**Letters from Thomas Holden, 1812-1816**

Transcriptions are produced with the kind permission of the Lancashire Records Office, Preston

The following letters were written by Thomas Holden (Holding), during and after his trial for attempting to set up a Trades Union and while in penal exile in Australia. Holden came from Bolton in central Lancashire.

This is ‘dirty data’ which can really only be analysed qualitatively. How would you use this data so that you could give a sense of Holden’s (written) language use?

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/ 2**

Lancaster 27 May 1812

Dear Wives We take this opertunity of Writing a fue

lines to let you Know that there is nothing done as yet

Concerning Your Sone (?) for the sises did not Bigin till

5 tusday Morning and West [~~Factuary Trial Lasted~~] Hou/g\hton

Factrey tri[<e]al lasted all day and to day Sume of Bolton folk

have taken there triales and gilty But we know not

What Will be there feat as sentance is not past on any

Dear Wives these lines leaves us in good health and hope

10 the will find you the Same no more at present from youre

Dear Husbands John and Thomas Holden

Over:

To be left at the Golden Lyon

For John holden Hagend

near Bolton in the Moors

Lancshire

Large <C> over this

Two postmarks: Lancaster 289 27 MY 27 1812

Lancaster [illegible] 28 MY 28 1812

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/3**

Lancaster May 29th 1812

Dear Wifes

We [~~are~~] have done no Busness as Yet

but we expect Some thing will be done to Morrow

5 as they have been Trying Similar Cases To day

I am sorry to inform you that the recognizes

will be £2.15.0 **each** for those that are Liber\and/

we heave better hopes to day considerably then

we had yesterday but in case we are Liberated

10 we shall be s[t]ill incasinaty for want of Money

There are Saveral Bolton pople /that\ and cannoy pay [~~ther~~]

their recognanceis and are Obliged Stay here on

expencis on that Castle I had forgotten to Say

those that are admeted on Bail haue this £2.15

15 independant of the Gail fees. Those are £[ ]

we are in great Trouble about home we expect

to know the wors by toomorrow at this time

Keep up your Spirits and hope for the besst

Page 2

[ ]

We see them every day onest and they are

20 in good health and Spirits and seems

to submit to the will of Providence with a

cheerful resignation

We [...in] your

[ ] Husban[d]

25 John & Richd Holden

Mr Richd Holden

laft at the Bolton le moors

Golden Lancashire

Lion

Church St

[illeg]

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/4**

Lancaster Castle June 1st 1812

Dear Wife

Its with sorrow that I have to acquaint you that I this day

Receivd my Tryal and has receivd the hard sentance of Seven Years

5 Transportation beyond the seaz I will trust my dear Father will

Make all the Interest he can to beg and get my Transportat[ ]

Taken off which if not it will break my heart leo

Fletcher will be the only [ ] to appy to and Mr

Mathen if Jesas for any [ ] In prison I would try and

10 Content my self but to be sent from my Native Country

perhaps never to see it again distresses me beyond Compreh

ention and will Terminate with my Life if so very

Soon and to part with my Dear Wife & Child Parents

and friends to be no more cut off in the Bloom of my

15 youth without doing the least wrong to any person on

Earth O my hard fate may God have mercy on me

In him will I trust—adue dear Wife & parents

I will expect to hear from you shortly your Affec-

Unfortunate husband till Death

20 Thos Holden

Page 2

Thos Taylor owes me 5s-6d I request that you will get it

& send it to me as I am in much need of it at prest

And from Arth Holden £3-4 my love to all freinds

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/6**

Lancaster Castle June 14th 1812

Dear Mother,

Nothing in this life gives me such uneasiness

as not hearing from you, and that I have not receivd a letter but One

5 and that was from my Wife since I receivid my Tryal surely you

have not forgot me so soon, I earnestly request you will let me

Know if Mr Fletcher gives you any favourable Answer or if

Their is any hopes of my Time being shortened. I know not how

soon I may leave this for the Hulks. I will expect to see you if

10 Not it will break my heart that I may take my last farewell

of you as I never shall think of seeing any of you after I

leave this I sent word by my Brother that I might see my

Father before I left this but they never sent me word

if I was or not, give my dear love to my Father & Brother &

15 all freends I will expect to hear from you by the

Return of Post & remains your Unfortunate But

Loving son till death

Thomas Holden

Page 2

Dear Wife

20 I request you will let me know if Frank

Greham is at work or if you have taken down the

Looms or not. I am surprised at your not letting me

Know how my dear Child is in your letter Dear

Wife if I am to go abroad or into the Army I will

25 Expect you will [ ] go with me. I request you will

let me know if you will I am amongst a number

of Strangers no not one acquaintance I am troubled

very much to think I am in this miserable state

for a Thing I know nothing of in life my love to your

30 Father Mother & Sisters & Brother & all freinds I

Receid your letter & 4s and I wrote to you but

has not receivd an answer since this – and nothing

to hear from you I will expect your answer

By the Return of Post from your tru loving

35 [G]if my love to Husband till death

John [Ro]west Thos Holden

Ellen Holden

To be left at the Golden Lion

Churchgate Bolton

postmark:

