

[NOTE: This transcript has not been proof-read.]

Furthermore, because of the way in which the originals from which this transcription was made were photocopied, the correct order of the various sections is unclear.]

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Wakefield, 5 month 4/63

My dear Nephew,
George Pollard;

I wish to acknowledge receipt of thy letter of 11th mo/62 enclosing one also from thy sister. both were acceptable & interesting to us. I might not omit to mention the still more important intelligence that has reached us since, of thy having become a married man. Trusting that thou hast made a wise choice I conclude thy happiness [illegible] will be greatly promoted by this step, adding so greatly to thy responsibility & importance -- however as I know nothing of the age, character, or connections of thy wife, I must say little till further information reaches us, which it will interest us much to receive. It is indeed a great favor & happiness to have

I have nothing new to report about my three sisters or their families. please favour me with a letter soon.

Please hand the enclosed to thy sister. it is sent without any envelope on account of the weight.

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a good wife, & I have reason to be truly thankful that I have been twice favoured in this way. Unmixed happiness is not to be experienced in this life, but the conjugal relation places us in a position to be mutually helpful to each other, & with the Divine blessing, does much to smooth for both the path of life. I hope you will find it so. It is gratifying to learn that thy father was pleased & benefitted in health by his trip to England. I suppose you still live near together & that thou art able to assist in managing his affairs as well as thy own. I have hardly any thing to tell about my wife & self – we get on in a snug, quiet way, perhaps as happily as most, but with little of incident to relate, and generally enjoying pretty good health, tho' neither of us strong. Among my sons, more changes have occurred. Edward & George have dissolved partnership in their business at Birkenhead, & George has a good shop & house at Barnsley, about 10 miles from us – both of them still Grocers. George has most of his trade to make, but he is encouraged so far, and I think with persevering diligence will do pretty well. Edward is lately married to a young woman from Lowestoft - she is not a Friend & thou would know nothing of her connexions, who are all strangers to us. I should have much preferred a different arrangement, but we may do well to hope it will turn out more to his advantage than we can see at present. I wish that George may get a good wife ere long, but I know of no such prospect at present. William seems happy with his partner, & I think he is usefully employed as an Ackworth master. We continue to hear sad news of bloodshed & disorder on your side of the Atlantic, but I hope you escape much inconvenience arising

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out of the present war – large numbers of people are still out of employment for want of cotton in this country, & excitement often arises in consequence of attempts of English ships to run the blockade & other irregularities, but I hope nothing is likely to disturb the peaceful relations between the two countries. We hear of a prospect of your forming a new Yearly mtg. in Canada, do write & tell us all about it I suppose if established it will be more convenient for your frequent attendance. My wife & I hope to have the privilege of attending our Yearly meeting this time. The present is a time of sorry excitement among Friends, when unanimity of sentiment is not always maintained, but if we hold to the New Testament as the written standard of truth & seek help & enlightenment from Above we may hope for preservation, tho' not all seeing alike in every thing.

With our united love to each of the [three] families, I remain thy affectionate uncle,

Wm. [Kitching]

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Wakefield, 2nd month 1st 1884

My dear Nephew
George Pollard

I think thy acceptable letter of 12th month has been in my pocket long enough waiting to be replied to, so I wish to spend part of this evening in preparing a letter. Considering that my 79th year has commenced, I think I enjoy as good health & freedom from suffering as I ought to expect; at the same time I am far from being strong & find lessening readiness in writing & in other employment than when I was a younger man. My sister too fails considerably though in fair general health. Thou asks kindly about our relatives, Thorp. I dont know whether thou remembers

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my brother-in-law, Jonathan Thorp of Hull: today we have information of his death taking place yesterday, in his 90th year: his last illness was not much prolonged, & he seems to have passed away peacefully: his eldest daughter, Hannah has continued to live with him & care for him. It is too soon to decide at all about future arrangements, but I believe that my sister [JK.] and [H.J.] have long thought it probably that if they both survived her father they might arrange to keep house together; my sister seeming now increasingly to need female companionship & care. I suppose thou remembers something of JT's son, James, & perhaps of ~~James Henry~~ Edward – James is quite a respectable Friend, has not been very prosperous as a man of business, but the recent death of his wife's mother tends to improve the circumstances of the family. Edward has not done well in his marriage or otherwise, but I have not heard about him recently. I made a mistake in naming James Henry who is James's son – he went to Australia some years since & has

married a Roman Catholic. Cath^e Brinks is a widow living near Liverpool, well provided for, and having one son & two daughters.

