

F2/619
19

1890 - 1891

Love Letters of

Harriot Mary Benvie 1864-1938

to her fiance'

John Murray MacDonald 1863-1957

Fourteen letters written by the late Harriot Mary Benvie to her fiance' John Murray MacDonald during the eighteen months prior to their marriage on the 28th October 1891.

Harriot Mary Benvie was the only child of the Rev., James Benvie. She was born at Warrenford, England. on 12th September 1864 and died at Sydney, Australia on 31st March 1938 aged 73 years.

In 1867 her father emigrated to Australia with his 3 year old daughter to take up a position as Minister to the Presbyterian Church, West Maitland, New South Wales. a position he was to hold until his death on 6th June 1902. Harriot (Hettie) first lived after her marriage at Ben Ean, Vineyard, Pokolbin. a vineyard founded by her husband in 1885; following its sale to C.F.Linderman in 1909, John and Hettie moved to Raglan Station, Raglan. Queensland. in 1912. Raglan a Central Queensland cattle property remained her home until her death in 1938.

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1.	5/5/90	The Manse, West Maitland.	to J.M.MacDonald, Glenmore, Rothbury.	Stamp, N.S.W. 2p blue Emu, 100 years.
2.	30/6/90	"	"	Missing.
3.	13/10/90	"	"	N.S.W. 2p blue Emu, 100 years.
4.	14/11/90	"	"	N.S.W. 1p mauve Sydney Cove, 100 years.
5.	24/11/90	Ardrossan House, Wynyard Square, Sydney.	"	N.S.W. 2p blue Emu, 100 years.
6.	13/2/91	The Manse, West Maitland.	"	"
7.	20/2/91	"	"	"
8.	9/3/ 91	Ardrossan House, Wynyard Square, Sydney.	"	"
9.	16/3/91	The Manse, West Maitland.	"	"
10.	3/7/91	"	"	N.S.W. 1p mauve Sydney Cove, 100 years.
11.	17/8/91	"	"	N.S.W. 2p blue Emu, 100 years.
12.	4/9/91	No address	"	"
13.	18/9/91	The Manse, West Maitland.	"	"
14.	26/10/91	"	"	"

Married 28th October 1891.

had so many wet days -
and disappointments.

Please give Syd my love;
& tell her ^{1st of May} I got her letter
today, ^{2nd of May} I did remember
Ralph's birthday, ^{3rd of May} her
kissamine is still alive,
and ^{4th of May} to be sure & come
on Friday -

Kate Black is coming on
Thursday if not too wet,
and will go home again
on Saturday morning -
Not a long stay -

Isn't it? Left Saturday
that Mr Pollock is

The Brause
West Maitland
May 5th 1890

My dearest Jack

This must
surely be the age for
disappointments, I hope
you feel very good after
two. I cannot say I feel
any better, indeed I feel
rather bad tempered - We
are so tired of the rain.
I was sorry you and
Syd could not come in
on Thursday, even had

going to Glenmore? Your
Mother said something
about it on Tuesday -
No one could have been
nicer to me, than your
Mother, she said she
hoped I would consider
myself as "one of the
family" - Dr. Inneson
came to say goodbye on
Tuesday, and congratulated
me; Papa was standing
by and said "If you
come into the other room
you will see her Mother
-in-law" - You may be



that her doors will
always be open to her
and to her friends -
Please deliver this
message.

I saw Mrs Terras in
town this evening, but
we were both in a hurry
so I had not much
chance of a talk with
her.

I have no news - yes
I have though - Mr Fraser
is coming up on the 8th
and will probably stay
a month, though he

says he is going to Longman
for part of the time - Dr
Frackelton is going away
for a month's holiday, and
the dear creature "can't"
stay in the house by himself
(so he says) so will inflict
his society on us - I am
thankful I will be out of
some of it.

Goodbye until Wednesday
fondest love and every
good wish from
your loving
Nettie

Love to Syd -

2.

tomorrow night on her way
from the Lake. We had
had hoped to be able to write
to you today and tell you that
my teeth were out - but they
are still as fast as ever.

I asked Dr Blackwell on Friday if he would come on Saturday morning and take him out.

He came and after looking at my teeth his hands began to shake and he said "To take out that back tooth properly I must get a good grip and take it out very slowly."