16 JU all else illegible

1812

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/7**

Lancaster Castle June 15th 1812

Dear Wife i take this opertumity of Righting a fue

Lines to let you know that I Expect to go from

hear Every day as thear are 7 going of tomerow and i

5 Beg you willnot Send me no Close as we arenot

Alowed to wear aney of our own Close but if you

will be kind a nough to Send me a little muney

It will do me a great kindness as i am withoug[]

at Present and i Beg will Let me know if

10 you have done aney thing abought getting my

Time Shortned and I Co[scored out]uld wish to be with

my dear Wife agane if it Please god and if you

are for Sending me any muney you must send it

ametitley and So no moar at Present from your

15 Ever loving and Efecned Husbant

Thomas Holding

Second page

Dear father and mohter I right those

fue lines to you hoping they will find you

in good health as it leaves me at Present

20 But my Spirits is low with thinking

How I am sent from my Natiff Contrey

and I am Inesint Dear mother i do not think

of Seeing you in this World ane[ ]y moar --

Excepting you Can get my time Shortened and

25 if you Can get me off by aney meanes I

Beg you will do it Emedentley Dear Brother

I hope you will stay at home with your

father and Mother and keep good Houres

and I have kissed this Letter a thousand

30 times and i hope you will do the same and

may the Loard bless you all and so no moa[r]

at Present from your Ever loving and

Efecned Son Thomas Holding I lefe you all

to be Left at the golding

Lion Church gate Bolton la

Moors for Mary Holding

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/8**

Dear Wife

I am very sorry to Inform you that I am going

of to Morrow morning but I hope to [~~have~~] meet again

before Long when Inocence is to be rewarded I am Surprised

5 that you have not sent mee any Money [N]ow I am Now

going of without any at all I expected to have receivd

before now Dear Father & Mother I bid you Farewell & all Fre/i\nds

Likewise. I Cannot say that I go of in good spirrits on acount

of Leaving my Native Country on this false Charge that as been

10 Said against me dear Father if you Cannot

make any Interest to get mee of before I Leave this Country

I think I never more shall see you nor my wife & friends

Dear wife I hope you will if possable Get to go \with mee/ & be as

much Determined as I am never to part till Death shall

15 Call of us should like you to go to Mr Fletcher & Mr Walken

tell them that I still Protest to my Inocens[altered to de] & see if you cannot

Get them to get me off if possable it can be Done as it is very hard

that Inocence should Suffer in this Manner with Leaving

My Family Wife Father Mother and Freinds in A manner

20 Like this never more to View my Native Shore but I hope

you will strain your utmost to keep my Company and

not Let mee go Without you for with your Company I dont

mind where I go nor what I suffer if I have your Company

Page 2

to cheer my allmost Broken hart as it Preasent is Douing

25 I am to say it so I now bid Farewell to all but you with

whom I hope never to part So may the Lord take you all

under is Espetial Care & Keep you from all Dangers & Fearses

in\stead/ I conclude yours Ever Affectinate Husband

Till Death shall Part Us

30 T Holding

Lancaster Castle 1812

June 18th 6 O clock

at night

Molly Old

Molly Holding

to be keft at the

Golden Lion

Church Gate

Boulton [~~Bolton~~]

Lancashire

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/9**

28 Ju 1812 Langstone Harbour

Dear Wife

I have taken this the first opportunity

of writing to you to inform you that I am

5 arrived at the place of distination hoping

this will find you and my dear Child in god

health as this leaves me at present thanks

be to god for it Dear wife we arrived in London

on sunday Last and remained there untill

10 thursday night when we sett out for this place

where we arrived this day about 12 oClock

Dear wife I have to inform you that I have had

a bad misfortune for I have lost my hentering

and money I hope you will send me some more

15 as quick as posible you can dear wife I begg

you will not think of coming to see me at

place as the distance is so great being nearly

three hundred miles and It will attend with a

great expence as well as give me a great deal

20 of uneasiness Dear wife father & mother

I beg you will lett me know as soon as possible

if there is any thing done for me or not for our

Journey has been verry whett and uncomfortable

and I have been eight day and nights without

25 having my cloaths of my back so dear wife I will

Leave you to judge what a state I am in at

present but I hope to be better in a

few days

Page 2:

Dear wife I have to inform you that I have

30 the good luck to be at the best place of this

kind that there is and Captain and officers

are all very good to the Priserners unde[r]

their Charge we go on shore at 7 oclock in

the morning and Leave off work at 5 in the

35 after noon. I am verry sorry that my father

mother & brother did not come to the New

Bailey to see me give my Love to your

father mother Brother & Sister Likewis[e]

to mine to John hearst and Edwd Crumpton

40 [a]nd Wm Thorper and all Enquareing for me

So I remain your &c &c

Husband Thos Holding

Direct for me on Board

HMS The Portland

Laying in Langstone [~~harbour~~] harbour

Near [~~Portsmouth~~] Portsmouth Hants

To Mary Holding

to be left at the

golden lion Church gate

Bolton Le Moores

Lancashire

Portsmouth

28JU28

1812

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/10**

Dr Father & Mother,

I Received your kind Letter on the 13th and Was happy to hear

[o]f your Welfare as I am in Good health at present thank

[ ]d for all his Mercies – I find you Wish to know what

5 [ ]rt of a place this is But I Gave my Wife a Clear

Description of it when I was at the new Bailey for I

Just found it the same that I told her I Expected it

Would be – I allso Recd one pound safe for which I

Return you the Most heart felt thanks for I ashure

10 you it Will be of the Greates service to me for people

Newly Coming here Must of Course be ile of al the have

Not some [ ]le of money to help them.

