

## WELSH FAMILY LETTERS 1

From JAMES WELSH to his brother

Liverpool, 6th May 1780

Dear Brother

I received yours & had some days before heard of your loss in the death of Mrs. Welsh. I have often set down to write to you & as often left off thinking letters from relations in your trouble would only renew your grief – to one no way related the death of a young mother leaving two little innocent babes, not to mention the closest of all affections that to a husband, must be very affecting, & tho' no spectator I can form a lively idea of the melancholy scene from the long but not forgotten death of our own Mother not unsimilar to your loss. I believe impressions made in early life are more durable than when advanced in years, at least that circumstance affected me more & has continued fresher in my memory than any event in my whole life. The last visit that I made her was by the desire of Dr. Hunter who told her end was near. When I got to Carterhope she expressed her satisfaction that I had walked there being a great fall of snow on the ground, & to pay me a Compt rose that evening to Tea & seemed in better spirits than for many days before. When she was dressed she looked in a glass & asked the company if they had ever known anyone so reduced as she was recover & being answered they had, she said with a kind of joy who knows but I may recover yet. Soon after she grew very ill & was obliged to go to bed & when she had a little recovered & composed herself desired the children should all be brought into her chamber and they were. When she kissed & blessed each of them & took a final leave it was a truly affecting scene. You were too young to remember it, but I shall never forget it whilst I live – as they were going out weeping our father met them & was surprised on being told what happened. He hastened to her bedside & asked how she had thought of taking leave of the children when she never had hinted any such intention to him. She desired the servants might leave the room & then told him how she had been flattered with some hopes of life by the short relief & unusual spirits she had that afternoon & how deceitful that kind of distemper was, but she trusted she would no more be led into such vain expectation & the firmness & resolution of taking a last adieu of the children proceeded from the comfort she had in a dream the night before in which she thought her Saviour spoke to her & said daughter be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven – this was a great happiness to our father for his wish & constant prayer was that she might be reconciled to death as her low condition left not the most distant hope of recovery. Our Brother John was just come from Edinbr was much affected at seeing her so bad & he wept violently which affected everyone present very much. As I was commonly near her assisting in making her drink she perceived my sorrow & putting her hand on mine & taking a ring from her finger & gave it me

crying weep not but be good & good will come of you – Some days after this in the evening candles were light & soon after she asked why they were put out. Our father holding one forwards told her they were not & asked if she did not see it. She moved her head & said Oh no! & expired with all the composure of a person in perfect health falling asleep. During her sickness & death our father's sorrow was great & manly for you know his manner & deportment was so. As I was not present at his end my grief was less but the relation I recd in a letter from Christy & Mary at my arrival from a voyage affected me much & I have often read it with a melancholy satisfaction since. The unexpected sorrows we meet with here but for our better reason would hurry us to despair. Our religion should convince to act like Christians & though afflicted never to repine but be fully satisfied that these light afflictions are but for a moment & encourage us to believe that in the end we shall be convinced that everything that happens was for the best – Mrs Welsh sincerely condoles with you & says if you can be at liberty a journey & a few weeks stay here would be of service to you wishing you & your little girls health & every good –

I am

Yours &c

Jas Welsh