Thou alludes to thy cousin Will^m Henry Smith – I wish I could report well of him – he has repeatedly signed a temperance pledge but too often broken it, though his mother has still useful means of living, with economy, he has sadly reduced the property his father left, & I have not much hope of his future well-doing. My brother & sister [Foster] at Scarboro are in comfortable circumstances without business – their son [illegible] is married, but not to a Friend – they have two children – his sister Mary Hannah

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is a useful, well disposed, single woman. My son William seems fairly successful with his school which he conducts now in nice premises that are his own. his wife's father died some weeks since, & though he was not wealthy, they are entitled to a useful share of the property he has left. W & L have four daughters who are scholars at Ackworth – their son Theodore was to have been a chemist, but his health being unsatisfactory he is now assisting his father in teaching, an occupation he does not prefer. I wonder what Josh Spence Hodgson was doing in Canada – I used to know him – he was naturally a clever lad, I think.

We are having so far on the whole a very mild winter – but little frost or snow & that only at intervals.

I am glad to hear that thy two sons have gone to school, as that will probably promote their welfare & perhaps usefulness. I hope they are happy.

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Wakefield 3rd Mo 6th/84

My dear nephew
George Pollard;

I wish to acknowledge thy kind thoughtfulness in sending the newspaper with report of the trial about your meeting house and ground. It seems sad that such difference & difficulty should have arisen between two parties calling themselves Friends, as to lead to a public trial: at the same time I cannot wonder, if practices had been introduced as described, that some of you thought it was time to withstand them. I am glad we have no such troubles to a like extent in England. It may require some care and self-restraint to avoid feeling hardly towards your opponents, but there will no doubt be a satisfaction in

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cherishing feelings of love and good desires towards those whose movements we cannot approve, sometimes remembering the query, “Thou that teachest another teachest thou not thyself?”

No doubt thou will notice in “the Friend” of this month mention of the death of my brother-in-law Jonathan Thorp at a very advanced age – his daughter Hannah had devoted herself much to promote his comfort, living with him to the last – she & my sister [Th] used to anticipate that if they survived him, being much attached to each other, that they would be likely to keep house together; but on [HJ] paying us a short visit we found her inclined now to prefer a very quiet home alone, or with her sister Mary Elizth, rather than to take charge of her aunt now increasingly feeble, after so many years of care for her (([HJ]’s) father; beside when the question of such a change seemed near, my sister felt affectionately disinclined to leave me – so no change looks likely at present, & we are all willing to hope that is best. It is not surprising that my sister and I both feel the effects of age in increasing weakness, & especially dullness of hearing, though we are favoured with general freedom from sickness & suffering. My late dear son George’s family continue to be objects of much interest to me; the widow, Rosa, (Rosetta is her name) had continued the business after George’s death, three years ago today, but she has quite lately disposed of it, and removed to a house toward the outskirts of Barnsley, where she will have need to exercise economy, and may be glad if I can spare a little occasional help. We hope the change will be favourable to the health of the family. It is a great

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satisfaction that William’s health continues so much better since his removal to Southport & he continues to meet with moderate encouragement in his school.

I suppose thou often sees in the newspapers reports of English public affairs, so will know that we have had on the whole an unusually mild winter, & that general business is considered dull, both farmers & tradespeople [etc.] finding cause for complaint. It is sad to hear of the difficulties and destruction of life & property in Africa & elsewhere, so opposed to both the letter & spirit of the Gospel of Christ. My dear sisters A. & E. are becoming old women, but I have nothing special to report in their circumstances either for better or worse. With much love to thee & all thine in which my sister unites & hoping for a letter;

I remain Thy affectionate uncle

William Kitching

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Possibly thou may have seen more of Alfred Wright since thou wrote. I learn today by “the Friend” that he has returned to England. We like much to receive information regarding thyself, with thy sister & your families, and to hope that whether there are some differences of religious preference among you & yours, that all are endeavouring in the main to lead Christian lives – in faith & faithfulness. I agree with thee in not wishing to have ~~ing~~ singing or formal arrangements introduced in our meetings for worship – you seem to have more innovations than we have in England. I had understood that Herbert Nicholson was likely to settle again in this country, but I hear nothing of him.

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My sister unites with me in much love & in good wishes towards thyself, thy sister & all your dear ones, & hoping to hear again of your welfare

I remain
thy affectionate uncle

W^m Kitching

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Wakefield, 11th month 15th 188[cut off]

My dear Nephew
George Pollard

My memory is not so good as it used to be 40 or 50 years since, but as I do not recollect having written to thee since the receipt of thy acceptable letter of 28 - [YI] I incline to send thee a few lines.

