

## Courtship letters between John Hall and Hannah Greaves, Jan-June 1824

Redivals nr Bury Jan 3rd 1824

Dear Hannah,

Ever since I have had the opportunity of knowing you, I have been in love with you, and I have no doubt you must have perceived my passion was sincere. Indeed, Hannah, I am continually thinking about you, and I find it impossible to express how dearly I love you. I have often designed to do so, but was always afraid to open my mind when an opportunity presented itself. However, I have now done so, and I hope you will not be cruel to me, as I am sure I could never live to see you in the arms of another. You are intimately acquainted with my circumstances and disposition. To this I can only add that my happiness or misery through life depends altogether on the reply you make to this offer. I shall employ no compliments, neither shall I insult your good sense by idle promises; but should you accept me as your protector through life, all my anxiety will be to promote your happiness, and at the same time to retain possession of your heart for which I shall be amply prepared in seeing that you are gratified with my conduct. On the contrary, should you reject my offer, I shall never again enjoy true peace of mind; yet I trust, even in this case, that you will be happy with the man whom you may bless with your hand, and that you will honor with your friendship: Oh! that you may resolve to grant me that happiness for life. Expecting your answer, I am, dear Hannah,

Your truly affectionate lover,

John Hall

Redivals nr Bury Jan 3<sup>rd</sup> 1824  
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Your truly affectionate lover,  
J<sup>n</sup> Hall

Austerlands, January 12th 1824

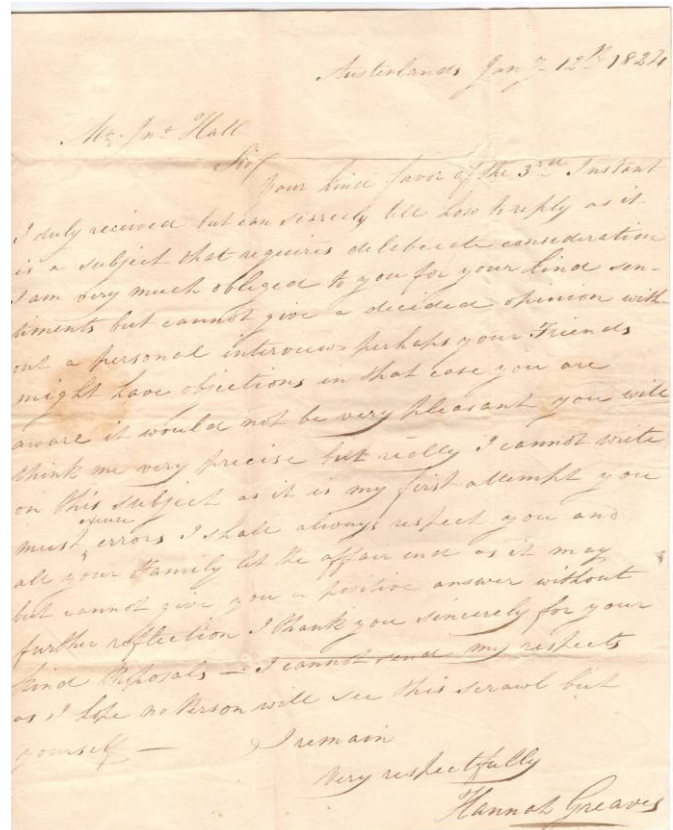
Mr John Hall

Sir,

Your kind favor of the 3rd instant I duly received but can scarcely tell how to reply as it is a subject that requires deliberate consideration. I am very much obliged to you for your kind sentiments but cannot give a decided opinion without a personal interview. Perhaps your friends might have objections in that case you are aware it would not be very pleasant. You will think me very precise but really I cannot write on this subject as it is my first attempt. You must excuse errors. I shall always respect you and all your family, let the affair end as it may but cannot give you a possible answer without further reflection. I thank you sincerely for your kind proposals. I cannot send my respects as I hope no person will see this scrawl but yourself. - I remain,