You may imagine that I did not feel any braver after that but I told him I'd have one out. When he came to work the ether spray the thing would not act, the ins

M^r-Logan
said M^r-Doyle
was here today - M^r-D-
asked me if I was out yesterday. He
said "it is a good thing for you would
have been blown right away". M^r-Logan
immediately said "I suppose he would be
have been blown away". Here he raised
his hand & wilderness
yellow dipping C. 13th 1890
my nearest back

As you will be
 almost alone tomorrow I will
 send you a few lines to cheer
 you up. Your Mother
 and Aunt were here this
 morning on their way to
 East India Land. I was so
 pleased to see them I had
 been hoping your Aunt
 would come before she
 left. What a nice lady
 she is. I don't wonder you like
 her. I am sure I should
 if I saw much of her.
 Your Mother is to stay here

Westbury.

tube had burst - I was rather
relieved and I am sure he
was very much relieved. I
should have seen his hands
shaking. I asked him to
sound my heart and see if
I might have the gas. He took
a considerable time over it -
five minutes or so. And then
said there was no reason at
all why I should not have
gas - that I had no more
the matter with my heart -
than I have had all my life.
That is a great satisfaction.
I can test you. The Dr. visit
did me no good, I have felt
rather queer ever since, I suppose
my nerves have not recovered
from the winding up I gave
them on Saturday.

to go to Sydney next month and
have the old things out. I hope
God will be there then, and I
have promised to go and see
your Aunt, and I might feel
thy by myself unless you take
it on me and come down
too. I know what you will think
when you read that. I do not
like to think about yet. I
hope the insecticide was
of use. Your Aunt said you
had taken a supply up to the
Ridge. If I don't stop you
will get tired reading this and
I know you have all the papers
to read. Hoping to see you
on Thursday - if you have
been run away with.
Believe me to be
Love from your loving

Will you take the plan
to Sydney and see what
George Poole says about
it?

I wrote to
Ayd this morning and
told her she might see
you on Monday.

I have got over my fear
of the gas today, but cannot
say how I will feel on
Tuesday morning.

Goodbye dear, until Monday.
Best love from

Your truly loving
Nettie

The Grange
West Maitland
Nov. 14th 1890

My dearest Jack

Of course
you think this is to say
that I am not going
to Sydney on Monday.

but it is no such thing.
It is to say how very
winded I am with myself
for not refunding the
money you lent me.

I meant to get another

ten shillings from you
and give you a sovereign
in exchange. but somehow
I forgot all about it, and
never remembered it until
about half an hour
after you had gone, when
I went into the drawing
room and found the
sovereign on the little
table. It has worried
me ever since. I do hope
you did not need it.
Why didn't you remind
me? Mind you do on

Monday for I might
forget! You will need to
charge interest on it.
You will be pleased to
know that Papa has a
great opinion of you;
he was sounding your
praises last night, and
you may be sure I did
not contradict him.
He has taken a great
fancy to that plan
though he thinks it rather
dear. but he says Mr.
Pender must be right.



J. M. MacDonald Esq.
Glenmore.
Rothbury.

boy is waiting to post this
so I must close - expect
to see you on Thursday -
Lovest love from
Yours ever
Hattie

Adrianam House
Hymyard Square
Sydney
Nov. 24th 1890

My dearest Jack

If you have
any objection to hear from
me just hear this up.

You will be pleased, I am
sure to hear that my
dentistry business is all
finished, except the new
teeth, and of course that is
nothing. I feel as light as

possible now it is all over.
I scarcely know myself
without having something
to dread. The stopping only
took three quarters of an hour
it was a little unpleasant
but not painful.

To my great astonishment
Papa appeared here at dinner
time. I could hardly believe my
eyes when he walked in.
He leaves again to-morrow night
but I remain until Friday
as I promised to wait for you.
So if you are very good

I will allow you to come &
see me on Thursday. I hear
that you were in Maitland
last Friday.

I had a very pleasant
time at Petersham on Thursday.
What a dear old lady your
Grandmother is!

What do you think? Mr.
Fraser came to see me on
Thursday; & on Saturday
he came and took me to
Raudwick and Waverley.