You are to understand that any money that [ ] to

Any of the Person [ ] on Board this ship – the C[ ]tain

15 keeps it in his hand and Lets us have 3 shilling for Week

Which supplies us With what Nei[g>s]sarys we want by that

Means the Money is kept safe – Dr parents you want to

know if I Ever Got the Money I lost but I never [ ] Got

one penny of it. Now I meant to state to you that I will

20 stand [ ] on [ ] of 3 shilling Every [ ]

here for we have not the smallest way of Making one

penny here & the [sh]ip allowance is too scanty to suffi[ ]

Nature So I hope Dr Parents you will Considerme for

We are not Debared from having any Necessary food if we

25 have a little money to provide it – Every thing ther is

Page 2

Extreamly Dear We pay ten pence for a Quart of flower and

that only Weighes one pound & about Eleven ounces & Every thing

is proportionable to that. Dr father you have send me word to

keep up my spirits but if you seen My situation and h[ ]

30 We are placed you Would think it was fit to make anyone

Low – [ ]p[ ]ted – all I Can say that as far as I have Experienced

All the officers over us seem to be Very Humane Men

and We think that Even Good Conduct here will be of use to

Us for Every three Months there is Return made of all the

35 Mens Caractors on Board & the Captain was pleased to speak

favourable of us Even for the Little time we have been here

(The C[ ]ters is Laid Before the Secretory of Sate in London)

I [ ]ther you Will Leave n[ ]thing undon that Lieth in

your p[ ]er to Do for me for my [ ]art is almost broken

40 [ ] unfortunate Circumsatnce hapned

I believe I have no more to say at

Present But Desire to be Remembered to all

Enquiring friends – & Ever Remain your

Loving son until Death Thomas Holden

on Board the

Portland

July 14th 1812

Upside down writing at bottom practically illegible but reads (in part)

<Holding>

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/10a**

Dr Wife,

My sorrow is Greatly Encreaced by parting with you

for what Comfort Can I Enjoy when we are separate – if we

stope here – that is I mean that if there is nothing Done for

5 Us there is nothing [shur]er than that we will have to Go

to Botany Bay – & w[ ] will not know of it Either [ ] that

Morning that we Will Go and I Could wish to know if you

think you Could Rise money to pay you passage & go with

Me or whether you Would be willing or not

10 But Dr Wife if it [ ]d in your power to make Exertions in

My behalf or to striv[ ] to Get some friends of Respectability

to Represent my Case. My Restoration would [ ]th

Happiest sight to both [y ]u & me that we Ever saw [ ]

if Government was [m]ade sensible of my Inoce[ ]

15 Would not Detain m[ ] one Hour – Dr & Loving [ ] when

I Come to Reflect on [ ]eing Banished from you & f[ ] my

Native Country it a[ ]ost breakes my Heart & ale [ ]or not

Doing the smallest Injury Either to Government or subjects

Please to let me know how the Dear Child is Getting

20 on when you Write to me again – & Remember my Love to

your Sister Nancy & [ ] [ ]our fath[ ] & Mother – so [ ]

[ ]

Barely legible post mark:

17[ ]

181[ ]

Commisarys

Allan Esq.

For Mary Holde[ ] Left at the Golden

Lyon Church Ga[ ] [ ]olton le mores --

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/11**

on board the Fortune November 22

1812

Dear and loving wife I take this opertunity

of Righting a fue lines to you hoping to

find you and my Dear Child in a good

5 State of helth and Dear wife I have been

Very poorly Ever since I Came on Board this

Ship But thank God I am getting a deal bette[ ]

and Dear Wife I Receved your kind and

welku[m] letter on the 22 [ ] and dear Wife

10 you say you Could wish to go along with me

you little know how I am s[ ]oled it is a long

voyeg of six months and my Brother Said

he wished he was in my sted But he little

knowes my Sircumstance and dear wife if

15 any thing Should happen any of us from

Boulton we let know with all speed

Page 2

Dear wife you desire me to Right at all

opertunitys and you may Depend I Shall

But it is a great Deal of truble and

20 Difficulty to get to Right a letter hear

Dear wife it dose not troble me to much

Being Confined hear as Being parted from you

and my dear Child Dear wife we are among

a deal a differnd Soarts of peple But If

25 I live to Serve my time oute as I trust

In god I Shall you may depend upon it

I Shall Returne to Ingland and then I

hope we Shall Spend the Remander of

our Days in this world in love and

30 happyness togater Dear wife if you Send

me any moar money I Beg you will

Send it in a Noat and not a post office

order and Pay the poastidge

Page 3

Dear wife as Soon as I reach my jorneys End I

35 Shall Right to you and if thear is any prospect

of you Coming to me and /us\ doing well I will send

for you and [sh]ortly so I would have you to get

all the money Gathered togater as you Can

Dear father and Mother I hope you will never

40 Seace doing all you Can to get my Pardin or to get

me to Stop in Inglond you might get my pardo[ ]

Sooner But if I go I hope you will do all

you Can to fetch me Back agane to you

and I hope you will keepe Sending up

45 Pertisones to Government to get me off or to

get my Sentance mitegated dear if think I

do any moar I hope you will Right and let

know by Return of post for we may Sail

any Day or we may Stop a month we do not

50 know and So I must Conclude and so no moar

at Present from your Ever Loving Efecned husband

and Son til Death Thomas Holdin

Page 4

Please to give my love to my father in low an[ ]