very respectfully,

Hannah Greaves



Austerlands Jan 12th 1824

Mr John Hall

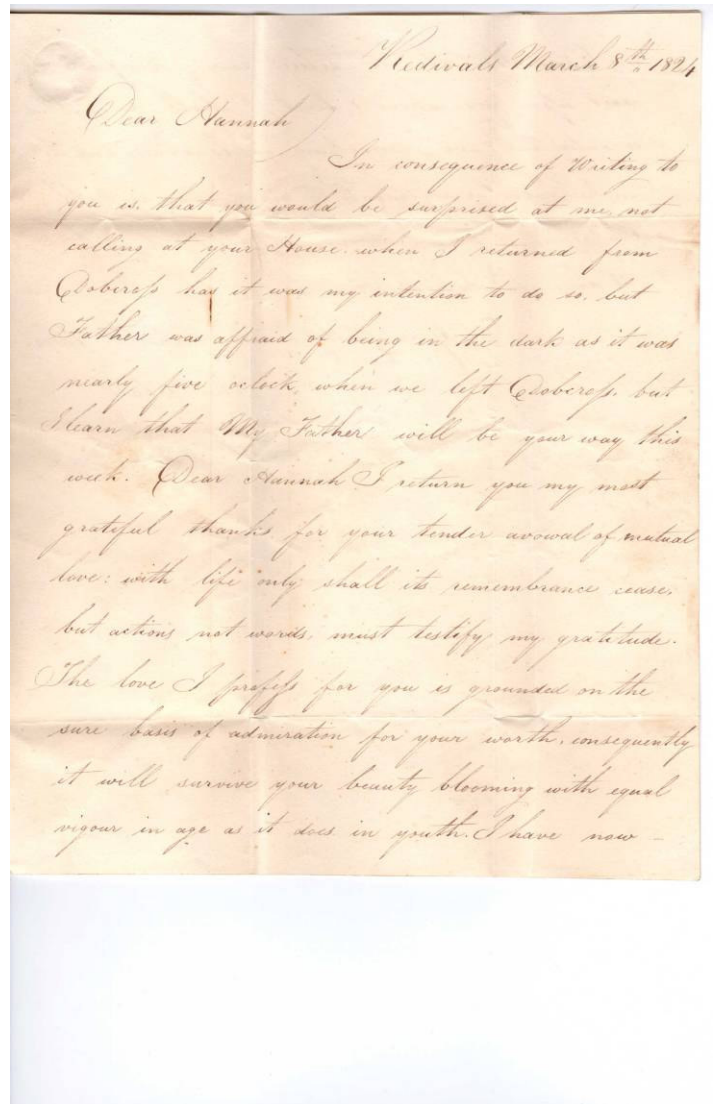
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Very respectfully  
Hannah Greaves

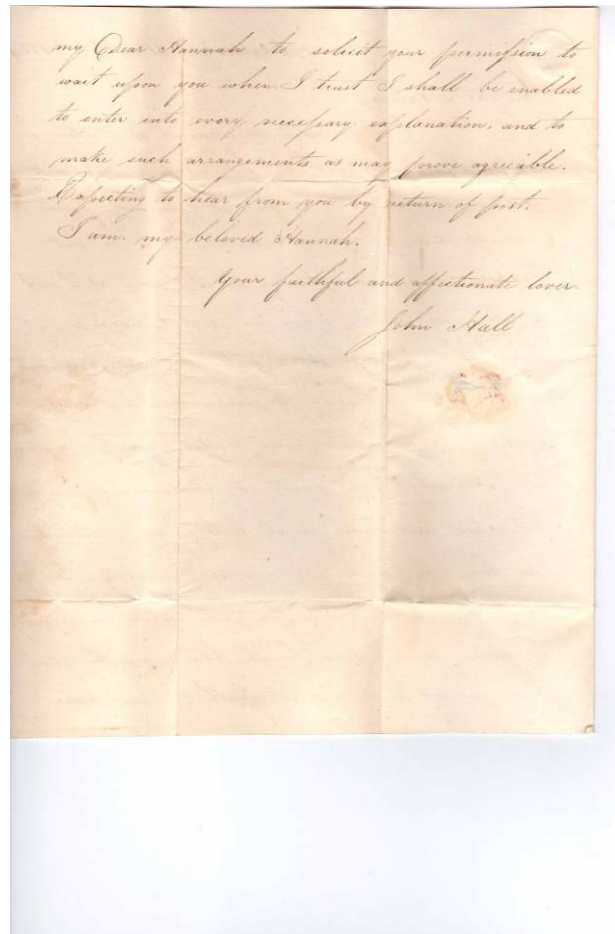
Redivals March 8th 1824

Dear Hannah,

In consequence of writing to you is that you would be surprised at me not calling at your house when I returned from Dobcross as it was my intention to do so but father was afraid of being in the dark as it was nearly five o'clock when we left Dobcross but I learn that my father will be your way this week. Dear Hannah I return you my most grateful thanks for your tender avowal of mutual love: with life only shall its remembrance cease, but actions not words must testify my gratitude. The love I possess for you is grounded on the sure basis of admiration for your worth, consequently it will survive your beauty blooming with equal vigour in age as it does in youth. I have now