What next? He was so very
amiable too. The black



J. M. MacDonald Esq.
Glenmore,
Rockbury,
Via Brantford.

Hoping to see you very soon
with best love
Remain

Yours truly
Helene

Now don't carry this about
in your pocket for weeks

The Grange
West-Dracutt
Feb. 13th 1891

My dearest Jack

We are all very
much concerned at your
non-appearance today, I do
hope your arm is not the
cause. Papa says it looked
very bad on Wednesday and
thinks you ought to come
to Dracutt and see a
Dr about it. I am living
in hopes of seeing you soon
but am writing this in case
you do not come. If your
arm continues swollen and
sore do come down and
have it seen to, just to please



me, I am so anxious
about it and I am sure
it has been bad quite
long enough - It will be
very awkward for you too, if
it is sore at visiting time.

Papa and Mrs Bencie
arrived safely on Wednesday.
They enjoyed their little trip
immensely, and say they
are going back again Saturday.

Mrs Bencie wrote to
your Mother this morning
meaning to send the letter
by you; in it she said I
was calling you names
for not coming, if you are
told that, you need not
believe it all. I said was
"If he does not come he'll
be a nasty mean thing" - not

very bad names!!

Do come soon dear, it'll be
an age since I saw you; and
you need not mind even if
you can't eat your food.
I'll do it for you, I think I
could manage to feed you if
it came to that.

If your arm gets any worse
you must come and let
either Mr Lipscomb or one
of the Drs look at it. So mind
you obey orders -

Give my love to Syd and
many thanks for the message
she sent me; she will probably
hear from me shortly -
There was a message delivered
to ~~you~~ me from you, but I am
rather doubtful about its
origin -

cannot come I will try and
not be too disappointed, and
will expect you on Tuesday.
I know a great deal depends
upon the grapes, so far you
have had nice days (if your heart
is the same as ours) but
it looks very like rain
this evening and I fully
expect to see it pouring
tomorrow, though for your
sake I hope it will keep
off for a week or so.
Mrs. Ellis was here yesterday
and was asking how your
hand was. She said they
heard about it last week.
We had our long talked of
conference on Saturday in
the East Wainland Church
on Wednesday night. There
was a fair attendance,
nearly all being the East-

people, only four of our folks
besides the choir.

I wonder if I will know
you when I see you? It seems
a very long time since you
were here. Be careful of
your hand and don't try and
do everything yourself; let others
do it for once.

Give Ed my love and thank
her for her letter the other
day - The basket was
sent to Allandale yesterday.
I hope Ed got it.

kindest love to yourself
From your own loving
Hattie

at Newcastle, then Oxford
 again. At Reading, I
 had an idea that I had
 not seen the last of him
 and I was right for when
 my cab stopped here, the
 whole family were waiting
 in the door. They either
 to me at table and Mr. H.
 tries to patronize me but
 it fails rather flat. I don't
 believe in it at all. It
 he will find his business
 cannot get on without him
 for long.

I have a splendid big
 room on the top floor. Quite
 a treat after the stuffy room
 I usually get here.

Mrs. Beare is to come
 down on Thursday, and

we went to the Grosvenor Gardens
 and I stayed at the Grosvenor
 March 9th 1891

My dearest Jack

You see I
 have got through the tunnel
 safely. I had a pleasant
 trip, and am not nearly so
 tired as last time. I suppose
 I was so scared that I could
 think of little else but rest.
 I have not been to Mr.
 Spencer yet. am due there
 at three o'clock.

The Harrisons - Mr. & Mrs.
 & Moore (!!) were in the train
 not in the same carriage
 thanks be, I saw Mr. H.



He will both return on
Saturday - I mean to
try & get to see your
Grandmother on Wednesday.

It is nearly 3 o'clock, so
I must close.

Give my love to Aged, & tell
her I fancy she owes me
a letter. Let me know
if you can't come in on
Monday.

Love & dear from
your own loving little

No. 1

Hattie

you want anything out
of him you must be
explicit. He told me to write
at once and say that it
must be a misunderstanding
on your part as ~~you~~ he did
not know you wanted to say
anything about it. I told him
you could get the money ^{from}
your uncle, and he says it
will not be a "mill stone"
round your neck as the
other money is sure.

