

Jacke House, Gardens
Friday, 23 January 1862

My dear sisters,

We have to thank our two eldest and youngest sisters in Natal very much for their dear letters Overland to the 22nd December, and per "Imperatriae Engenae" [?] to the 8th January, which letter reached us on Tuesday 20 inst. The intermediate Overland letters have not yet reached us; but they will probably arrive safely in their own time. The last time we wrote to you (Jemmie not being able to write then) was last week, Thursday 15th inst. That letter will probably reach you about the same time with this. We were then since Tuesday (13th) staying at Bathfelder's, the great heat in Cape Town making it advisable to give Jemmie this change. We found the Hotel, which is at present kept by a man called Cogill (son-in-law of Gilman, who keeps the Hotel at Kalk bay) quite empty. We were able to choose our rooms, a large two windowed bedroom, one window looking towards False Bay, and constantly inhaling the fresh sea breezes blowing from that quarter, the other (a glass door) as well as the glass door of the sitting room in view of the chain of mountains, beginning from Devil's Peak and Table Mountain, and ending in those mountains which kept Kalk bay out of our sight. The green winyards of Constantia were almost opposite to us, on the gently sloping hillsides, not far from the Kloof leading to Houts bay. You know perhaps that a verandah runs along the house, which is a great acquisition. A garden with sheltered walks and an arbour, in which we frequently sat reading, for example our whole English mail on Friday, 16th inst., adds to the advantage of the place. There was only one other lodger (so far as we know) during the time that we were there; but as we dined and had all our meals in our sitting room, we had not the honour of making his acquaintance.

To give you a little of our history – from the day of our leaving home, - I must begin to say that between 8 and 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning (13th inst.) we left Cape Town in a carriage and after nearly two hours easy drive we reached Bathfelder's. The day was fortunately not so hot as the following (Wednesday) which was the hottest we have had this season, and was even strongly felt at Bathfelder's where the breeze from False Bay did not blow its refreshing breath that day. In that day we received a letter for Loui from Natal, which Jemmie opened to see if there were any enclosures for her in it, but not seeing any, we enclosed it the following morning in our Overland letter to Natal. The letter was posted before we received those dear Overland letters which ought to have reached us at the same time with Julia's letters of enclosures, which was the only one which we could then acknowledge. What a joy it was that same afternoon about 4 o'clock to receive these dear letters, the non-receipt of which had been such a serious disappointment to us. Many thanks for their dear loving words of sympathy, for which we had naturally been longing. The letters reached us when we were about to go in a cart to the Holding's who have now a farm close to Bathfelder's. We found Agness dunn [?] well, and she walked with us back the grater part of the road through the heath.

The 16th letters from Europe. Jemmie had letters from Aunt Julia, Uncle Marmaduke (very short), Kattie, Mrs. Fisher and a note from Mrs. Russell. She sends all which she can to you to read. I had very good news from home. My brother Theodor had been elected burgomaster of Sobernheim, which is on the Nahe river, and about 4 hours distance per rail from Bonn, and Johannes had the expectation of an appointment to the administration of a _____acy (part orat) [?] a few miles distant from Sobernheim. Hermann (at Heidelberg) and my sisters at home were doing well. From Buenos Ayres I had no direct news, Phillipe and Marie had gone to von Ports at the Lamborombon [?], inland. My mother was still somewhat anxious about Meerde. I had no letter from the Bishop of Natal this time, - nor could I expect any, not having written in October, but he sent me two newspapers (numbers of "Daily Telegraph"/and one magazine "Public Opinion" containing reviews of his book. I had a letter from a son of Baron von Bunsen, expressing much sympathy with the Bishop's work, &c. – I should have liked to have known what Mr. Wolley wrote regarding him; if he had time in this letter to say anything regarding this subject. – On Saturday 17th Jan. thinking it necessary to go to town to make some arrangements, I took Jemmie

in the Mail Cart which was happily not very full, as far as Rondebosch, and left her at Mrs. Pauling, to whom she had announced herself on the previous day. I fetched her again in the afternoon, between 3 and 4 o'clock, in a carriage, and was glad to see that the two drives seemed not to have knocked her up, as the cheering visit to an old Natal friend had done her good. Whilst in town, I had amongst other things gone to old Mrs. Parke's for a quickie in the Gardens to see whether we could not stay at her house for a couple of days next week, found her all empty. – But I must close, having no more time for writing. On the 20th (Tuesday) we received Natal Letters per Imperatrine Engende [?]; and were sorry to see that Loui had at their date not yet left. On the 21st (Wednesday) early in the morning (between 8 & 9 o'clock) had post our English letters. In the afternoon about 4 1/2 o'clock, drove in a carriage which I had ordered from Cape Town (cart driving being too shaking for Jemmie) to Mrs. Parke's. Jemmie received a note that day from Agness excusing herself for not having come to see her, being prevented by the serious illness of Mrs. Holding. – At Mrs. Parke's we stayed two days till yesterday afternoon (I write now Saturday morning 24 January). We were quite alone, On the whole our excursion seems to have done Jemmie a great deal of moral & physical good, and also to me, though I caught a slight cold just at last. – She is, however, not yet quite well and strong; nor can she expect so quickly to get so. In her case, patience is very necessary. In many respects it was delightful again to be at home; everything looked so particularly nice and clean, and bright and it did one good to feel again in one's own home. We hope also soon to be better off with regards to servants – we are hoping soon to get some from the Breakwater. Tom, who is not half so useful, nor even so good a cook as we expected, or as his wages would indicate, is to leave us at the end of this month. We hope to get a nice little woman cook, recommended by Mrs. Parke. It is also likely that we shall engage a good housemaid, instead of the little girl whom we have now, who is nearly as much trouble, as use – not from unwillingness, however, but because she is still so young and inexperienced. We both want good servants too much almost as a prima condition. – We so trust our dear sisters will forgive our frequent neglect in writing them so fully as we ourselves should wish, and punish us in the most generous way, by the more frequently writing us, and the more fully. – But I must close, to dress for breakfast, and after that go to the Library, my holidays being at an end. So good bye, my dear sisters, with best [illeg]
your affectionate brother
Wilhelm

PS Jemmie had hoped to be able to write, but I think my dear sisters will not blame me, for not letting her, when I see she is not just fit. The Mail closes than we had first expected. If I can, I shall forward a parcel containing partly returned enclosures, Natal letters received here for Loui, and a couple of newspapers to your [illeg] having just returned from the country, I do not know whether I can manage this still. We send a registered letter for Loui, giving her English letters. We took them out of their envelopes, in order to save postage. – Jemmie sends her best, best love. She is so sorry, you can think, and I am sorry too, for your and for her sake. But goodbye.

PS I have forwarded the parcel per Mail Steamer "Norman", through the Revd Lion [?] Cachet, told him, - you would call for it or Mrs. Cachet – otherwise he should leave it at Mr. Sanderson's. In great hurry...