my Dear Hannah to solicit your permission to wait upon you when I trust I shall be enabled to enter into every necessary explanation and to make such arrangements as may prove agreeable. Expecting to hear from you by return of post. I am my beloved Hannah,  
Your faithful and affectionate lover  
John Hall





Austerlands March 11th 1824

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 8th instant came duly to hand in which you still mention the most sincere marks of esteem. I make no doubt, allow me to be candid, but the conjugal state is the most happy in the world if the love between the parties be mutual and their study be to contribute to each other's welfare and happiness, and I certainly would not address you on this topic if I was not convinced in my own mind that this would be the case; allow me my dear Sir once more to say that it is a serious thing to trifle with a female's affections and character but I feel confidence from our family acquaintance and the opinion I have formed of yourself that I shall not see an instance of this kind in the present affair. If upon mature reflection on the subject you still give me the

preference I shall esteem a visit from you an honor; if you can make it convenient to visit \_ on Sunday the 21st instant I will be at home and we can have a little conversation on the affair if you think proper. I am glad to say that Mr Last paid the bill. I certainly was disappointed at not seeing you on the Saturday evening, but excuse you as I thought you perhaps expected being in Manchester or that you were late in your business. I enquired of my cousin Cooper on the Sunday. He said you were very late at Hale hill and that your father said he would call upon us in a short time. I said indeed! but thought to myself this is poor satisfaction for me seeing his son. I will conclude this scrawl as I think you will scarcely have patience to read it. I really am quite awkward when I write to you, but I hope to get the better of it if ever I shall make a third attempt.

I am

yours respectfully  
Hannah Greaves

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I am  
yours respectfully  
Hannah Greaves

Austerlands 5th April 1824

My dear Sir,

Agreeable to promise I now sit down to write to you but do confess I now felt so much at a loss to collect my scattered ideas as I do on the present occasion. However as we ought to meet an important question with due consideration and proper firmness. I will treat the subject with candor and sincerity. I have given your offer my most serious consideration and certainly feel much obliged to you for the preference you have shown me. I think it advisable for your friends to have a knowledge notwithstanding you shall act as you think best on this head. It is a serious subject and one in which your happiness might be materially concerned and if you do repeat your visit it will be thoroughly known to my friends (there are no secrets in our country). I will be firm in saying that I see no objections to receive your address providing your intentions are strictly honorable and I beg

leave to add I have a very different opinion of you than to suppose for a moment that you have acted in disguise. The respect I have for you will not admit of such an idea. I was at Middleton on Saturday with a friend. I own I stole many a glance towards Bury but also could not see my friend Hall. Robert and myself are removing to our new cottage and if you condescend to honor me with a visit I will send our girl to Peter Hoult's Swann Inn Greenacres Moor at any hour or time you may appoint. Robert looks as sly as a fox, he says he has found us out and I should not be surprised if he has not mentioned it to James as he said in a joke yesterday he did not expect me staying long with Robert. I smiled but made no reply. You are a favourite with Robert. He speaks very highly of you. Indeed my father has not made a remark that I have heard; from this I conclude that like me has not many objections. Excuse this remark as a joke as it is a suggestion of my own.