I suppose you will feel a
bit better pleased now.

Papa thinks you must have
been thinking so much on
the subject that you thought
he could read your thoughts.
I am writing this in a hurry
I hope you will be able to
understand it. I will

The Grange
West Maitland
March 16th 1891

My dearest Jack

After you left this
evening Papa asked me if you
were disappointed at the business
not being finished. I said you
were but even more so at him
saying we had better wait a
bit. He says he did not
mean ~~it~~ to say that you
ought not to borrow the money.
He also says he has no
objection to your so doing
for he says you may hit
the station money before the
house is finished. He told
me to tell you that if ever

Handwritten notes at the top left of the page, including the word "March" and some illegible scribbles.

Main body of handwritten text on the left side, written in cursive and mostly illegible due to fading and slant.

Main body of handwritten text on the right side, continuing the cursive script. It includes phrases like "write to you soon" and "accept the".



The Inance
West-Maitland
July 3rd 1891

My dearest Jack
That horrid
man has not sent those
photos, so unless they come
before post-time tonight you
will have to wait a little
longer. I am very much
annoyed about it for he
promised so faithfully - as
for Mrs Benrie. She is simply
wild with him. She has
gone to see him this afternoon
and before she left she
said she would "kick him
downstairs" if he hadn't
any friends - Can't you

See her? Alice has gone
too - to catch him as he
falls. she says -

I hope you reached home
safely on Tuesday, and
that no questions were asked
and no remarks passed
about your coat.

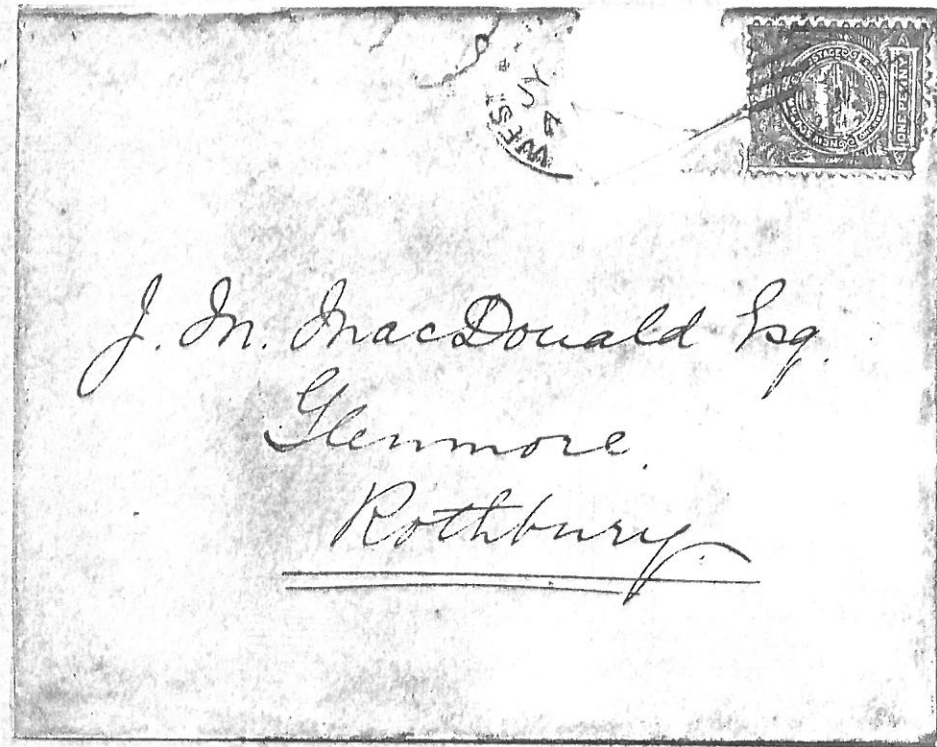
I have the house quite to
myself this afternoon, even
Charlotte is out. My sister
Sophy is to be married on
Tuesday week, and Ch. is
to have a fortnight's holiday
if she can get someone to
take her place - so I am
out-looking about.

Alice goes to Porphyry on

either Monday or Tuesday,
the Mrs. Becks leave town
so we will have a quiet
~~week~~^{time} next week.