It was pleasant to find thou could report more favourably of both thy own family & thy sister's, & I hope the improvement continues. It is not surprising that after so serious an accident thy son is aware of reduced strength & especially if he has a taste for literary engagements, his becoming

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qualified to teach would seem more appropriate than manual labour – his case as a young man is very different from my own, as I am now within a few days of 83 Yrs old. My hand is not strong, but I am glad to be able to write and to use it (my right hand) in doing some other little matters; & though my strength is small & my life quite uncertain from day to day, I am ~~much~~ favoured to be much free from suffering. My sister, [Th] still lives & is in pretty fair health though feeble, & not leaving her bedroom, sometimes employing herself with a book, while too deaf for conversation & understanding being very deficient, so that my life is a solitary one. I find a double set of artificial teeth very useful.

We have had much less spring & summer weather during those seasons; consequently the produce of fields & gardens has been less than usual in many respects, but as we are greatly dependent on foreign supplies of grain, the cost of our bread loaves is but little enhanced – fine flour here is 1/8 per stone of [14th]. I suppose you have good crops of apples, as Baldwins seem pretty plentiful. Thou mentions your Yearly meeting but without reference to numbers. I suppose the company you meet with is the smaller body, as I do not hear of any uniting of the two - Do you issue an Epistle? We in England are not without differences of sentiment, but do not in many places hold separate

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meetings. I hear frequently of [Ins] Dorland from Canada being at other meetings to satisfaction, but he has not been here yet. I am not aware whether he advocates any peculiar views as a Friend, but he is thought to be a gifted minister.

My grandson Theodore (W^m's son) has left his father's school where he was a teacher, & is now in London in connection with the "Salvation Army" desirous, I believe, to be useful in Christian service; tho I should have preferred if he had remained among Friends. The S.A. spreads wonderfully & I believe is active in Canada. May we & all ours be preserved in the ways of truth & duty to the end.

With love to thy self, sister & all yours
Thy affect^{te} uncle W^m Kitching

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Wakefield 2nd month 9th 1889

My dear Nephew
George Pollard

I believe I have not yet acknowledged the receipt of thy very welcome letter of 11th month, nor that of several reports of your Yrly meet^{gs} for all which I am obliged. I think thou will excuse some delay all the more readily now I have become a decidedly old & failing man, to whom much writing or other exertion is less easy than it used to be. I like to know of your welfare, & am not surprised that thy sister & some of thy own family experience the common lot, in some disappointments, failure of health [etc.], which we may hope

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are trials of faith and patience & not without good, providentially designed. I am not without some such experiences, in the failure of strength, & to some extent of hearing & memory, beside which I have a lonely life now that my dear sister [TK], though still living & generally free from pain, does not now come down stairs at all, & has too little understanding & hearing to admit of conversation; she has a kind & capable attendant, but is unable to stand & walk across her bed-room without help: she reads a little at times but mostly spends much of both day & night in sleep, often with her head on her knees as she sits in an easy chair. My sisters [A.J.] & [E.F.] have become old women; but it is pleasant that we continue to correspond frequently & I am not aware of much change in either of their families. My son's wife continues to suffer with rheumatism [etc.] so often as to be very trying to them; and a remedy is not easily found: they have six daughters & but one son, who I may have told thee, is much attached to the Salvation Army, & has seemed likely to emigrate under peculiar circumstances. Mrs. Booth, wife of the General of the S. Army, about 15 Years ago adopted a boy as if her own – he is now 18 years of age & it is thought best, with regard to his parentage, that he should leave England. The Booths have confidence in my grandson, who is called a lieutenant in the S.A., & they propose that Theo shall accompany the youth – a day was named for the two to embark for New York, since which France has been suggested, & still more

recently a day has appeared fixed for them to leave for Switzerland. I know not why so many changes, but believe

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the youths are still uncertain of their destination, which Theo feels unsettling & trying. I have not met with [Ins.] Dorland, as I stay almost entirely at home and he has not been here; but I hear of his engagements as satisfactory to Friends. I suppose he is not ~~not~~ a member of the Yly meeting you prefer. It would be pleasant to hear that the two parties were able to unite without any deviation from the ways of truth & duty, but being able “in love to serve one another”. We have had a very mild winter so far with little frost or snow, but today is some exception, being extremely cold.

Hoping to hear again from thee at thy convenience & with love to thy own & thy sister’s families,

I remain
thy affectionate uncle
W^m Kitching