

**Three letters written in Hastings, 1958 to 1960,
from Carrie (Caroline) Wood (1884-1975)
to Martha Browne, née Wood (1882-1968) in South Australia**

Here are three letters written by Carrie Wood, from the home in St Leonard's Hastings, England, which she shared with her other unmarried sister and two brothers - Thomas, from the evidence of the letters, apparently was not with them at that period. Carrie was 73 at the time she wrote the letter below, the others younger. The youngest brother, Harry died at the end of the following decade in 1969. Carrie herself lived until the end of 1975 reaching the age of 91. The others lived on at 15 Salisbury Road for only another 14 or 15 months after Carrie. We have seen from the account (see Edmund_Rye.pdf) by Thomas Wood's daughter, Peggy Hargreaves, of their last days in the same house at 15 Salisbury Road that finally their lives ended in a



distressing way. These three letters (in the possession of Judith Lloyd in Adelaide, Australia (Martha Browne, born Wood, was her great-aunt), provide some other evidence that even in the late 1950s they were not leading the best of lives. Of three of their other brothers and sisters - Edward, Julia, and Edmond - we know nothing. The oldest of this family, Louisa, had married in New Zealand, but she and her husband (Thomas Silk) soon after returned to England and Louisa had died much younger, towards the end of WW2. Thomas had married, but in the war his wife, with his daughter, had left him. Carrie and Grace in their early days had worked as servants in the Great Dixter house of the rich Lloyd family. Had this restricted their lives with the result that they never married? The oldest, Carrie, had been an accomplished cook, and it seems possible that the main burden of running the household fell on her. By the end of the 1950s, from the evidence of these letters, she certainly sounds under strain, intolerant of other people's children. Looking at this image of the handsome Carrie when young it is surprising that she, like others in the family, should have remained single.

July 22nd 1958

15 Salisbury Road
St Leonard-on-Sea
~~Sussex~~
England

My Dear Martha

Received your very kind and welcome letter ^{on} July 16th, I see it was posted April 20th it seems such a long time since I got a letter from you, Daisy or after said have you heard from Martha they have ~~had the same~~ as bad as we have, their place is very open, and in a Bungalow I shouldn't want to live there, that is seaside, this place is packed with visitors very close. He isn't too good she ought to have a holiday by the seaside that would loosen her up. if she likes the sea, we live here but we prefer the country, we would very much like a house in the country. So Ted could just do gardening which he is very fond of

of: for is work is very hard & he a Phantom
 soon had some days he cant hardly move
 but makes himself, he is like Father got
 a strong will, thats what gets him through
 not saying any thing about myself I have
 got legs like big poles they swell up
 I dont get out a lot we both want
 to see on the 14 of this month to
 Dear Mother & Father grave. we go
 there as often as we can take a
~~train and I hope to see you soon then~~

we go to Louis which is here at
 Hookings that costs 1/6 the Bus fare are
 my dependence for such short journey.

Since writing this letter we have had
 another storm we seem to have
 them every 2 or 3 days 2 weeks ago
 we had the man to plaster the front
 of the house as the rain came it in
 he should have had help but as he
 done it himself and in doing so

Let the ladder slip and it went
 through one of the large window
 up stairs, that was that & last
 week we had a storm the rain was
 so heavy that it sent a slate from
 the roof right through our bed-
 room window, so that was that I
 am wondering when the end of the
 storms are coming, it gets very depressing
 and Grace as been to the land lady to
~~ask her to have them put in~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~land~~ ~~lady~~ ~~to~~
 she cant as the glass costs so much &
 the mens time, they do waste such a lot
 of time doing nothing, so I cant afford
 to have them done so we shall have to
 fix strong paper, untill we get a
 nother bad storm & that will fetch
 the frame out then she will have to
 have some thing done, what with the
 rent & the taxes its enough to drive
 one crazy, and the cost of living is
 still very high its the shops that are doing

as they change just what they like, each
 day. I shall go to stop still more to pay
 and you can't see any thing for your money
 well I will change the Subject, I am so
 glad you are keeping well, & that you
 can get in your garden yes I like
 gardening. Dad as promised some potatoes
 this year, and a nice lot of
 cabbages we haven't got a very
 large garden, but he makes ~~the~~
~~most~~ of it getting up ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~morning~~
 in the morning before going to work
 we all work very hard to make
 ends meet you have to in these days
 for we are all getting on in years
 Dad is 54 & May 55 they are the 2
 youngest of the family of course May
 as never be able to earn his living
 on account of his health Tom Boy
 but we have always done all we
 can for him as he is such a good
 Boy he can't help being feeble