I suppose this weather
suits Mr. Russell: it
has been lovely the last
few days. Can you
remember the size of the
dining room? I fancy it
is 22.6' x 14 - but am not
sure. I loan asked me & I
could not tell him. You might
find out before next Thursday
please. I know the other three
rooms are all 16 x 14 -
Goodbye dear. Best love from
your loving
Dettie.

nowhere else - Can't you
any finished -



J. M. MacDonald Esq.
Glenmore.
Rothbury.

The Innes
West Maitland
August 17th 91

My dearest Jack

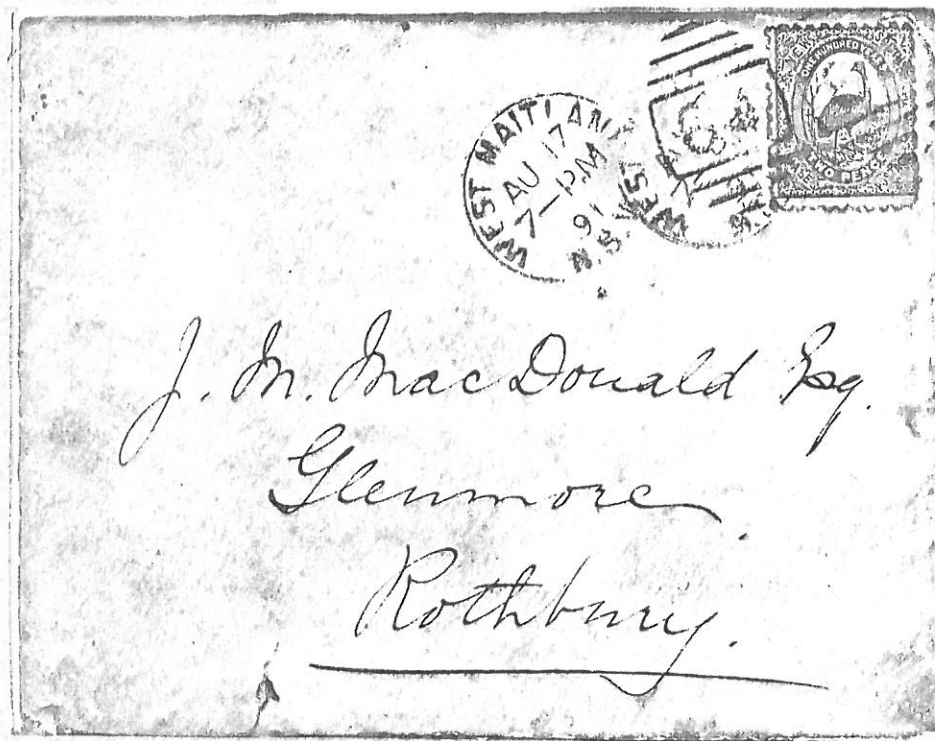
You see I
am safely home again.
They had almost given me
up! Papa said "Where's
Jack?" Mr. Pender
came down this morning
to see me. He wanted me to
choose the marble for the
dining room mantel piece.
He brought two patterns one
black & white & the other
grey ~~and~~ with white. Terms
I chose the latter. I think
it the prettier. Both were he

same price - 70/-
He & Papa had a chat
about the house and he
said that he told Russell
not to put the weather boards
up until the middle of the
month & he supposed he
was beginning them today.
Of course he did not know
anything about them being
already up; & you may be
sure I did not enlighten
him. He told Papa that
the house would not be
fit to go into until the
end of October; so he
has changed his mind
since he was up. He also

said he would have to go
up again soon. The end
of October is not nearly so
bad as November - perhaps
he may change his mind
again and let Russell
finish sooner.

I hope you reached home
in safety on Saturday
and that you ^{& Tom} are enjoying
your loneliness.
Fondest love dear
from your own
sorrowing
Attie

I chose the latter. I think
it the prettier. Both were the



J. M. MacDonald Esq.
Glenmore
Rothbury.

My dear
Don't you
admire it?



