

This is a transcript of a letter written by Charles James Cecil to Thomas and Elizabeth Randall in 1856 whose daughter Elizabeth Cecil Randall (referred to as Eliza in the letter) married Sir John Stainer. I swiped the original from my late father's stamp cupboard!

Bonnenyong  
24th August 1856

Dear Lidy and Mr Randall

Week after week and month after month I have been expecting a letter from home but further expecting in vain for not a scrap has reached me since your letters written to me on the 3-th November 1855 on which Mr. T. R attained his 50th year. I at times fancy that some calamity has happened and that in consequence I am forgotten, earnestly do I wish such may not be the case and that the Almighty will in his mercy spare you to enjoy more years on this earth, to which we have all such inconsistent longing and desire to remain upon as long as the general scale of mortality allows. I have written to you at distant periods of about three months intervals and shall continue to do so. We are all in good health here. Since I last wrote to you the Almighty has blessed me with another son. He was born on the 24th June and was christened on the 19th Of July in our own house it being the middle of our winter (which has been unusually severe) and it was a moral and physical impossibility for my wife to go to the Kirk which is 3 miles distance. Before the Minister arrived I had been amusing myself reading your & Mr. R's last letters to me; and the name of my second son had been fixed upon as David Cecil after his Grandfather and much to my wife's astonishment when the Minister asked me for the name of the child I had him called David Thomas; as I had not ever spoken about it to my wife you may guess how she stared at me. But I thought I would keep in mind the only ones that seem to bear me in remembrance on the other side of the world. Both mother and son are strong and desire kind love to you; David Thomas is a very large and strong child and was near costing his mothers life, is now two months old you would take him to be at least four months old. Charlie my eldest is now a strong little fellow running about and always in mischief is capable of doing in the garden in about five minutes what has perhaps taken me the whole day to do. I have to keep a pretty good watch on him. This winter has been very wet everything is very backwards and the crops have generally sustained serious injury. My garden is looking very nice just one all the cabbage tribe are looking green. All the Goose Currants & Rose bushes are just putting forth their little leaves and the Apple: Plum and Pear, Cherry trees are blossoming. The Grape trees are likewise just beginning to burst into leaves the strawberry leaves are covered with their little white blossoms. I think no person can walk into the garden (at this time of the year especially) without being struck by the wisdom and power of God who causes all these things to occur at their proper seasons. If one of these trees were to be moved to England true to their nature they would be dormant till March or April It is so wonderful the more I think of it and other things the more I get bewildered at the bounteous goodness of our Creator who has appointed all these things for our comfort and benefit. Give my love to Tom and Eliza. I should like to see them though there is little chance of that. It always occurs to me that they must still

be the same as when I left home sixteen years ago. I cannot fancy them being men or women. My wife wishes to know whether you have lately paid a visit her native land and if you have you are to be sure to send full particulars. I did once think of paying a visit to home if I had been spared but now with a young family fast springing up around me effectively expelled such thoughts from my noodle. Julia used to once upon a time to write to me and so used Mary but this last twelve months they have suddenly stopped. I am thinking after this harvest of either purchasing more ground or renting some. I have not yet made up my mind but I expect I shall buy it if I can manage it as the rent of ground in this country in the course of about four years would amount to the first cost of the purchase and to a man like myself who could fence it in and do the building part himself the after expense does not come so heavy and when it is once done you have a comfortable farm free of all expenses to leave behind you for those who perhaps may need it in their day. I expect you will be tired of this Egotistical letter so with best love and wishes from Jessy and myself to you and yours .

I remain  
Your affectionate  
Brother

Charles  
James Cecil.  
C J Cecil  
Bonnenyong  
PortPhillip.

The following can be deduced for the Stainer family tree:

1. The writer Charles James Cecil was the brother of Elizabeth Frances who married Thomas Randall (2)
2. His wife is given as Jessy, probably Jessica, and she was probably Scottish or Irish
3. At the time of writing they had two sons Charles and David Thomas (b. 1856)
4. Thomas Randall (2) was born in 1805
5. David Thomas Cecil's grandfather was David, so either Charles James Cecil's or Jessica's father was David. If the former, either George's second name was David or you have an error on your family tree.
6. Julia and Mary were probably two of Charles James Cecil's sisters
7. Thomes Randall (2) also had a son called Thomas (Sir John's brother in law).