Mother in low and Nancy Barret and Thomas

55 Baret and all inquiring Frie[n]ds

Mary Holden

to be Left at the

Golden Lion Church

Gate Bolton Lee

Moars Lancshire

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/12**

On board the fortune November 29th 1812

Dear and loving wife I take opertunity of Righting a

fue lines to you hoping they Will find you all in good

helth but Dear wife I am very Sorry to inform you

5 that I am Very Bad of the yellow Jandes and

has been for a fortnight and I am still getting

Worse and if I Very Soon do not get some Relif

I am afrade I shall not Recover and dear wife I

think it is with being so Close Confined and I

10 have taken to my Bed – and dear wife I am Very

unhappy Concerning I have Sent a letter and never

Recevid no ancer and you knowing we may Saill

any Day as Dear wife It is all the Confert I

have in this world to hear from you Dear Wife I

15 have no frend hear but John Fisher and he wates

upon me and Lookes after me like a Brother

Dear wife I have hard you have pititioned to go with

me and Dear wife I Could wish to know if you

have any prospect of going with me or getting me off

Page 2

20 Dear wife you know it would not be too late to get my

Sentance Mitgated if we were oute of the Contry as I

would have you to do all you Can for me and Dear

Wife the Capn dose not open the letters as the Capn

dose at Langston harbour and dear Wife I Could wish

25 to know if you have any Prospect of Coming to me

and I would have you to Right amedintly by the

Return of Post and Give my love to your sister

Nancy and So no moar at Present from your Ever

\Loving and/ Effecned Husbant til Death Thomas Holding

30 Dear Honored father and Mother I think it

Propper to inform you what Situation I am in as you

desired to know Dear father and Mother the Plase

that I am in is like unto that which Mr

Fletcher put me and my Brother and my

35 Uncel [ ] into my Beddin is as Bad or worse --

and here are alowed to go on Deck aboute one hour

Per Day and Some Times more & many Bolt[oun] [Donyours]

Page 3

Dear Honored father and Mother we have Beene

7 weeks withoute Cleane Shorts and we asked

40 the Capn for Shorts and he Said they Could not

be Durty yeat – and I weare Irones on boath

kegs as we did Before at the hulks Deare

Honored father and mother if you Cannot

Do nothing for me and very Soon I am

45 Sure you will neve See me alive agane

and give my love to my Brother and I

I have Eaten nothing for 3 days not on[e]

penny worth of meate – and so no

moare at present from your Ever loving

50 and Effecned but unfortunate and unhapy

Son til deat for Ever Ever moare

Thomas Holding

Postmark: illegible save for <1812>

and I beg you

will let me

know if you

Receve this letter

of Jenkisons Roo[ ]

of Z Jenkinsons ?yad?

for)

Mary Holden

[ ] be left at the Sign

of [ ]

[ ]

Le Mo[ ]rs

Lancshire

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/13**

Ship Fortune

Dear Wife Dec 12th, 1812

I received your kind letter wich gave me

Great comfort to hear from you I wonderd

5 the reason I Didnot hear from you sooner

Theirfore I sent a letter to Know the reason

you Didnot write to me but I received your

Letter about the Same time you received

my Letter, you say you are going to send

10 some flannel Shirts but if you have not

Sent them of I hope you will not send the[ ]

as it is an Hot Climate wheare we are going

Therefore they will be very useless things

but anything els that you may have to

15 send that is Right, would be very serviceable

and I hope you will not fail in sending

Immediately as we Dont Know Know one Day

before anoth[ ]

Page 2

I hope you will not mind what you may

20 hear from any one that writes to boulton

Saying how good anyone have been to me

for I in all my illness have Received no

favour from any one of they that Come

from boulton but for the other way

25 I dont hold any conversation with any one

of them, I thank God I am getting better

now Daily – but what my father Desired

me to get I have not got it in my

Power to get it. if you have got any

30 trifull of money to [ ]end to me, it would

be thankfully to Received it and please

not to Delay any time what ever in

Sending as we expect to Sail Daily

I hope and [ ]y Cornel Fletcher will

Page 3

35 have the goodness to Sign a [ ]tition

for me, and, I hope you will let me

know every particulars you can in you[ ]

next letter, if Brayley Box is not Lent

I will be Obliged to you to send me a Quire

40 of Writing Paper, and a few pens as they

are very Dear hear. I Remember my

Love to my Wifes father and Mother

and her Sister Nancy and to my Dear

Loving Mother and Brother and Father

45 and I Conclude with Remaining your

ever Loving Son and Husband till

Death Thomas Holding, in the

Next Letter you sends to me pleas[ ]

to put my Christian Name in full

50 as follows, Thomas Holding

For

Mary Holding

to be Left at the Sign

of the Golden Lion

Church Gate

Boulton Lei Moores

Lancashire

at side:

with all speed

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/17**

No 13 Letter and Sydney, Port Jackson.

only one Answer New South Wales,

New Holland 23rd June 1815

My Dear Father & Mother,

5 I take this Opportunity of

[ ]iting to you those few lines hoping it will

[ ]ind you in good Health as it leaves me and

I should wish to know the reason you dont

write to me as there is a Ship sails from

10 Portsmouth every 3 Months there is nothing

in this World that would giue me more

happiness than hearing from you at euery

Opportunity there is never a Ship comes

into New South Wales but I always go

15 and ask for one and when there is not

one I always think that /you\ quite forgott[ ] me

Mr and Mrs Holding

Page 2

Dear Father you was a speaking to me about the

Men that came in the Ship with me but

20 I neuer associated with any of them so that

I dont know any thing about any of them

for I have as much as ever I can do to look

after myself Dear Father I should like to know

the reason my Brothe dont write to me Si[nce]