Friday
Sept. 14 - 1891

My dearest Jack

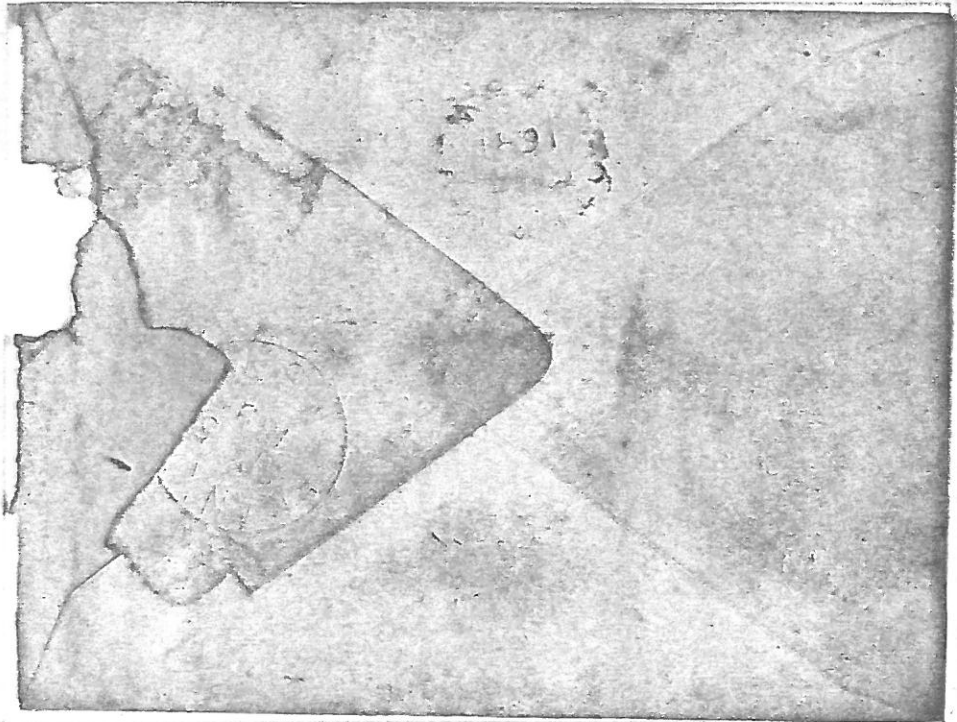
I suppose you wonder what is the matter now, but I thought I would send you a line to tell you that our friend J. H. P. is in a great fix about you not calling yesterday. He stayed in his office the whole day waiting for you. Must it be he have been tired? I only saw him to day but our other friend Billie S. helped me this morning. I said "for H. didn't he go to see Mr. Pender? What could have kept him?" I told him Mr. P. wanted to see him. So you will have to take the blame. Don't you think you ought to write him a few

WEST WATTS
SEP 17 - PM
1891



J. H. McDonald Esq.
Glenmore
Rothbury

lines, he might turn spiteful & stop
Russell. Suppose you come down by train
next week & take him back with you: if he ^{must}
stay all night - or tell him about the coach
again - I saw you yesterday about
1/4 to 6 - but you were too proud to take any
notice of me - you were going into Ed Blair's
I won't tell you where I was - you can wait till
Thursday for that information - Miss P. did
not come to practice last night so I did not hear
of any of your roughy doings yesterday. She is to
have her teeth drawn today if she can stand it.
She is braver than you (or me either). Goodbye dear
and you make your peace with J.H.P. Your own loving
Hector



love to Syd & tell her I hope
to hear from her soon.
Best love to yourself, & can
from your down home
Bettie

The Grange
West-Dracuttland
Sep. 18th 1891-

My dearest Jack
Papa told me
today that he means to
furnish the servants room
for us as well as the four
other rooms. Thus leaving
you only the kitchen. Indeed
I fancy he would have furnished
that too, only I chanced to
say that you meant to get
Mr. Hutchison to make the
dresser & tables. I thought
I had better tell you at
once, in case you made
any arrangements before

We had a good attendance at the "Young
people's class" on Wed. night. It was a
pity you did not stay as there were eight
girls (some not very young) & three boys (Cousin
Papa) - James & Ben came over early to
light up the stove - because he thought I
would be otherwise engaged - Kind regards to
The Carminchaes were here yesterday
& Mrs. C. ~~she~~ said she would not be
come to the wedding without her father &
that will be the less - I must stop now
as you will be tired reading this - Give my

next Thursday - it would
be a pity to have more furniture
than we can use -
I hope you reached home
safely on Wednesday -
I have not seen Dr. Tindley
since, I think he must be
still away - Charlotte
informed me yesterday that
the plasterers had gone up
& that they are greatly taken
with the vines - never saw
so many before -
I fully expected to hear
from Lydia today but
have been disappointed -
perhaps she intends coming
to see me tomorrow.

go down with mine; please
yourself about it. it will
not make any difference
to us. There will be a cab
for the luggage & we will
go in the phaeton.