he is the last one of a large Family they
 dont have large Families in these days
 but they were the Happies they didnt
 give their children away like they do
 know well dearest Mamma I hope you
 are still keeping well, also hope Cousin
 Flo is better, well here we are again
 plenty of rain coming down we
 shall soon be washed out we dont
 get much Sunshine in these days our
 Summer is quite finished, I am
 thanking you for my nice letter
 with all our love to you, oh how
 lonely so have Orange, Mamma & Abundant
 love to all Cousins we would
 love to hear from any of them
 your lonely Cousin Mamma
 Grace, Ed & Harry
 cheers

Letter dated 20 May 1959 from Caroline Wood (1884-1975)
to Martha Browne, née Wood, in South Australia

May 20th 1959.

15 Selisbury Road
St Leonards-on-Sea
Sussex
England

My Dearest Martha

I am just writing you a few lines hoping you are keeping well, I haven't heard since Dec 3rd 1958. I hope you are well and happy at your Nieces. I was very sorry to hear of you being robbed, what a dreadful lot of ~~people~~ there are in the world, to do such a thing to another next door, and to get away with it, they are lucky to get scott free they wouldn't in some cases. I am thinking we are living amongst some but we haven't had that done to us. The Children are such devils you have got to be every where watching to see if they don't break your windows they play football just out side, when there are the beautiful Banks the Mothers cant trust them

out of their sight why dont the mothers
 bring their children up like we were
 brought up stop in at night, & go work
 & help but now as soon as they come
 out of school they go in doors & change
 & hurt their Boy Friends up, our fathers
 would give them Boy Friends but its
 all changed, there is no children of
 today they are older than we are
 that is the government given all this
 money for each child, its dreadful but
 still we cant stop it, I did write to
 you Jan 25. 1959 So I hope you have got
 it but I am afraid you dont get the
 other one with the Tomas Card as you had
 moved by the time it reached you, still
 I hope you got the other one we are
 having some dreadful weather for may
 so cold we dont get any warm weather
 that is what we want the sunshine it
 does make such a difference when people
 havent been well. every thing so gloomy

Grace as been ill since Janury. First she scalded her foot a very dreadful scald, well that was 8 weeks and through that the D^r. said it was shock its upset her stomach and she has had a dreadful lot of pain so now she as had to go on a diet just eggs & fish nothing heavy, she as been 3 months on diet, and all fish steamed not fried, she as lost a lot of weight but the D^r tells her it will take a long time to get its self right - so we are hoping it will, people would feel much better if we could have the sun I cant think where it as go to. the 20th of May & all this cold weather is dreadful the last holiday was a dreadful day wind & rain & cold I had a letter from Daisy & they have had the same they both seem to be very well just now she doesnt like the house they are in and wants to move

To new Romney I don't know if she will
 be lucky enough to get a horse, if
 she did it would be near Henry
 work. how is Cousin Tho is she better
 I hope she is she was very poorly
 when you wrote before you moved
 So I hope she as got well trusting
 these few lines will find you
 all well. as it leans us fairly
 & I must close with much love
 to you & all Cousin you
 Cousins Cousins. Grace & Ed
 and Harry & Emma.

hoping your weather is much
 better than ours.

Letter dated 28 June 1960 from Caroline Wood
to Martha Browne, née Wood (1882-1968) in South Australia

June 28th 1960 15 Salisbury Road
Cousins to S. H. St Leonard-on-Sea
cheerio with
much love to you Susse
England
My Dear Martha all
trouble

I am writing you a few lines
I haven't got a letter to answer
because I have answered all
I haven't heard from you for
such a long time, I hope you are
well. I have sent several letters
but no reply. I know I put
your new address, so you should
got them, well how are things
in your part of the world
we are having some terrible
weather for June. we have

had a dreadful altogether we
weather and one thing and
another. Grace as been ill with
a aggravated Gutt, just on 18 months
she as ~~long~~^{lost} a lot of her body
as she cant take milk so she
as been on a diet with just nothing,
she is better than she was, but
~~still under the D^r she as gone to~~
a Shadow because she haest been
able to take things with out being
in Pain. The D^r said it takes a
long time to clear, well I wont
worry you with our worry but
I should so like to hear from you
on any other Cousins I would love
to have a line from any of you
well I will close for this time
hoping to hear soon your loving