

"1873-80: letters from America to Emily and William Hall,"
[from Agnes and Henry Billups]

Derbyshire Record Office
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Letter 31:

Yeagertown feb 6, 1880

My Deair Syster And brother
i now rit these few lines to you
hopen thay will find you All
in good hlath [health] witch i Am
Sorry to Say it lives me with
A house full of Sickness for
All the Chrildren has had the
Hoopincoff two is better now
but the baby And the next to
him is very bad but that is
not the worst i Am Sorry to
Say My poor Deair Wife is
no bette but is worse She was
Gettin better we thought but She
Got A little frish colg And it
Thru hor right back into hor bed
Deair Syster it is not the Cancer All
to Gether She has Got the
consumption As well And Every
Day She Seem to me to Get thinner
She Cannot Eet hardley Anything
And wen She Dos Eat it coms
up A Gain i told hor i was going
to right to you And Ask hor wot
She had to Say And these is hor
words Give them all my best And
tell them i Am no better And if
thay heair of My death to not be
So prised but i tell hor wile
thire is life thire is hopes but it
is poor hopes for me Mrs Smith
is with us Again but i Dont no how
long She will be for he is Out
of work now now Deair Syster
right back by return of post
So She Can See One more letter from
you i will right to farther &
Mother On Sunday next i well tell
you now how She is Once A week
from this Out ifit is Ondlay A
line Or two Good night All My
Deair friends we remain with best love your
brother And Syster Ag & H billups

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Letter 32:

Yeagertown feb 8 1880

Deair Mother And farther Systers
And brothers i take pen in
hand to right to you with
A Sad hart to think i cannot
Send you better news of My
Deair Wife but i cannot do
[but?] to tell you the truth
the Doctor Gave up All
hopes of hor to Day And it
very Neair Drives Me Crasey
for She has been So Good to
Me And Me to hor We lived
So happy to Gether And now
to part with hor Wot must
i Do Wot Can i Do i have
thought wile thire was Life
thire was hopes but Deair
Mother my hopes is Small now
i rot to Emmaly So that i
Dont think thire is Aney
thing more i Can tell you
All Ondlay thanks be to
hour Savuier And hour God
hor Sold is happey She is
reday Aney time And She
Wished Me to bring My Chrildren
home Among hor friends
Deair Mother And farther
Systers And brothers
i cannot right Aney
More now So Good by
She Sends hor best love
to you All And i Goin
with hor from your
Loven Daurter And Son
And famley Agness And
Harry Billups

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Letter 33:

[The first page of this letter
is edged in black.]

Yeagertown Mar 29 1880

My Deair Syster And brother
Mother & father Systers & brothers All
now i Sit Down to right to you
All with A hard foal of Sorrow
And Grief to tell you how i have
Gon throw my Grait truble
And the Good And Merisuful
God Above noes it is And had been

booth truble And Grieve of the
worst kind to me it was bad
Enuf to me wen i lost my mother
i thought hor the Dairest friend
i had On Orth but it was his
wish to take hor but he Sent me
Another friend to take hor place
And that was My Deairest of All
My Wife now he had took All
My Earthery treshers Away
Ondly my Deair little Ones from
me

but it is no use me telln you
wot you no i want to tell you
wot you Dont no that is this [each word underlined]
My Deair Wife was took wors
On fridey 12 night i never left hor
Satad [Saturday] she Still Got worse She
was Sensibul till the last She
Called me At half past 10 i was
with hor i Syd i Am heair She Syd
God bless you waire is mrs Smith
She was next Dore i Sent for hor
She com quck As She Cood She
Syd Agness i Am heair Did you
want Aneything She Syd God
bless you i Am Goen home And
She layed Down A gain for is was
holden hor up And Just As if
She was Goen to Sleep She never
Spoke no more i was holden hor
hand the nabers then told me
She was Gon i cood not belive
it for Awile it was then 11 0 Clock
Sat night 13 Day of March i cannot
Deair Syster i cannot Expres my
feeling i cood not begin but Aleass [Alas]
it was too true i Got the night
Over As best i Cood the next
morning i went to Lewistown
Me And my Naber i Ordered hor
A coffon the best i Cood Get Solled
walnut with 6 Silver mounted
handles On put to Gether with
Silver fingermounted Screws
All together thire was 50 Silver
Screws And Small plates On it
i boat [bought] hor robe witch cost ten
Dollers Coffin 50 booth includin
the herst Sixty Dollers i then
went to the Simertary boat [bought] A lot
12 Dollers then i came home witch
is home no more wen i Got thire my
Master was watten for me he Ask
if i wanted aney thing i told
him nothing but Som money

And his two chariges [carriages] wen we
had to bery he Gave me 20 Dollers
then All he had tellen me he
wood Send his Chariges All i wanted
And wen it was Over he wanted
to See me i took the 20 Dollers &
went to town On mondy morning
bout All My Chrildren new
black All throw [through?] wen i Got
back the nabers One And All
Joined in And made them for
my little Ones in the meen time
the Nabers was plesed to See i
had not Spaired no Expenche in
heven hor made comfotble And
Out of respedts to hor thay went
home cut thire Choisest flowers
And Made hor A reeth And
put hor floures in hor hands
And God bless hor She looked
Like A piece of work