Mr. Fraser is as nice
as ever he can be &
takes the greatest interest
in every parcel which
arrives. The last present
sent me (or us) is a beauty
marble clock from Mr.
McDougall. On counting
the things today I find
there are just forty counting
the things I am to get
tonight. I am pleased to
say that as yet I do not

feel the least bit nervous
but by 14 to 8 I will feel
pretty shaky.

Mr. Sloan paid me a
visit on Saturday & gave
me a great description of
all his doings at Ben Can.

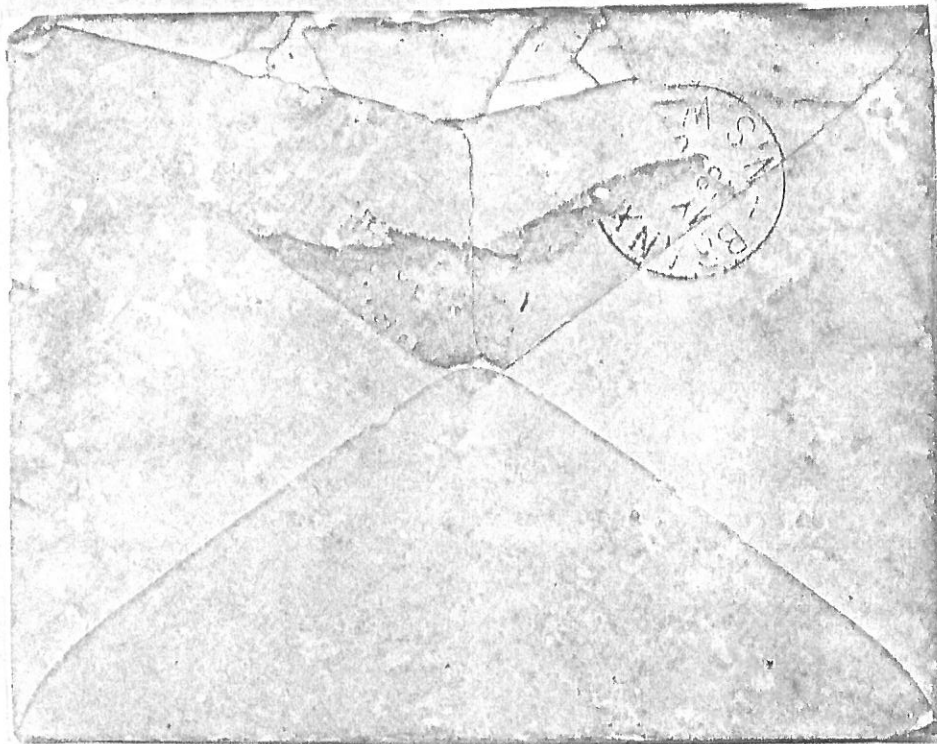
Mr. Pender was here today
& wanted to see you about
the finishing of the house.
He had a list of the things
to be done, also some receipts
of yours. I told him to give
them to me; I will pack them
away & give them to you at
Toronto. That reminds me

I suppose it is all right
about going there. You might
send me a message by post
or a note. Because the luggage
will need to have the

you managed it, it would scarcely have been wise to go to the Show, the Ground was in a dreadful state mud up to the folks' insteps. Needless to say I did not venture.

I suppose Syd got my letter on Saturday. I hope she will come on Friday and you too, of course. I have made a nice little plan with Mrs Berris. It is this - She will take Syd and Miss Black to the Tea meeting, and you

and I will have our tea quietly at home. She says she supposes you will have no objection to staying away from the Tea, as you would be well stared at, if you went. I suppose you will not be in before Friday, if you feel inclined just come when it suits you, even if we do not know beforehand. I may be out, but you won't mind waiting a little. It seems an age since last Monday I suppose because we have



sure I did not go into
the other room.