Austerlands 5<sup>th</sup> April 1824

My dear Sir,

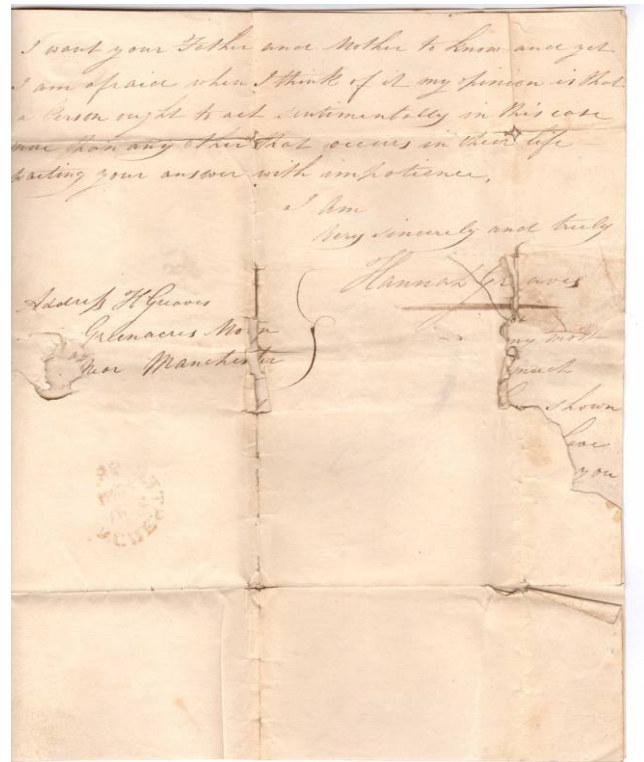
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I want your father and mother to know and yet  
I am afraid when I think of it. My opinion is that  
a person ought to act sentimentally in this case  
more than any other that occurs in their life.  
Waiting your answer with impatience,

I am

very sincerely and truly,  
Hannah Greaves





Redivals April 7th 1824

My Dear Hannah,

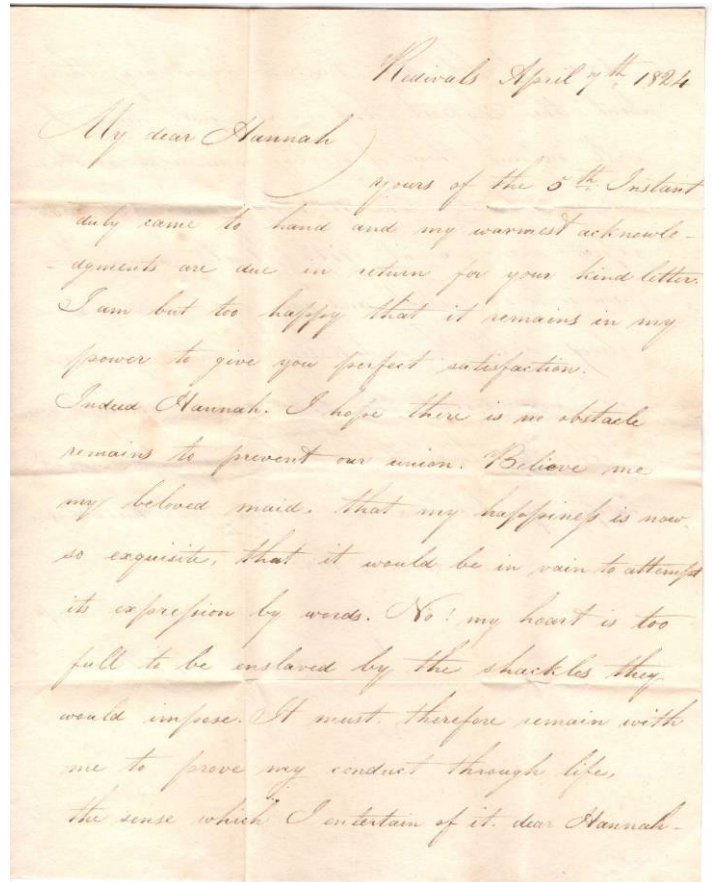
Yours of the 5th instant  
duly came to hand and my warmest acknowledgments  
are due in when for your kind letter  
I am but too happy that it remains in my  
power to give you perfect satisfaction.  
Indeed Hannah, I hope there is no obstacle  
remains to prevent our union. Believe me  
my beloved maid, that my happiness is now  
so exquisite that it would be in vain to attempt  
its expression by words. No, my heart is too  
full to be enslaved by the shackles they  
would impose. It must therefore remain with  
me to prove my conduct through life,  
the sense which I entertain of it, dear Hannah.

I have not let my parents know anything  
about the subject but in a short time, I  
will inform them of it by some way or other,  
and on Sunday the 11th instant you may  
expect me over at Mr Hoults Swan Inn  
from 11 to 12 o'clock and may you never my  
beloved regret the confidence you thus repose in  
me, nor repent the hour which allowed your  
affectionate lover to avow himself the most  
happy of his sex in being your husband.

