

Maffham Rectory  
Full 3/138 Concerning the life & happy departure  
of our late dear Mr. Johnson

My dear Sir. You have probably heard already  
that my beloved Mother, has departed to her rest;  
but it is due to our Pres. & S<sup>r</sup>s of the Moravian  
Congregation, who pleaded for her so earnestly  
at the throne of grace, in the words of that  
most appropriate hymn, "When flesh decays  
and bones fail," "Do thou her strength &  
portion be;" I support her weakness, bear  
her ails, "And softly whisper trust in me."  
And it is due especially to you, who so  
kindly expressed their sympathy, and your  
own in your letter of the 1<sup>st</sup> Inst, that  
you should have direct information of  
God's mercy to her, and to us her devoted  
children.

And what greater joy  
could we have than the manifest  
tokens God has given us, that such  
prayers were heard. — It is true that  
her spirits were much oppressed during  
the last months of her life, owing  
doubt not, in a great degree to the  
nature of her disease which brought  
her to the grave: which without ever  
causing acute pain, has a grievous

on the Spleen; but the light which  
was shed upon her at times during her  
illness, redounds all the more to the  
Glory of God. — She alludes to both  
in a paper which my brother has just  
found among her Memoranda. —

"The wonderful grace of my God has been  
so sweetly manifested to me this day  
in my poor helpless forlorn state! dark  
and dead as I am in myself, and my  
best frame — Jesus comes as it were  
face to face to his poor creature, and  
says, I am thine, "only believe". —

Dear William has been with me to  
tea, and it has refreshed me: and we  
have had sweet interchange of thought  
and feeling on heavenly things. Blessed  
be God: Oh keep me from grieving that  
blessed spirit by — "there she was  
interrupted. —

I well remember  
the occasion to which she alludes;  
and how, while we were on our knees  
in prayer, she interposed in my general  
Confession of sin, to pour out her soul in  
prayer, in the confession of sins of temper  
and spirit, which she felt were then especially

her burden. Whatever those infirmities were, those sins over which she groaned, I need not tell you that they are generated by us, only to call forth our gratitude to Him who caused her thus to abhor them: and, "who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed."

The Cross of Christ through life, was her glory. If I have indeed been brought to cast myself at its foot, it was my Mother's hand that led me there. The earliest religious impressions date back almost to her childhood when, as she lately told me, she was taken out sobbing from the Moravian Chapel into the garden; her gentle spirit overcome by that touching Hymn No. 998 "Jesus makes my heart rejoice": The last verse of which, God designed in his infinite grace to fulfil in her I trust.

"Should not I for gladness leap"  
"Led by Jesus as his sheep,  
"Nor when these blest days are over,  
"To the arms of my dear Saviour  
I shall be conveyed to rest,  
Amen, Yea my lot is blest."

The earliest records of my memory  
reveal her to me as a tender & affectionate  
and affectionate mother - sparing & wise  
faithful in admonition, always aiming  
at one thing, that her children might  
be the Lord's: Sustained in her prayers  
by the gracious assurance, that is in  
Is 44.3 "For I will pour water on  
him that is thirsty, and floods on -  
I will pour my Spirit upon them  
and my blessing upon thy offspring" -  
And as a daily means thereto, appen-  
ding ps in her room every morning  
at 8 O'clock to read and to explain to us  
God's word, marking ps learn large  
portions of it by heart, and enforcing  
with all a parent's authority our strict  
obedience to its Precepts. The thirty  
years of her widowhood, seem to have been  
years of peace discipline, which brought  
her nearer still to her Saviour -  
The first page which I cast my eye on,  
in a diary this moment opened, evinces  
touchingly, the blessed effects of God's teaching  
dealings with her. It was written at  
Cromwell in 1858. "Oh Lord, You hast been  
very near and dear to my soul, here in my

little cottage. Oh how near; as near as  
the very air I breathe: and I seem to draw  
converse with thee, as with a beloved  
tender sympathizing friend. Preserve me  
O soul from want of deep reverence; wretched  
vile and false as I am in myself. Oh let  
me look at thee my God, and make  
me holy, as Thou art holy. My dear  
children and grandchildren bring me  
very near to my Lord and Saviour in  
prayer and praise. "Oh let me not  
desire myself. Search me O God and  
know my heart &c Do shew me the way  
in which I should go, for I lift up my  
soul unto thee. Amen. Thy will that  
mine, be done." — The trials of widow  
hood were increased by the consequent  
loss of her parochial interests; which  
roke the growth of twenty five years,  
during which she laboured in the parish  
with unrewarded, in visiting the sick,  
and instructing the ignorant with  
singular force in the blessed truths  
of the gospel. This was a work for  
which the distinctness of her doctrinal  
views, her clear voice, and her earnest  
impassion manner, made her ministrations

eminently effective, and which go  
permitted her to tenuo in the old  
scene of her labours at Gasham, at  
the advanced age of 74, and continue  
till within three months of her death.

When at length she was checked  
in her work, and the signs of decay  
were manifest, she said to me, "Is  
it not wonderful, that I, who am nat-  
urally so nervous, should be able to  
look forward to death without fear?"  
If the thought of her dissolution  
ever apprised her, I believe she was  
instantly relieved by the assurance  
that Christ would be with her, a  
fact the more to be noticed, because  
in regard to the little trials of the day,  
it might truly be said that "the  
grasshopper had a burden." But,  
precious in the sight of the Lord  
is the death of his saints. —

The death came on very gradually.  
On Saturday night, it was evidently  
near at hand. Her children had  
joined up with her the beautiful  
prayers for the visitation of the sick,

from the prayer book - including the  
commemorative prayers. In the evening  
I was watching by her, when she said,  
"Good night, William, I want to go to  
sleep." After a while sleep came,  
I listened to her breathing for an hour,  
as she lay perfectly undisturbed.  
It grew fainter. It ceased - we  
watched for some minutes expecting  
that there would come a last breath,  
but no, her spirit had fled: She  
was already sleeping in Jesus.

"The Lord has dealt very graciously  
with her", said the nurse. We all  
knelt down and praised him for it.

So her eternal Sabbath began where  
the early dawn of our earthly one  
had set in, sweet accordance with  
the last text which I read to her  
from her Moravian left book, (dearly  
cherished as thousands had been,) to this  
her last, "I have caused thee to rest  
from all thine enemies", and, Jesus  
loved us, and watched us from on high  
in his own blood". It was on Sabbath  
Feb 21<sup>d 1866</sup>. When she entered into the rest that

remainder for the people of God," after  
a pilgrimage of 45 years. I may add  
that the last hymn I read to her the  
day before she died, and which she would  
have me read twice, was that on the  
"Surrender of the heart to Jesus No 342  
"Unto the Lamb of God" &c.

With cordial thanks for your  
sympathy and prayers, and for those  
of our dear Lord Jesus in Christ who  
have been always endeared to me  
from Childhood, Believe me dearest  
Yours most truly  
Wm Cowper Johnson