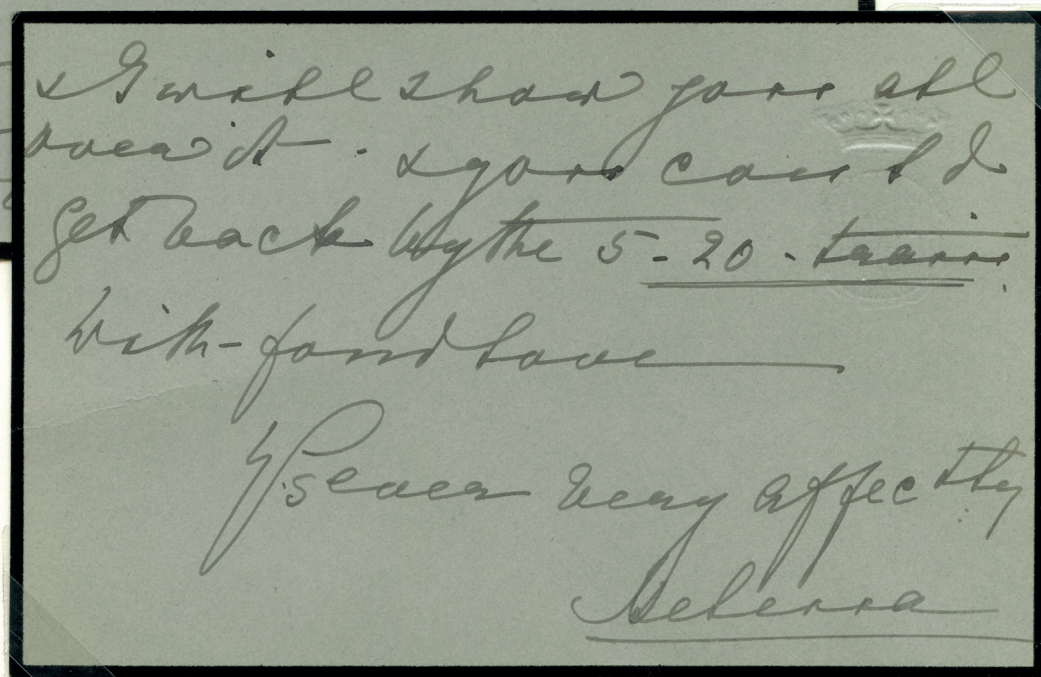
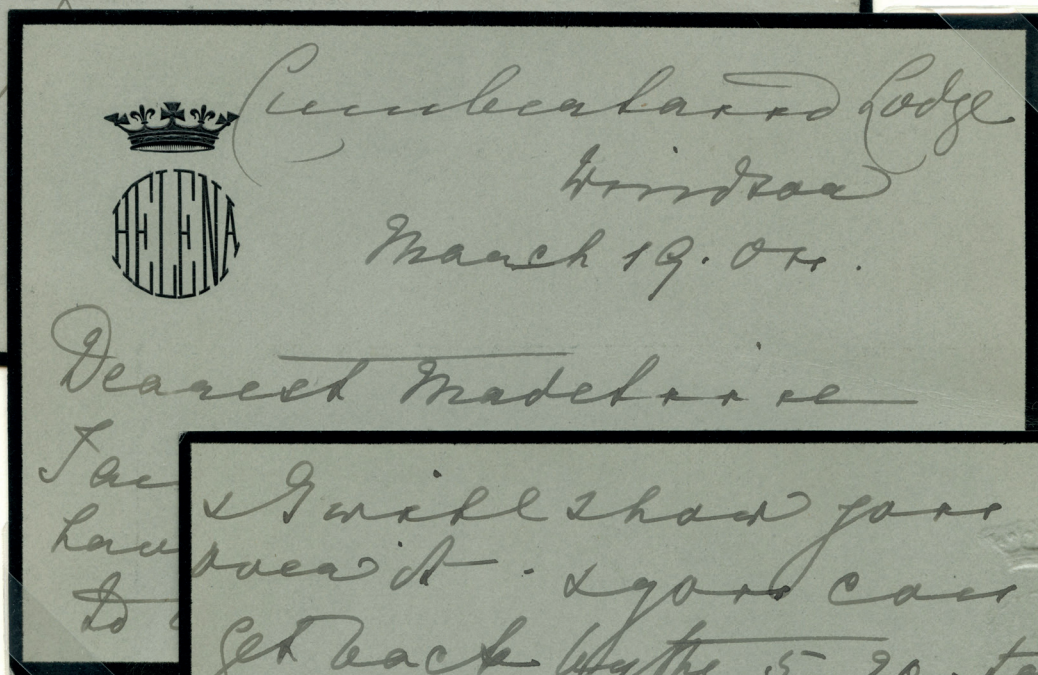
Llandilo

Wales.



Constance, Countess of Derby, writes an affectionate letter to her friend, Madeline, Lady Drummond, on Xmas Eve 1894. Having sealed her letter, she then takes up her pen on Xmas day, and adds a postscript saying "My letter did not go last night so I open it again to thank you very very much for your dear nice letter to me".

The cover received a 'Prescot 626' postmark on 25 December, and travelled that day, as it received an indistinct receiving mark at Llandilo on Boxing Day, 26 December 1894.