I am my beloved

Yours, every yours,

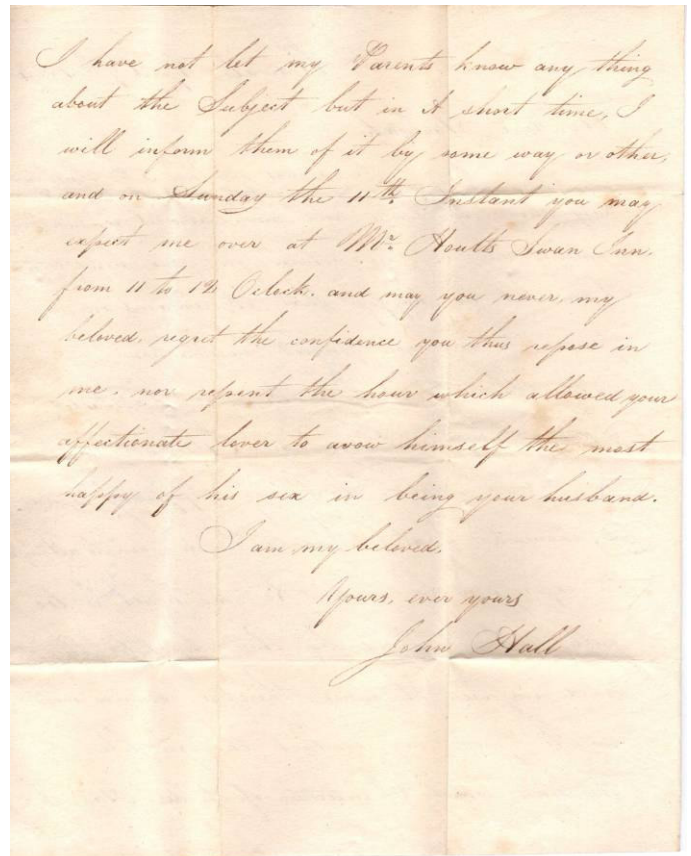
John Hall



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affectionate lover to avow himself the most  
happy of his sex in being your husband.

I am my beloved,

Yours, ever yours  
John Hall



Greenacres Moor May 10th 1824

Ever dear Sir,

You will I make no doubt be impressed to see a letter having seen me so recently but beg you will excuse me writing as I cannot make myself comfortable without addressing a line to you. My mind was really very much perplexed last night in seeing so many eyes upon us. Your wish for me to walk I know was from the strict motive of respect. As my brother was with me there could be no great demand to censure; my flattering expectations tell me that the period will some time arrive when I can spend months instead of moments with you without either scandal or remark. My dear sir should that time were to come my happiness will be exquisite but alas! we are never entirely certain of any thing in this transitory world until we attain it. Your welfare, I can assure you your happiness is very near my heart and my constant study shall be to retain your good opinion. What kind of sentiments am I writing. My heart speaks language scarcely becoming my sex but the pleasure I have in writing to you is unspeakable therefore you must not dwell with censure on the remarks of a silly girl who in every respect considers you as her confidential friend. I have much pleasure in saying that no remark was made respecting my walk with you. Sister James told me one of the ladies asked her if she knew you. She replied you was a friend of Robert's and I rather think it will settle there but however I will have a walk with you whenever you & myself think proper whether Robert is with us or not but must confess it does not look very well for me to go towards your house and return alone. Brother & sister James and Robert Cooper spent the evening with me. James was very friendly but never mentioned your name. Suppose he did not see any thing improper in me being seen with you. If you have an opportunity to send me a few lines I shall receive them with very great pleasure but I do not fully request it without it be your wish. I suppose a fortnight will be over sometime but it seems like a year to me. I wish you did live at Oldham. You must excuse this scribble as I have been called off each two or three lines and it is post time or I would

Greenacres Moor May 10<sup>th</sup> 1824  
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have scribbled this half over. Hoping to see you  
at the appointed time.

