

Sydney April 4th 1889

My dear Father & Mother

It is with pleasure I take my pen which I should have done long ago and enquire about you all, but I suppose you will say it is all carelessness as I must confess it is. I am very rejoiced to hear you are still enjoying health & happiness as myself & Mrs are at present. Brother Patt I have not heard from this long time & Terrence is gone to Melbourne is in the best of health. Had a letter from M. Slattery lately & he is also well. You asked what part of the world my wife hailed from. Well, she is from the north of Ireland and a few years my senior with a family of five, a widow. I am not blessed with a family of my own, of course. It is all the better I suppose. However, I have no cause to complain as they are all very obedient and everything that can be expected from a good family. Thos. McGrath & his wife come & spent an evening with us a week ago. They are both well.

Well now, with regard to brother Thomas coming out here, for the life of me I don't know what he is to do when he does come. There are thousands of good mechanics starving in front of Government House here asking for work or bread. Times have altered very much here a few years back, or I would have sent for him long ago, so I would thoroughly advise him to throw Australia out of his head. Ireland is bad, but I believe there are more unemployed in Sydney at present than the whole of Ireland put together.

I remain for the present your very affectionate son.

John McHugh

P.S. My Mrs wishes to be kindly remembered to you both.

Transcribed by Margaret Marlow with some adjustment for spelling, grammar and punctuation.