25 that he can find as much time as I can

do So I hear there is Peace made in England

and I hope you will let me know how

trade is in England since there was Peace

and whether I could gett an honest living if

30 I was at Home .... Dear Wife and Child

I should wish to know the Reason that she

does not write to me for there is some hopes

of me getting my Pardon let me know the

foundation andd send it by the next Ship

Page 3

35 Not to be afraid of putting them in the Post Office

for I will pay the postage for them and

let me know all the New They can andd not

to be afraid to let me know all particulars

Dear Mother if it should be our fortune

40 in this Wo/r\ld I hope it will be a happy

meeting and if not in this world I hope in

[ ]xt so now I think we will can[ ]

[ ]ife Child, father Mother Broth[ ]

[ ] my Cousin James & my Wifes Sister

45 Dear Father and Mother I am

your Most Afft and Loving Son

Till Death shall part

Thomas Holding

P:S: Kip my Dear little Wife & Child for

50 me my Dear Mother

T Holding

sydney New South Wales 23[ ]

Mr John Holding

To be left at the sign of the Golden

Lion Church gate, Bolton

Lee Moores

Lancashire

Holding

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/18**

Sydney June [~~11~~] 30 1815

My Dear Wife

I take this oppertunity of Writing to you

Hoping to find to find you and My Dear Child in

5 good health as this Leaves Me at Presant thanks

Be to god for the Same and I ham very unhappy

to think that you have for got me So soon for

My Part I know that I ham Shut up in one Corner

of the World But I hope that you wont for get to

10 write to me hevery 3 Months as there is a Ship

Sails from Portsmouth and there is nothing will

Give Me More happiness than to hear from you for

My Part there is never a Ship Coms to this Contry But

I goes to know whether there is aney Letter for Me

15 or no and when there is no Letter then I think you

Have quite forgot Me to think that I have got ondley

one Letter Since this time 3 yers So I Desire you

Will Let Me know the Reason that My Brother Dont

Write to Me and My Cousan James and I hope they

20 Will find time to write if they Can and My Dear

father and Mother I hear that there is Peace with all the

World so I Desire you will Send the Word if it is So and

Please to Let Me know how the trade is Since Peac[ ]

and Whether I can get a honist Living or not and

25 there is a Strong Report of us getting our pardon

Page 2

and if there is Please to Let Me Know By the

first Ship and you Mentinsond Some of the Men

that Came from England with Me But I will ashure

you I have never Cept Company with any one Sins

30 I Left my natife Contry for I will ashure you I find

it as Much as I Can do to Mind My Self and I have

Done all that Eavr Man Can Do to get my Liberty

and to Come home But it is all in vain the More

I strive the More I ham Behind So Dear Mother if

35 Should Please God to Let us Meet a gain in this

World I hope it will Be a happy Meetting and if it

Should Please god to Call Me Before our Meeting

I hope we Shal Meet in another World Where there

Will Be no More Parting once I Did not think

40 that it would Be my feat to Be So far Distant

from you My Dear Mother and you My Wife and

Child Dear Mother things in this Contry is very

Dear Mens hats is too Pound too Shillings and

Stockings ten Shillings Per Pair and Shoos

50 Sixteen Shillings Per Pair Sugar 3 Shillings

Per Pound and Butter 7 Shillings Per Pound

Cotton Prints 12 Shillings Per yard velveteen one Pound

Per yard 40 Reed Muslin 12 Shillings Per yard

and Eavry thing acordingly and allthough the

55 Prices is So high We are Verry glad to get at aney

Price so I must inform you of my Wages

Page 3

I have 20 Pounds Per year in Corrency

Money it will Be More than 12 Pounds in English

Coin So My Dear Brother I hope you will Stay

60 at home with your Mother and Becontented in

the State you are in and I Desire you to write

to Me and Send Me all the news that is going with

you Both in family afairs and how trade is and

the Prise of Vitling and all oather news that you Can

65 as ther is nothing will give Me More Satisfaction

then to hear from you all & when it is Dark with

you it is Light with us and the natifs of this Contry

they are Blaiks and they go naked Just as they Came

into the world and they live on Nuts of trees as [ ]  
70 [ ] Snouts or aney oather Creeping thing

[ ]n and Children goes all naked a Like

So I have nothing More to add ondley Begging

of you My Dear Wife that you will take Perticul[ ]

Care of My Dear Child until I Return for I will

75 ashure you I think of nothing But you and My

Dear Child and My Sincere Prayr is Both Day

and night that I May once More Be along with you

Both and never More to Be Parted – – –

So no More at Presant from your Loving husba[ ] –

80 [~~til Death~~] and affectinate father and Dutifull Son

til Death Thos Holding

Mrs Holding

to be left at the sign of the Golden L[ ]

Church Gate Bolton

Lee Moores

Lancashire

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/20**

My Dear Father and Mother

March 19th 1816

this Comes to Let you no that I ham in good Ealth

hat present thanks be to god for it. I hope it will find

5 you the seme Dear Father if you Could Send me a few things

has [ ] same Coulters Bouls and tr\h/ed and mousless

spolled for Caps and gouns and Shalls the Best you have

yet and a pase of them prinilled Bed Covers wich the

making even I laft home and Coulters stokings and a pace

10 of the Best /peses of\ prints you Chan get and Seddels and fine

Lin Clath for shirts the Best you Can get and Legs

and futten for Caps and tepe and if you heve Recourse

to Send soum of the Boults that Coums of the

Masten works sumaker hals hers [ ]

