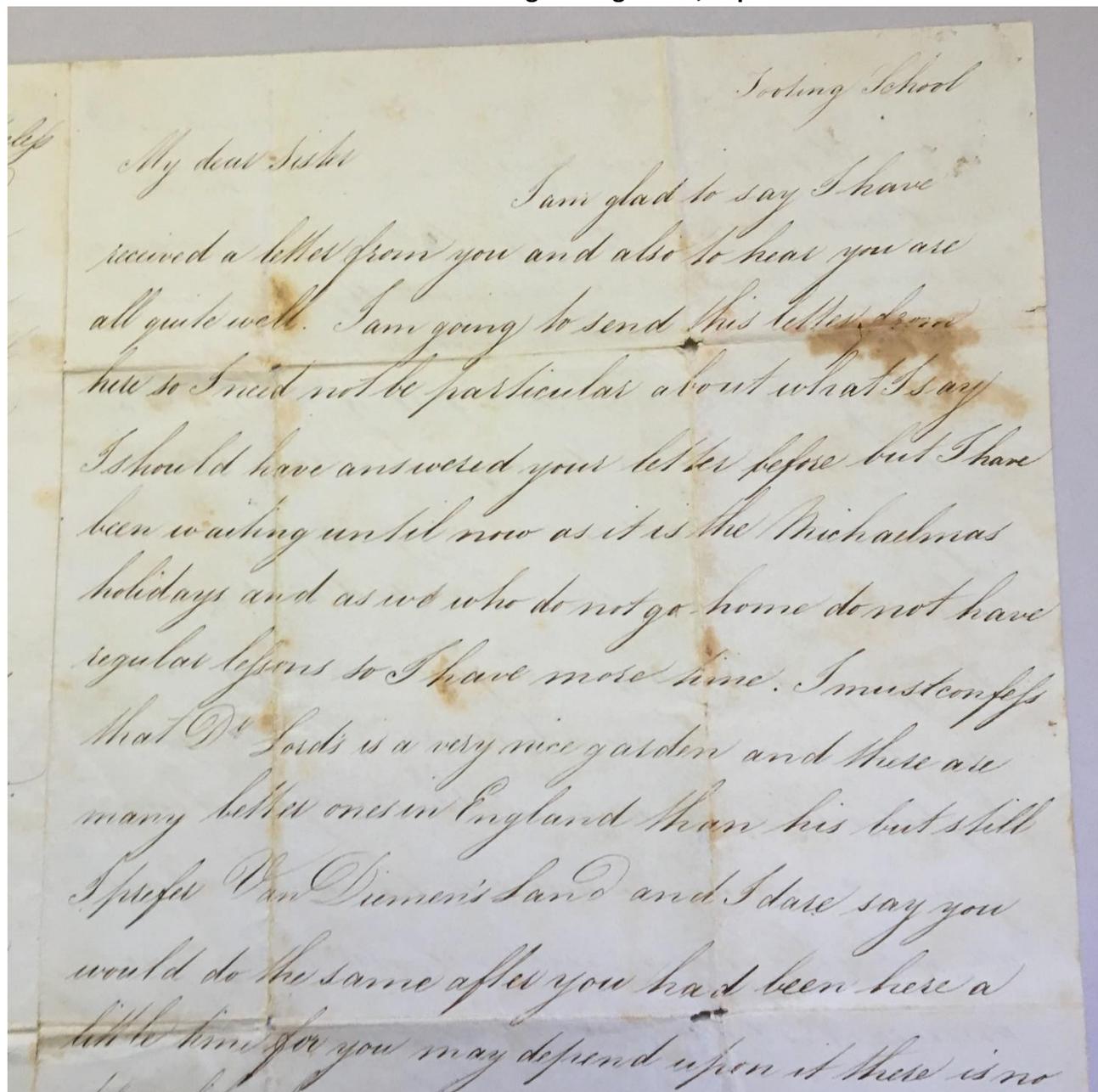


Annotated Letter Number 4 : Thomas Weeding writing home, September 1846



Tooting School

My dear Sister,

I am glad to say I have received a letter from you and also to hear you are all quite well. I am going to send this letter from here so I need not be particular about what I say.

I should have answered your letter before but I have been waiting until now as it is the Michaelmas holidays and as we who do not go home do not have regular lessons so I have more time. I must confess that **Dr Lord's is a very nice garden** and there are many better ones in England than his but still I prefer Van Diemens Land and I dare say you would do the same after you had been here a little time for you may depend upon it there is no place like home. I am glad to hear James is so industrious and I think it would have been better if I had been a little more so when I was with you but I must endeavour to make amends in my mind for the time which I which I lost with my hands.

I had read about **the affairs of Sidney** [sic] in the newspaper before your letter arrived but I am much obliged to you all the same for telling me. I think it was very natural that the natives fought against the English if it is true that the English took some land from them without paying for it and it was very good of them to allow the English to bury their dead and not destroying their chapel etc for we must consider that they are not civilised as we are. I daresay the English will have some trouble to conquer them again I am very anxious to know how it will all end and if you will tell me when you answer this letter I will be very much obliged to you because it may not be advertised in the paper here.

I am very anxious to know what Mother thinks about my going to India. Please to tell her that I leave it to her and Mr Weeding to determine whether I am going to India or not if she likes I will go but I should like to come and see you first but I will sacrifice that wish if it is not agreeable to her. I think I asked you about my going to India in that letter which you received with James Morris' but if I did you did not answer accordingly which leads me to believe that I am going only you do not like to tell me in case I should be disappointed if that is the case you need not be afraid for to tell you the truth I should like to go if I could come and see you first and if is not convenient for me to come see you first - it will be all for my own good. I am glad to say Mrs Barkley is quite well she wants me to come and see her next summer but it is not very likely that I shall go as I daresay I shall have to go with Mr Weeding and I am very near sure that he will never have time to go so it appears rather a hopeless affair. I like Mrs Barkley very much and I daresay you would do the same if you knew her and I hope you will favour her with a letter now and then as I am sure she will be very glad to hear from you. Mr Batchelor has heard from Mrs Clonder but he has removed to Port Philip I am invited to go to her house next Christmas holidays. I have not heard from Mr Weeding lately but I daresay he is quite well as he generally is so.

Give my love to Mother Fanny James and Uncle and believe me to remain

Your affectionate Brother Thomas Weeding

Please to tell me about the Hunting Ground folks

“Dr Lord's is a very nice garden”

The Tooting School was one of many small 'public' schools in 19th century England which offered a classical education for young British gentlemen. By the time Thomas Weeding was enrolled at Tooting, Dr Lord would have been retired, but the school was still known locally as “Dr Lord's School, Tooting”



Dr Lord, Master of the Tooting School, painted ca 1810



Fairfield House, Tooting, formerly Dr Lord's School

“the affairs of Sidney”

In other letters, Thomas spells Sydney (the city) as Sidney, so the reference here is a bit confusing. Given the sheer size of the British Empire in 1846, he could have been referring to frontier violence in New South Wales, or indeed anywhere in the British Empire.

If you think you have an answer, please contact Alan Townsend at atownsend@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au