

The School House  
Moumouth  
August 8<sup>th</sup> 1912

My dearest Brother

I know you will  
be glad to hear of my  
visit to Cameron House  
Mary was so very kind to  
me & I much enjoyed the  
happy little time. When  
I arrived kind Mary was  
at the station to meet me.  
I am very glad to see her  
in her own home, & she &  
Lilly have managed so  
cleverly & have made it so

pretty & comfortable. The things  
from St-Pierre have fitted in  
quite nicely & it is a pleasure  
to see them there. Harold  
very kindly gave me his  
room so that I might en-  
joy his view. I thought it  
so kind of them all to take  
so much trouble in arranging  
to welcome me. And as  
you know Lilly is always  
able & kind in doing things.  
I have always appreciated  
Lilly's practical capability,  
& I am glad to have a new  
admiration for Mary's  
business management.  
Though for that too I used

to think I saw the capacity  
if it had to be used. I am  
very glad to see Mary well  
& able to do things.

You have a nice little family  
& I wish you were coming  
home in the spring to see  
them.

Leo will be writing to tell  
you of his engagement.

I shall be very glad for him  
to be happy & to have a  
good wife to take care of  
him. And I am sure Ethel

Claburn will be unselfish  
& devoted. But there are  
some things wanting I am  
afraid, that I would have  
liked for him. It is an un-

-desirable connection for him  
to be involved in, & I cannot  
help feeling distressed that  
he should take such a heavy  
responsibility in her family.  
If he were a rich man  
that would not matter.

But the dear boy by his  
generosity has already les-  
sened the provision for old  
age that his Mother left  
him. And now he is not  
young. I did warn him  
that he ought to be care-  
ful as he might some day  
wish to marry. And now  
he is doing it with need to  
spend on his fiancée & her  
family before marriage.

2. I was already anxious about him, & I cannot but feel my anxiety justified & increased. I wish I could see my way to earning something to help. But the only work that at my age I am qualified for is not paying work.

Mary kindly gave me a welcome for the extra day & I came here on Tuesday. Leo had arrived at 5.30 P.M. & Miss & Labburn returned just before me from a stay with friends in the near country. They are very good & kind. There

is much to consider. They had not wished to be married till Christmas or Easter. But that would necessitate a chaperone in the house, & they are beginning to think that it will be best to manage to arrange the wedding for this holidays. Leo has a reading party arranged for 3 weeks from August 24<sup>th</sup>, so it is difficult to fit in time for a wedding trip. I know I shall have your sympathy in the anxiety I cannot help feeling. Mother had so nobly & so ably educated & kept us to the position that was

rightly ours by inheritance.  
And you have bravely worked  
to do the same for your  
children. Is it very worldly  
-minded of me to feel con-  
-cerned that Leo should be  
risking for his possible fami-  
-ly falling to the standard  
of the strugglers here in  
Monmouth?

I know you will be grieved  
to hear of Linda's sad loss.  
Cousin Willie died at Whitby  
last Friday after only a  
day's serious illness. I am  
so sorry for dear Linda  
to be left alone. She will  
I think be going to London

after the cremation at Dar-  
-lington yesterday. So the  
grange or

% Mess<sup>rs</sup> Holt & Co

Whitehall Place

will be the best addresses  
for letters.

Leo goes with Ethel to see  
her mother next Thursday,  
& I shall be left in charge  
of Dorothy & Mr Pearson till  
the end of their visit on  
the 19<sup>th</sup>. Then I go to Glau-  
-bouldu.

I hope, dear, that you are  
really well again. With  
much warm love

Your loving sister

Edith E. Coulson James

Letter from Edith James<sup>1</sup> to Henry Rosher James<sup>2</sup>  
Concerning their Brother Lionel James's<sup>3</sup> Marriage Plans  
8<sup>th</sup> August 1912

Transcribed and Annotated by John Barnard  
(updated 23 Nov 2018)

The School House  
Monmouth  
August 8<sup>th</sup> 1912

My dearest brother

I know you will be glad to hear of my visit to Cameron House. Mary<sup>4</sup> was so very kind to me & I much enjoyed the happy little time. When I arrived kind Mary was at the station to meet me. I am very glad to see her in her own house, & she and Lilly<sup>5</sup> have managed so cleverly & have made it so pretty and comfortable. The things from St Pierre have fitted in quite nicely & it is a pleasure to see them there. Harold<sup>6</sup> very kindly gave me his room so that I might enjoy his view. I thought it so kind of them all to take so much trouble in arranging to welcome me. And as you know Lilly is always able & kind in doing things. I have always appreciated Lilly's practical capability, & I am glad to have a new admiration for Mary's business management. Though for that too I used to think I saw the capacity if it had to be used. I am very glad to see Mary well and able to do things.