15 for the hals and Julanlen and Ribbens Blu and

[ ]te and if you send me these particlars it will

[ ]u me a great kindness hat this present time

Dear father plese to derect them to Mr Heath

Sherby Street Halton garden London to the

20 Comissary girel Allen Nue South weles

and put the Letter in the Box that I [ ]

the [ ] for and ples to send a Letter to [ ]illm

Heath to fonned the seme to Nue South weles

a Long with the Allan things and I shall be

25 shoure to get them sefe put Mr Allan

neme on it But not mine be sure to

Nale this Box doun fast and if there is hanny

Room to send James bradley thing with mine

Dear Father has there is No More oppertunety

30 of Sending me No more as my thime is groing

Short of Confinement wich I ham Looking for

it will Be the happeness dey that he[ ]er I had in

Page 2

My Life if you Should Receiv this Letter

Send me word if you Can send me these hartic\less/

35 nor not Rite to me as soon as you Can for I hop

that I soon be with you hall Dear father and fine

poucet andkerchifs Someone hat present From

your hun dutty ful Son Thos Houlding till

Death

40 Dear wife and Louing Child I

Hope the dey will Com when we shall be

Both to gather Dear Wife I hope you will

geat /the\ monny that my huncel hattan Would

[in det to one ] Left home has it will dow

45 Me a greate kindness hat this present thime

and send me has much has you cand get

in gouds has this is the Last oppertunity you

Shall heue wilst I ham in Country sell the

2 pare of Looms if you can and hall my Close

50 to /sell them\ send to me has it will be a great thing for

[to have my pacadge] to England as it is a Long

we for me to Com home Rember my Love to

My Brother willam and to my Cousen

James and to your sister Nancy and Father

55 and Mother and to little nancy grene and if

you send me these thing be shour that we

hare sefe and if Mr Biley gouse to London

yet tell /im\ to see Mr Heath imself and no

More from your Loving Housbond

60 till Death Thomas Houlding

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/21**

Sydney New South Wales May 30th 1816

Honorde parents

I take this Opportunity by the Ship Alexander with

pleasure to inform you that Mr Allan as procured a promise

5 from the Governor of Emancipation for me which I am to

Receive the first Monday in nexs Month which kindness we

agree than of this Colony for the Remainder of my Sentence

& do expect to leave Mr Allan, in hopes of getting into some More

Lucrative Employment which I trust in God will prove [ ]

10 [ ] that at the Expiration of the time I have the [inexpressable]

Happyness of once More enjoying my beloved parents and

Relations I have to Acknowledge the Receipt of three Letters

from you which I was happy to Receive & hope I shall hear

Again at all Opportunity with all information as to hear

15 from you is a great Happyness to me – I have no particular

News here to Relate Excepting that the Native Blacks are

Continually Murdering the White People in the Interior

of the Country the Soldiers where font in persuit of them

A few weeks back & Shot 14 of them – I hope when

20 you write you will inform me of the Welfare of my Wife & Dear Child

I wish you to Understand that this favor I am to Receive

is totally Risen from my own good Conduct in Service

[of] not the least indebted to Any Interest through Colonell

Melcher in fact it is only wasting paper mentioning him

Page 2

25 or Isaac Crompton & I hope when I have the pleasure of

Returning to you which Nothing but Death will prevent

that I shall never be Disgusted with their presents or names

I hope that you got my last Letter by the Emu

Dated March last, wherein I wishd you to forward me

30 Sundry Goods which I now most earnestly hope you will

not Neglect doing According to my Instructions as they

will be of Serious Service towards assisting me Home

I am Exceeding Sorry to hear the Death of my Grandmother

& Uncle Richard Holding – but it is a Debt we must all p[ ]

35 I would be happy to receive a Letter from my Brother if

he can possibly find time to Write me one – & [ ]

Cousin James – haveing No further information to Com-

municate at present I conclude hopeing to God to

give you all health & Happiness & my speedy Return

40 hopeing to be Rememberd to my Wifes Sister – & all Enquiring

friends & with God Bless You all --

I remain Yours

Most Dutifull Son

Thos Holding

Page 3

45 NB The night after this was wrote I was

robbed of all my money and among other things

they broke open this letter. I hope by this time

you have received the newspapers which I sent

by my last letter. The first monday in next

50 December I am to receive my Emancipation

which day I hope you will keep up

yours &c

T. Holding

My dear wife and Louing

Child that is the [ ] any

55 has I hope the dey will Coum

when we shall have the ple[sure]

of once moar meetting

in this world, No more hat

present from you Lovin housband

Address:

Mr John Holding

to be left at the Golden Lion

Church Gate Bolton le Moors

Lancashire

to right: two attempts at Thomas Holden's signature

to left:

Thos Holding at Esquire Allans Sydney

Cove New south wales

**Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/21a**

Dear Mother I have Receaved 3 Letters from you

wich gives me much Comfort to her you har

hall well has this Leue[s] me plese to send

me word what a letter Coust you from me

5 I haue sent you som nusepepers and a [parret]

fethers that I Shot my Self so god Bless you

hall No more hat present from your

hon duty full son thomas Houlding

I Beg you will Send my doutter han to

10 School I hae seen Jhon fisher and Nouls But

had no thime /to\ speke to them

Address:

For

Jhon Houlding

to be Left hat the Sine of

the Goulden Lion Chourch

gate Boulton Lee Mors

Lankshire [ ]

Postmark:

7 [ ] 7

1816

**Letters to Thomas Holden, 1812-1816**

Transcriptions are produced with the kind permission of the Lancashire Records Office, Preston