If evidence was needed about the special friendship between Helena (Princess Christian) and Madeline (Lady Drummond), then this will serve that purpose. In March 1904, Helena invites her to Windsor and will meet her off the train at the station. She begins "Dearest Madeline" and signs off "With fond love. Yrs. ever very affectly".

Sige Kloof
2-8-02

My Darling Mam,
Many thanks for
your letters & papers. I wonder
what sort of 12th you had. I
do wish I had been at Ed.
We have just heard that
orders have arrived to break
up the 22nd Bn. S. so I am
expecting to go back to
Middelburg to rejoin the
regiment any day; I shant
be at all sorry as it is far
nicer to be with one's own
regiment. I got two long
letters from
mail. Had
Kitchener
when he



Lady Drummond
Edinburgh
Llandilo
England
S. Wales.

Receiving an Army Post Office - Cape Town cancellation on 6 August 1902, and a Vryburg C.G.H. acceptance mark three days earlier, Caryl Clifton writes from South Africa to wish his mother birthday greetings for 22 August. Regrettably, arrival at Llandilo was 24 August, just 2 days too late. With hostilities over, he reports that all is very quiet, but that Kitchener had "timed leaving Africa so beautifully to miss the coronation".



30. 3. 05

My dear Sir

I have been a long
while answering you - but
have been pretty busy
picking up the threads of
the work here -
It is most fascinating - &

I believe
in the
a for



Sir James Drummond Barr
Edinburgh
Leamington
Aberdeen



Earl Cawdor, friend and fellow local landowner to Sir James Drummond, writes to him in March 1905 describing his new work at the Admiralty in Whitehall.

Admiralty postal stationery together with red Official Paid handstamp, and blue Admiralty Whitehall cachet over Cawdor's 'C' initial authorising official paid postage.



An Express Letter rated at 4d. from London to Edwinstford, near Llandilo in Carmarthenshire, in December 1905.

Talbot Clifton, intrepid explorer and subject of *The Book Of Clifton* written in the years after his death in 1928, writes to his step-father, Sir James Drummond, advising that he cannot come to Edwinstford for Xmas as he off to search for buried treasure in the Cocos Islands. He leaves on the "23rd inst.", as he states at the top of the letter, just above his initials of "JTC".



Madeline, Lady Williams-Drummond

Taken from the photograph on the issued postcard for the Royal Visit to South Wales in April 1905, Madeline is shown in her fifties. She was to die at aged 60 years in October 1907.

There are no portraits or photographs of Madeline at Lytham, and those in Edwinsford albums have long been dispersed. This is now the only known extant portrait photograph.

Epilogue

It had been an unexpectedly warm mid-October day with clear blue skies over Carmarthenshire and, apparently, over much of the United Kingdom. By the Afon Cothi next to Edwinsford mansion the stream continued to ripple and burble on, as it had for many centuries, and altering its path so slowly that it was indiscernible to any particular generation. I had become exhausted from clambering over the fallen walls leading into the front of the mansion, and carefully making my way from room to room in the hope of feeling some of the past atmosphere, if not able to see any of the fixtures and fittings which had long gone. There was left merely a trace on some walls of the colouring from past Edwardian days.

I sat down lazily by the southern end of Hopkinson's bridge over the Cothi, and gazed forward slightly to my right to the long outline of this house that had seen so many owners, so many people, so many births and deaths. The light was beginning to go as the early evening approached, and the air became perhaps unusually still without any apparent birdsong or sound. It had always been a quiet place of solitude, apart from the ever-moving river, but even that sound seemed to lessen.

Perhaps my eyes shut as I sat there, or perhaps they didn't. I really cannot say, but I was startled to hear a voice somewhere to my left, saying clearly "Excuse me, what are you doing here?" I peered towards the left, and discerned a woman of perhaps no great height, and of no particular age except neither young nor old. She was at a distance of some yards, and the hat she wore somewhat hid her face, but I noticed that although the day had been warm, and still was not cold, she had her hands concealed in a fur muff, something I had not seen except in old photographs. My mind raced, and I realised in that instant, before I thought to answer, that the voice was both cultured and authoritative.

I sprang to my feet and heard myself in a detached way mumble that I was here to research the history of the house with regard to family letters that had been kept. The woman had paused in her journey towards me and remained some yards away, and I felt that she must have walked up from the turn in the river where the stone bench was placed.

"Letters? What letters?" she said in voice that betrayed a measure of uncertainty concerning not only my response, but my very presence. Before I had time to reply, although time seemed to stand still, she continued "You had better come with me and speak with my husband", and she waved her gloved left hand in front of her towards the mansion. I turned my gaze to where she was pointing, and although the daylight now really was fading and becoming dim, it seemed to me that there was light from within the house, and that the roof really hadn't fallen as I had thought.

She walked away from me, turning back slightly as she moved to ensure I was following. I couldn't quite make out the scene before me, which was still and as if two dimensional, rather than entirely real. We followed the stones of the circular drive on the river side which I'm sure had not been there when I had last walked some hours before, and approached the two wooden doors of the portico entrance, the left-hand one being open.

The woman turned, still only partially visible to me, and said "Wait here" in a voice that did not suggest a request, but more an order and direction. I did as I was bid, and she entered through the door. I was but a yard or two away as she disappeared within, and I heard a man's voice clearly say "Madeline, is that you?", and her reply of "Joe, there's a man here outside about some letters being kept. Do you know anything about that?"....