You have a nice little family & I wish you were coming home in the spring to see them.

Leo will be writing to tell you of his engagement. I shall be very glad for him to be happy & to have a good wife to take care of him. And I am sure Ethel Clabburn will be unselfish & devoted. But there are some things wanting I am afraid, that I would have liked for him. It is an undesirable connection for him to be involved in, & I cannot help feeling distressed that he should take such a heavy responsibility in her family.<sup>7</sup> If he were a rich man that would not matter. But the dear boy by his generosity has already lessened the provision for old age that his Mother left him. And now he is not young. I did warn him that he ought to be careful as he might some day wish to marry. And now he is doing it with need to spend on his fiancée and her family before marriage.

I was already anxious about him, and I cannot but feel my anxiety justified and increased. I wish I could see my way to earning something to help. But the only work that at my age I am qualified for is not paying work.

Mary kindly gave me a welcome for the extra day & I came here on Tuesday<sup>8</sup>. Leo had arrived at 5.30 P. M. & Miss Clabburn returned just before me from a stay with friends in the near country. They are very good and kind. There is much to consider. They had not wished to be married till Christmas or Easter. But that would necessitate a chaperone in the house, & they are beginning to think that it will be best to manage to arrange the wedding for this holidays. Leo has a reading party arranged for 3 weeks from August 24<sup>th</sup>,<sup>9</sup> so it is difficult to fit in time for a wedding trip. I know I shall have your sympathy in the anxiety I cannot help feeling. Mother had so nobly and so ably educated and kept us to the position that was rightly ours by inheritance. And you have bravely worked to do the same for your children. Is it very worldly-minded of me to feel concerned that Leo should be risking for his possible family falling to the standard of the strugglers here in Monmouth?

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1 Leo's elder sister, Edith Emily Coulson James (1860-1936), often referred to by Leo and Ethel's children as "Aunt Edie". She was a historian of the art of Bologna, and never married.

2 Leo's elder brother, Henry Rosher James (1862-1931) was an educational administrator in British India. He was often referred to as "Bobby".

3 Lionel James (1868-1948), known as Leo, was Headmaster of Monmouth Grammar School

4 Mary (née Hindle), H R James's wife

5 Probably Mary's sister, also known as "Lul"

6 H R James's eldest son Harold Hindle James

7 Ethel's father had died in 1901, leaving the family in severely straightened circumstances. Her mother was almost certainly an alcoholic, and it fell to Ethel as the eldest to provide for her five younger siblings, which she did partly by taking the matron's job at Monmouth School.

8 6<sup>th</sup> August 1912

9 This must have at least been curtailed, as the wedding took place on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

I know you will be grieved to hear of Linda's sad loss. Cousin Willie<sup>10</sup> died at Whitby last Friday after only a day's serious illness. I am so sorry for dear Linda<sup>11</sup> to be left alone. She will I think be going to London after the cremation at Darlington yesterday. So the Grange or c/o Messrs Holt & Co., Whitehall Place will be the best addresses for letters.

Leo goes with Ethel to see her mother<sup>12</sup> next Thursday & I shall be left in charge of Dorothy<sup>13</sup> & Mr Pearson<sup>14</sup> till the end of their visit on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Then I go to Glanhonddu.<sup>15</sup>

I hope, dear, that you are really well again. With much warm love

Your loving sister

Edith E. Coulson James

---

10 William Bennett, husband of Belinda Rosher (a first cousin of Edith's mother) [FreeBMD Whitby Q3/1912 9d 492, aged 76]. They had been married in 1869 [FreeBMD Q3/1869 North Aylesford 2a 629].

11 Belinda Bennett, née Rosher (b. 1843) may have died in 1915 aged 71 [Islington Q4/1915 1b 435] or in 1938 aged 95 [Battle Q4/1938, 2b, 56], though I am unaware of any other family references to her.

12 Ethel's mother Rosey Clabburn lived in a boarding house in Brighton.

13 Ethel's sister

14 Dorothy's fiancé Cyril ("Billy") Pearson. He was an assistant master at Monmouth, but they were not married until 1916. Both were present at Lionel and Ethel's wedding.

15 Home at Pandy, near Abergavenny, of Mrs Lucia Rosher (1830-1927), 3<sup>rd</sup> wife and widow of Edith's great-uncle Jeremiah Burch Rosher (1792-1874). The house is now demolished, but remembered in the street name.