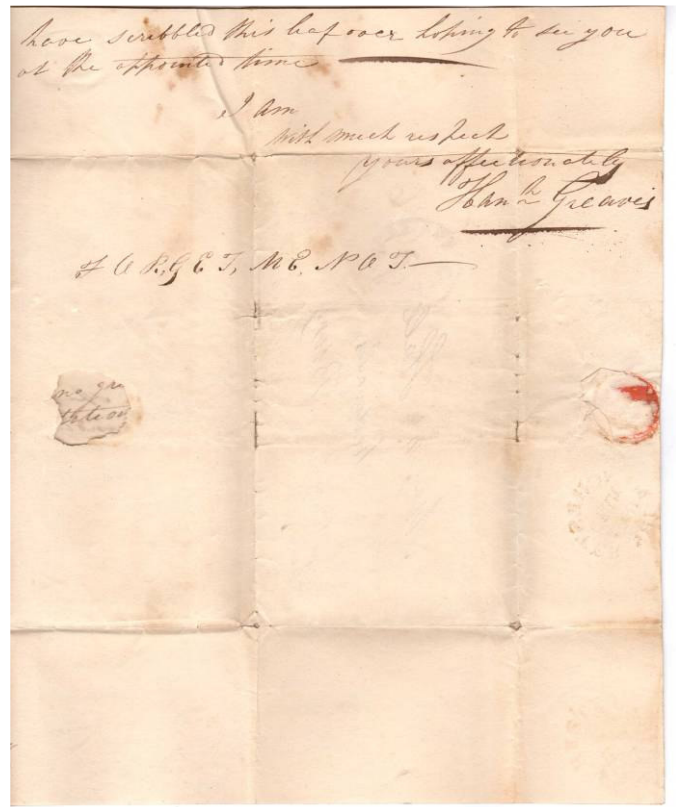
I am

with much respect

yours affectionately

Hannah Greaves

FORGET ME NOT



Redivals May 17th 1824

My Dear Hannah,

Your charming letter has removed a weighty load from my heart and I may now calculate upon the speedy enjoyment of every possible happiness. Be assured I am truly sensible of my great obligation to you, and that I shall never forget them, but endeavour by every method in my power to repay some part of them.

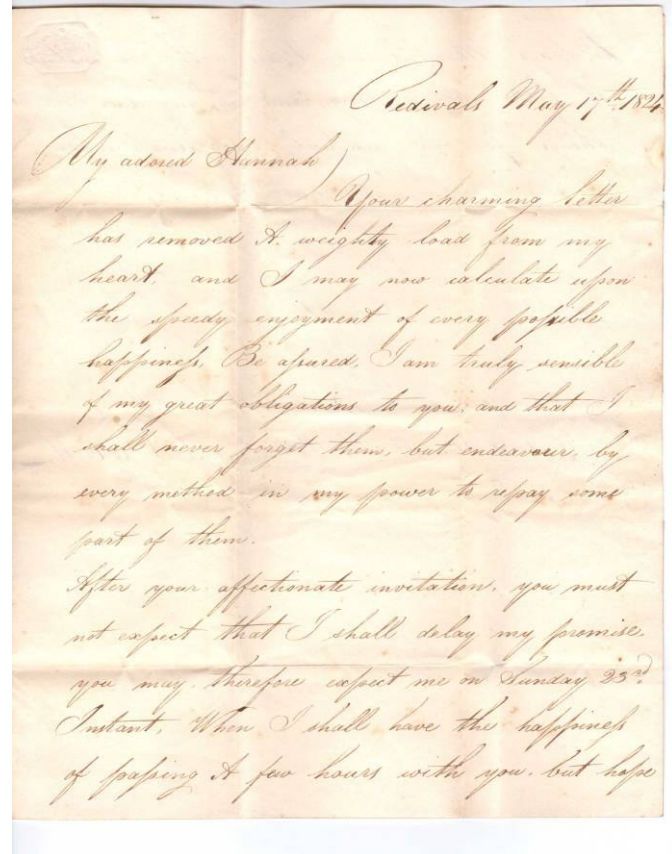
After your affectionate invitation, you must not expect that I shall delay my promise you may therefore expect me on Sunday 23rd instant, when I shall have the happiness of passing a few hours with you, but hope to pass months and years with you instead of hours before long, and we will my dear arrange things for our mutual happiness when I come over. I am dear Hannah