This is a real long letter,
not that there is much
in it.

Hoping to see you some
day soon

Believe me to be
yours loving
Lettie

The Maunse
West Maitland
June 30th 1890

My dearest Jack

Just a
few lines to wish you
"many happy returns
of the day" and may
each year be happier
than the last.

I wrote to Syd in such
a hurry on Friday
that I quite forgot to
tell her that Mrs Beane
sent her love and said

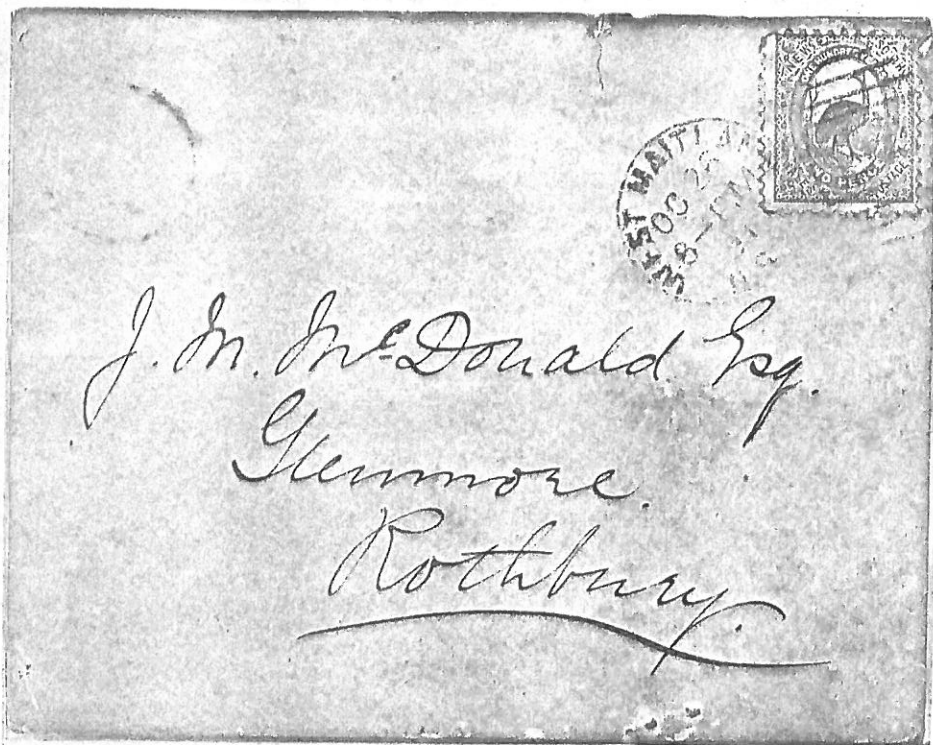
tell her that Mrs Bennet
sent her love and said

WEST WATF
JUL 3
8-11
20

J. M. MacDonald Esq.
Glenmore.
Rothbury

but from Syd's letter today
I presume you have - Give
her my love still her I was
very pleased to get her letter.
Best love from ~~your~~ ^{Attie}.

The baggage room - Perhaps
you would prefer to bring
it here; if you do, it can



SCHEDULE E.

(19 VICTORIA No. 30.)

(COPY OF) CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE.

Insert Christian and Surname at full length.

Insert Designation.

Insert Christian and Surname of the Husband at full length.

Insert Designation, Residence, and Condition of Husband.

Insert Christian and Surname of the Wife at full length.

Insert Designation, Residence, and Condition of Wife.

I, James Benzie being

Presbyterian Minister of West Maitland

do hereby Certify, that I have this day, at the Presbyterian Church

West Maitland duly celebrated Marriage between

John Murray McDonald

Vignerou, Ben Ean, Scholten

Bachelor and

Harriet Mary Benzie

West Maitland

Spinster

after Declaration duly made as by law required.

DATED this twenty-eighth day of October 1891.

James Benzie

{ Signature of Minister

Signatures of Parties to the Marriage

John Murray McDonald

Harriet Mary Benzie

Signatures of Witnesses

A. McDonald

James Donald