

London. July 1<sup>st</sup> 1817 -

My Dear Sister,

Having an opportunity of sending you a few lines, without putting you to the expense of paying postage; I assure you it is with great pleasure, that I comply with your request, of giving you any information in my power respecting Isabella. M<sup>r</sup> M. I suppose informed you, that she got her bed, on Saturday, about eleven o'clock; she was poorly from the time you left us, till Friday morning, when she sent for me. but her labours did not come on strong till evening, we sent for Nurse but could not get her that night, which as you may suppose, made it more fatiguing & distressing to me, than it would have been, had she been there; however, we sent to her again in the morning to say that if she did not come immediately, we must get someone else, which message soon brought her. she seems at

Letter from Sarah Benson to her sister Ann Mather describing in minute detail the confinement of her sister Isabella.

present to be careful & very attentive. I hope Sarah will be comfortable  
with her. but to return my sister was in strong labour, during the  
whole night, till she was delivered, all that time her pains were  
regular every three minutes, & indeed I know not how she could  
have supported it so long, had not Amelia & myself held her back  
with great force; & between almost every pain, gave her a spoonful  
or two of brandy, to prevent faintings; she was sick, & reeking all  
the time; but when it came to the last I was quite frightened, the  
pains were so dreadful, she struggled so violently, during the few  
last pains, that it was with difficulty three could hold her, tho  
she had a very hard time, yet it was a safe one. She was wonder-  
fully supported & bore it with great patience. indeed we were all  
filled with wonder & astonishment & gratitude to God, for tho we hoped  
she would do well, yet for my part I greatly feared on her account, the  
child is very fat, & apparently healthy, I am sure you would be surpris-  
ed were you to see it, you would hardly believe she could have  
had such a fine large child, & if I am any judge of beauty, it is very  
pretty, it has more hair than John has now, its hair is dark brown,  
& blue eyes, & it has a dimple in its chin, tho it is now pretty, yet we

know not how it will alter. They are very much pleased that it is  
a boy, I question whether they would have loved it had it been a girl,  
the milk came into her breasts in great plenty, the next day the  
child suckled, she has had a great deal of pain, with them; they are  
now rather better & we hope by the child sucking & drawing them  
they will get better in time. I assure you my dear sister Do not  
ever shall forget what you suffered when confined with Sarah,  
both as it respects your breasts, & various other complaints, I hope  
we have learnt experience from it, & that poor Sarah will be pre-  
served from those complaints, with which you were afflicted. She  
now as well & indeed better than we could expect for the time  
rest assured as far as I have any influence all possible care shall be  
taken of her I have laid many injunctions upon them to keep her  
quiet & to let no one go to see her till a proper time. I think we have  
now more encouragement than ever, to put our trust in & to cast our  
care upon God who has at this time so graciously interposed in our  
behalf. O what reason we have to be thankful, for in how many instances  
have we been supported & delivered, May we prove grateful for all past  
favours, & may we never doubt of the goodness of God in future,  
Sarah sends her kind love to you, likewise Sam. from whom I heard  
to day Ben John is got unpat where to go.

as soon as we know you shall hear. Father intends that I am  
 should go to Cambridge in Oct. Father sends his love to you & desir  
 me to say he is glad you do not think of going to the Isle of Wight, he  
 thinks you would be very uncomfortable there without any friends  
 hopes you will stay where you are. We were glad to hear that you & the  
 children were better. I hope you will reap still greater benefit &  
 restored to us in good health, kiss all the children for us, tell I don't

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17th July 1819

M<sup>rs</sup>. Mather

Portsmouth

ccc

17/7/1819

Joseph Brown

forget them, or love them any less on account of their little concern.  
 We are all tolerable. I have been rather unwell owing to fatigue &  
 my feet swell & are at times very painful. I think a little bathing  
 & blue do me good, but it is all in vain for me to think about it, for on many  
 it is impossible for me to leave home, be assured tho' not present in body  
 I often am in mind. I must now conclude wishing you every blessing these are  
 your affec<sup>t</sup>ed sister Sarah Benson