Yours, every yours,

John Hall

FORGET ME NOT

I CANNOT FORGET YOU

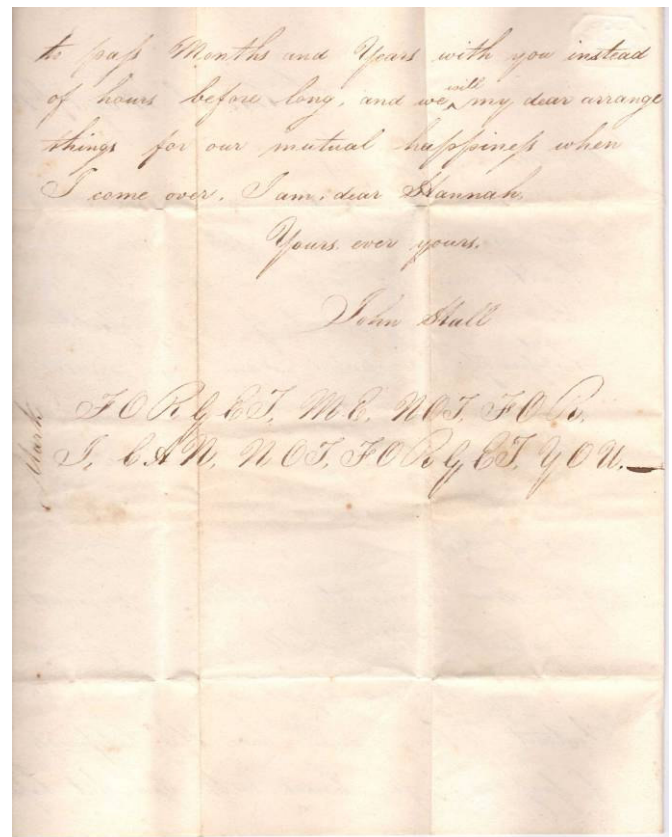


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Yours, ever yours,

John Hall

FORGET ME NOT, FORGET YOU.



Greenacres Moor June 22nd 1824

My very dear Sir,

You will perhaps excuse me in addressing you as I thought it necessary to acquaint you with the particulars that have occurred since I had the pleasure of seeing you. My sister came according to promise on Monday morning. She was uncommonly kind and began to arrange matters in the first place. She wrote to my father & mother acquainting them with the affair requested. Mother to come and assist us in making arrangement for dress etc. She likewise informed brother, & sister, James and Robert. They all seem to have a desire to see us united and of course I could not say they should not. I have learned since they are ordering fine

blue cloth etc and I expect we shall have a smart attire respecting gloves. I think the ladies should have white and the gentlemen buff. You will have no access to arrange gloves for our family. If we all go we are to have 2 chaises from Oldham. My sister says the chaise, boys ought to have buff gloves from the church. I should like you to write per return of post your arrangements and when I may expect to see you. Brother James says he will gladly give up the shop to us and he is sure it will answer very well indeed and will do everything that lies in his power for our welfare. Excuse me enlarging as my time is rather engaged. Hoping to see you at your earliest convenience.

I am

yours affectionately

Hannah Greaves

Greenacres Moor - June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1824

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I am  
yours affectionately  
Hannah Greaves

Redivals June 22nd 1824

Ever Dear Hannah,

Everything therefore determined, I shall come over on Sunday next and on Monday shall seal our eternal union, yes my angel then will our mutual happiness be decided. My mother has informed my father about it, and she said that he had no objections of you coming to his house, and said it would be the best not to have many only what was sufficient, and I think you may invite your brothers, Robert, James, Mrs James and Miss Haigh if you think proper as I think it is useless having so many as we can invite all our friends in a short time after, and you must give my best respects to sister Haigh and to excuse us not inviting her as we could not think of doing so without inviting all, but I will leave it to you, and I think the best way for you to come to Prestwich is the way we thought of and me and my sisters to meet you there but however I shall come over according to promise then we can arrange things

as we think proper, we shall be very busy this week or I would have come over before Sunday, you must be sure to write by return of post and inform me which way you think is best. My sister Mary will write a few lines to you on the other side.

I am dear Hannah,

Yours, ever yours,  
John Hall

Prestwich June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1824.  
(Ever dear Hannah)  
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I am dear Hannah,  
Yours ever yours,  
John Hall

*John Hall married Hannah Greaves at Prestwich Church on the 28th June 1824 and they had one son, William, who became a surgeon and married Louisa Platt.*