

*Leven Shipyard
Dumbarton
4th November 1876*

Dear Papa and Mama,

You don't know how much I have been thinking of you this past week, thinking of you in all your trials and difficulties, and notwithstanding, your never-ceasing love and kindness to us all, and especially to me.

No doubt you will have thought of me as one of those hard-hearted wretches who, when they get themselves all comfortably settled, give up all thought for those who have been their loving protectors through life.

Dear papa and mama, if these have been your thoughts, I can assure you, you were never so much mistaken in all your life. Perhaps I hadn't that "show" of love about me that you see in other sons, nevertheless, deep down in the bottom of my heart, I don't think you will find many sons who could love you more than I do. I must also say on the other hand, I don't know what son could have a father or mother that loved and cared for him as much as you do.

To show you in a small measure how much I really do love you, kindly accept of the enclosed small token of love and gratitude. I wish it were double, but that is out of my power.

Believe me,

Ever your loving and affectionate son,

Walter F. Topping