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/1 all one hand

May 18th 1812

Dear Husband,

I Rec'd your well Come letter which was dated

may 16 which gave me great Comfort to hear

5 you was well as this leaves both me and your

Child and your Uncle Rich.d Holding is for

Come Esther on saturday or sunday next all the

witnesses that we Can hear on is Isaac from [ ]

Edward Crompton and [John] Grine so I Conclude your

10 Loving and affectionate wife till death m

we are doing all that lies in hower power

for you against your trial Comes on

all your Neighbours wishes you all at home

again and would [b]e glad to see you at home

15 your father and mother wonder at your Brothe[r]

William sends no word and wonder how he

goes on for he never send no word to them

I [ ] Must [ ] [s]end his love to you and

would be very Glad to see you at home

20 so we Conclude your [blot] loving and affection\ate/

father & mother [John] & Ellen Holding Hagg

End

Over: Mr [Thomas] Holding

Lancaster Castle

with speed [ ] plaze (?)

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/5 (one hand)

June [illeg – 1812?]

Dear Husband

I Recd your letter with Great Trouble

to hear you was so uncomfortable in

5 your Mind and more so to hear you was

not in health your father as been at Mr

Fletcher and Mr Walking and James Gooden

and the all say they do there best for

you but Mr Fletcher says it is to soon yet

10 to troy to get your liberty yet Dear son

make yourself Content in your situation

as well as you Can and behave yourself

and send for some Money when you are

in need of some your father and mother

15 send there best Respects to you and your

Brother Willm sends his love to you your

Child is well and all your family at presen\t/

we Conclude your loving and affectionate

wife till Death Molly Holding

Perhaps wife is for Coming on sunday

Next (same hand)

Over:

To

Mr Thos Holding

Lancaster Castle

with Speed

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/14

Bolton 4th March 1814

Dear Son Thos

It is with the most heartfelt sattisfaction that

we can possible express to you that yours of June 24

5 1813 is come safe to hand, by which you give us an acct

of Part of your suffrings since you left home but dista[ ]

as you are from us we feel greet pleasure in your haveing

it in your Power to say that upon the whole you have

found a residence that promises fair for your comfort

10 Even in those remote regeons called New south wales

the acct of your Sufrage hath given us all sattisfaction

and what aught to be our consolation is that you stand

[ ]fortunately sheet with such kind reception /for\ from the

tenor of your letter we are led to believe that the man

15 you are liveing with is a gentleman, we beg to say

to him we are very thankful that he hath so far condes

ended to take you into his service and at the same tim

we hope and trust that you will not be wanting to [me ]

his favour and esteem whom while he thnks for open to employ

20 you, Dear Thos with such prospects as this we look

Forward to those happyer days when you may have

the pleasure of engoying Our paternal care for [ ]

in your native land which the almighty in his

wisdom be pleased to fullfill.

In the margin:

25 We expect by the time you receive [ ] your wife will have had one from

you as you say that you will [ ] Fortune her never faiding

love to you Adieu

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/14a

Dear son we shall certainly do all in our power to get

your sentance mittageted so that if we can do any thing

in that way we will give you the speedyest information

you cannot conceive what satisfaction yours gave us

5 for we had all kinds of doubts and reports about you

Some time you was [sometimes – scored out] just out

at sea some times at one place the next day some

where Else But yours of 24th June [ ] put the

matter beyond a Doubt alass alass unfortunate son

10 your wife and child is well as are we all hope you

are the same as is all other family matters that is your wife

and child is where you left them together with all your

other things and as you hope to see them once again

we shall keep them all to[ ]ther whill your [ ]

15 which we hope will not be long

Counterpane weaving is gone to all intents and purposes

for out of upwards o 20 looms at the hag end not one

is left all the hands are Enployed at Quiltings or muslin

we for our part are in the muslin line, hope you will

20 Excuse our short hand yet the heart is the same to you

Our dear loving Thos holding [ ]

Remembered to you his kind love, and your Cousin Fu-

holding the same together with a numerous train

of Relatives and acquaintance which all wish to se you again

25 so we Conclude and remain your father and mother

till time shall be no more John and Elen holding

[illegible], the first opertunity

In margin:

Nothing but war in Europes.

one knowles father and mother

desire that you will let them

30 know if you can where he is

he went from England with you

Thos Holding

[ ] of Commisary [ ]

Esqre in New South Wale[ ]

or Sidney-Cove

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/15

Dear Son Hagend April 1st 1814

We receivd yours & are glad to hear

you are so comfortably situated at the end of

your Journey which we are sorry to hear was

5 attended with sickness you say you are looking

out for a ship but (for what reason if you

are well-doing) but you wish to come home

before the expiration of the time you was

sent for, you must be very cautious how

10 you go about it though [ ]e should all be very

happy to see you at home again in a Lawfull

manner Please to excuse an advice how to

proceed if you are acquainted with your

master (which I suppose you are) you must

15 get him to write to the government of England

for their approbation of your discharge from

Banishment as returning before the

time without it whould cause them to

send you again & perhaps fore a longer period

20 you'll please to write as soon as you can after

the receipt of this & let us know your mind

your Wife & Child are very well & your goo[ ]

page 2

in the same state you left them & likely

to continue so if you know any thing

25 about Knowles where he is wish

to know for the sake of his parents they are

so anc[ ]tious to hear from him

your Wife joines in the greatest Love

with us to you & we remain your

30 Loving Father & Mother

John & Ellen Holden

PS Please to write to us as ofte[n]

you Can.