No. 1

[next page of paper]

No. 2 but Deair Syster i Cannot
rite much more
the precher com Out from
town he spoke in the house
then we berred On tusday
At One O Clock in the meen
time i went to the [telegraph office]
to Send you A mesige And he
wonted ten Dollers in Gold that
wood be 11 Dollers And fifty cents
paper money And i had not Got
that much So i com back And
rot A few lines with black [led?]
it was male time i had not time
to come home i Did it in the Office
Sou you will for Give me i no
wont you Deair Syster
thire was A large frunell [funeral] So
theyay tell me wen we Got to
town the precher preched
A sermon thay tell me it was
very Good One
but i cud not tell you Mrs Smith
Syd She wood rite to you She has
Gon Away to pittsburgh i have
A hired Girl to look After the
Children wen All was Over As i told
you On wedsenday morning i went
to See My Mister told him All
i had Don he Ask me how much
money i wanted to Striten All
up i told him 72 So he Gave me
80 told me he wood Stop it At 10 Ami.. [A month?]

So you See Deair Syster how i Am fix now
he wants me to have a head Stone put up
Worth 40 Dollers My Docter bill is Over
100 but i think i will have it Don
And i have been trying to Get up
A verse i will Send you A copy
of it if you can Send me Aney better
i hope you will it is the best i can Do
by My Self plese to right back by return
of post from your true lovin brother
And family Still Hy Billups

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Letter 34:

Yeagertown May 3 1880
My Deair & Deairest Syster & brother

i now Sit Down to rite to you hopen
you And All Are quite well As it
leves All My family And
i cannot Say i Am well for i Am
not nor have been Since i Lost
My Deair Wife the Deairest One
i had On Eirth Or Ever Sall
have for i mis hor So much i cannot
help fritten About Hor night And
Day And that is wot is the Matter
with me the Docter tells me he
Cannot Do me no Good if i Dont
Stop it i Shall be wors i Cannot
Eat Work nor Sleep Deair Syster
She was So Good to me And my
Deair little Ones She sas So Good
She praied for me wen i was Sleepen
And wood kiss me till i woke She
wood Say Harry ge Good to the
Children wen i Am Gon wont you
i wood [Stare?] in the room thinken
She was Sleepen And wen i Got to
her She wood be prayn for
you All includen All of us mother
farther Systers And brothers
Deair Syster i Got your letter
And mothers And fathers All
in time but i Did not read them
to hor for i will tell you wie
She had Got So lo then that
wen i Got them i went to hor And
Syd Maggy i have Got A letter from
farther And mother And One from
hour Deair Syster Emily Shall
i reed them befor Supper She Syd
no harry Dont for i Dont want
to heair them it will make me feel
worse for i love them So much i Syd

Why My Deair it Allways Did you
Good before She Syd yes for i
Allways thought i Should Get
better And Go home And See
them All but it is diffrent
now for i Am Goen to my last
home now i will meet them thire
i Syd well Maggy My Deair thay
Are So Good And So nice letters Such
Good Advise in them i wood like
to reed them then She burst Out
Crien And Syd Harry if you
love me Dont bother me So far
i Cannot [..?] to heair them i no
thay Are nice but it fills Me
hurt So foole to think of My
Friends to think i Shall never
See them till i meet them in
heaven then the Docter Cam in And
Ask Wot was the Matter now i told
him He Syd Billups you must
not bother hor for you wont have
hor long if you Do if you wont
to Do hor Good pray for hor then
Deair Syster Syster how Do you
think i felt for i cannot tell you
My Self Words cannot
Expres nor pen cannot right
them Down She wants me to com
home wanted me to promise hor i wood
i have Seen the Docter About
A secituet [?] for brother Harry
Bosswell he Syd he wood right
Me One Down A good One
so As Soone As i Get it i will
Send it to you As i Dont no
his Adress now this is the Caird
i Got Don i Did not berre in
Yeager but in Lewistown it was
the Episcople Church Or the Church
Of England Cemitery the best Around
heair i bout A lot thire And you
Did notSend me A verise to put
On hor toom Stone i will wate till
ill i Got Anser to this Send it in the next
letter will you And rit back by return
of post Give my love to mother farther Systers
And brothers i will rit to mother & farther
from your Ever true And loven brother H Billups

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Letter 35:

My Deair Syster this is wot
i thought i wood have put
On My Deair Wifes Grave Stone

but i wood like your Opinon of
it if you have Aney thing you
wood like better Do be so kind As
to Send it me i will rit this Down
if it is not Sutible you must Exquse
me for i have no One now to tell me
Aneything

Weep not Deair Husban And friends
but be content for i to you
Was Ondley lent The lord had
Ondly had His Due And
very Soon May Call for you

And you Deair Deair Children
that is left be Hind trust
in the lord And Me
you wile find

[a note on same photocopied page:]
Let Me have them
back soone I have posted
a Letter to America
to night E Hall