Thos Holden

At Commissary Allen Esq

New South Wales

or Sydney Cove

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/16

Haugh y/e 10th April 1815

Dear Thos. Your uncle Richd holden is dead and was interd

the First day of this present hear all the Rest of under is well

Dear

5 Husband Yours of 17 of Sept 1814

Came safe and welcomly to hand by which I

am very Glad to find that you was in good health

at that time. hope you still enjoy good health

as there leaves me and the child together with

10 your father and mother and Brother /love to you\ William,

Dear Thomas you appear in your letter to want to

know Wether I am for coming to you believe me

It Certainly would be the greatist pleasure to me

In this life to be with you be in what part of the

15 world you may Or let your situation in life be

Prosperity or adversity It woud give me great

satisfaction to share the toil with you, but Wether

it will Ever be Our lot to meet at NS Wales or

not I canot tell for Very soon after you left home

20 I together with the rest of the Bolton /[ ]\ wives sent

ut a Petition to the prince Regent of England for

to let us come after you but we got for Answer

that the time you had to stay that is your term

of stay or stop whas so short that nothing Could

25 be done in that Cace so you see how we as well as

page 2

you are placed, so you need not have the least

Doubt but I should have been with you before now

If I could have found any way that was legal

at the same time We all Consider it a miracle

30 That you exeaped being shi[ ] with [ ] I [ ]

as it would at Once have [ ]led all Our hopes

of ever enjoying your Company again, which we

Trust will not be long you wish to know Our mind

Concerning your comeing home believe us we desire

35 that if you have to stay the time you was Convict\ed/

For at the end of that tim[ ] you will make the

Best of your way home, for we are inform'd that

[ ] your master can do a deal for you by way of

saving the Expense you speak of, a[t<s] the same time

40 It gives us all the greatest pleasure notwith stand

ing the attention you have to pay to find that you

have mett with such a master and we [ ]

say a Friend a Esq. Allen hope you will continue

with him [wil – scored out] while you stay in the Isleand and

45 at the same time we think of our Duty to say as he

hath placed so much Confidence in you we have not

the least doubt but you will study to merit his

Future Trust or Favours he may Chuse to besto[ ]

on you, we beg to say we wish you to look forward to tho[ ]

50 happyer days when you shall have to Return to us all

again which we hope in the almighty will be your lot

To Conclude we Remain till death Mary and Ann Holden

In margin:

Page 1

51 If you desire to know how trade is with us [ ] it is very bad and getting worse

Every day and where it will old we cannot say [ ] provisions are deare and geting higher

very

Fast

Page 2

Thos Fishers wife and knowles wife desire that if y[ ] know anything off their husbands

55 that you will say it or let them know in your n[ ]t letter to us as the have had no

advice from the[m] [ ]ince the went to NS Wales –

Page 3 (ie behind address)

Write us again by the first sh[ ]at departs from Sidney Cove as we have duely

Answerd all your letters and [ ] surprised that you have not got them as y[ ]

Thomas Holden

at Commissary AllansEsqur Sidney Cove

New South Wales

290 AP[ ]

1815

LONDON

Preston, Lancashire County Records Office, DDX 140/7/19

Bolton y/e 28th 1815

Aug

Dear Thomas we jointly take this oppertunity of send\ing/

you a few lines to inform you that we are all

5 well at this time hope you are the same --

Likewise yours of the 14 of sept 1814 Came safe to

hand makeing the Fifth from you and this will

make the same number that we have sent you to

N.S.Wales If you have had the Fortune to receive

10 them we hope that it will give you some Consol

ation for you appear to say or Think in your letters

that we have all forgotten you, Dear Thomas as it

is not posible that we Ever shall while god [sp]ares

Our life and we do assure you that it allways gives

15 us pleasure to hear from you at all times and under

all Circumstances, that may happen to you, was it

in our power to bring you back your stay from us

would be Very short in your Present time of life but

we fear that you will have to stay the period

20 of time you was sent for, thoug we have made

all the intrest in your favour in our power, hope

if you have to stay as above that you will make

yourself as Content as your situation will admit of

looking forward to the time if god spare that you will

25 have to return to us all again -----------

we have heard that all Transports have had one year taken off

page 2

Dear Thomas we have to inform you that Thos [illeg] is

Return'd home again and at the same time we wish to

acquaint you that we are inform'd that the parson you have

30 with hath it in his power to do some thing towards getting

you a passage and your liberty now if Mr Alen Esq

would condecend in this Ou[ ]quest it would Leave

a lasting Testimoney our love and Esteem that nevere

Cou'd be Ereased from our minds and we wish you to

35 Speak to your master on this subject, Dear Thos your

wife hath pettioned Three times Over to Come to you but

the secretary of state gave for answer that your [Term]

wass so short that nothing Could be done for her, we

[ ] you will Excuse this our short hand and believ[ ]

40 [ ] to be untill death

your Father Mother and Wife

John Elen and Mary Holden

PS we have to say that we are all together the sam[ ]

[ ] when you life and intend [ ] ] Remain so untill

45 your Return your daughter ann is a Very fine Child and

often speakes about her dad Brother Will Remember

his love to you as doth Mary sister and Father and

Mother together with uncles and aunts &

Please to Write on all Oppertunitys and not fail

50 and we will do the same

Margin:

your grandmother and your uncle R[ ] dead [R ] intered the first

[ ]unday this year

Thomas Holden

at Commissary Allens Esq

sidney Cove

New South Wales

or else where

[In diff hand]

From Jhon Houlding

to be Left hat the

Sine of the Goudin Lian

Curch Gare Boulton

Lee mours

Lankshire