Menefee, Richard Hickman, 1809-1841.

Letters, 1837.

51x47

12 pieces.

Washington, Aug. 31st, 1857.

My dearest wife:

I have concluded to commemorate this the first day of my arrival in the City of Washington as a member of Congress, by writing a letter to dearest Kentucky wife — not insinuating that I meditate another raid not of Kentucky, but hardly meaning that to the list of victims — already innumerable — which my wife adores — not which adorn her — I count the fact of her being a Lutheran — I dropped you a line from Wheeling, in which I expressed some uneasiness on account of fatigue. I still feel much uneasiness; tho I hope to be relieved by the next mail. Under the careful treatment you were commencing

I expect him to become very soon.

We performed our journey in very good time, and as pleasantly as could have been expected. Six of the Kentucky Delegation were together — amongst them Mr. Southgate and your humble correspondent, the former of whom was regarded as quite a prodigy, and the latter even esteemed a little as no contemptible affair. But we shall see what a day will bring forth. For my part I have resolved to make a haste of myself in the way of reading and studying for the next three or four months; not of course with a view to acquire distinction, but to escape disgrace. I take some comfort, however, from the Congressional specimens I have

thus far met. Yet I know there is talent and acquirement in the Hawk somewhere; and I know just as well that sooner or later, in one form or other, it will manifest itself. You know that I have not been accustomed to acknowledge superiors of my age — nor will I, voluntarily, submit to learn that lesson of humiliation even here — on this the most expansive of all earthly theatres, for such do I regard the congress of the U. States. — O! don't! I find my hesitating manners as an insist — vanity — overcoming me, and must cool a little — I expect the fondest and tenderest letter you ever wrote — My love to all — Most affectionately yours.

J. B. Kempe.

Thos. H. Kempe.

August 31st 1858

Hon
W. H. Murphy
Frankfort
Franklin Co
Ky

letter
me
for th
to
If
next C
co
Estimates
& take
the Congress

Washington, Sunday night,
Sept. 3d, 1837.

My dearest Sally:

On to-morrow the Nation's wisdom assembly — your illustrious husband in the midst! And lest I should be so far transported by the splendor and awfulness of the proceeding as to be incapable of attending to so small an affair as writing to one's wife, you will excuse me, I hope, for violating the Sabbath — just by way of precaution against such a misfortune. Great men, especially patriots are apt, it is said, in diffusing their love over a whole country, to detract from that which in justice belongs to their wives. But

either from not being a patriot, or from uniting in the character of patriot that of a just man, my affection for my Lal magnifies as the world widens before me. If I were required to designate, under the solemn sanctions of an oath, that period of my life when my pulings towards my blossom were purely correct, truth would compel me to answer, now. What do you think of that from a young, hot-blood Kentuckian, more than 600 miles beyond the eye of his wife, in the midst of the most horrific temptation arising not from the vicinity but from being directly amongst a population of professional gentry? How long I shall be able to maintain my independence I can't tite, but

how to continue faithful, if not to the end at least, at the end.

I expect a letter is now in the office for me from you by the mail of to-night; and earnestly pray that it informs me of the recovery of our dear boy, on whose account I confess I have had, and yet have great anxiety — You shall hear from me often, with not expect long letters. Be a good girl, and remember what your husband has often told you concerning your health. Make yourself as beautiful as possible, and keep so; for you know how I adore beauty and abhor something else — A kiss to you.

Most devotedly yours,
Richd. H. Menpes.

L. B. Menpes.

Free
R. H. Kempe

WASHINGTON CITY
SEP
4

Mrs. S. B. Kempe
Lex.
Ky.

Sept 3 - 1861

51 x 47

Washington City,
Sept. 8, 1837.

My dearest wife: I have a moment of leisure this evening, and devote it to what always affords me the highest satisfaction I can experience from home — writing to my wife.

Still no letter! Every day occasions greater fear of unfavorable accounts from Joliet. But, my dear, you should write. In future I will allow nothing, except your own inability from sickness, as an excuse for not writing. Yet I hope your letters may have miscarried. I might I know I shall get one.

I could write much that would entertain you if I knew what was the condition of things at home. But as matters now stand I really have so much apprehension that some thing is not right, that I cannot, with any heart, undertake any thing of the kind — The Nation is home of both sexes. Yet they are all human. Great talent and learning are found on every hand. Yet still they do not astound even me: for I have formed my model of greatness after the elder, wiser Dead; and feel as tho' the great men of history were my intimates, from

the close contact in which books have brought us. Until then I am around me, therefore, perhaps the dead excellence I speak of, nothing new come to me — I am read-

My dearest wife be a good girl – love your husband – take care of your health – & accomplish your wishes – love to all.

Ever Most affectionately,
Your Devoted Husband
Richd. H. Kempe

T. M. Kempe.

Washington City,

Sept. 11th, 1837.

My dearest wife:

I received to-day your first letter. Whether it is because I am amongst strange folks in a strange place, or, as you suppose, because you are a Congressman's wife, I never received one from you that gave me more delight. In the first place it relieved my fears about Smith; in the next it seemed to understand that you were sick; but especially, it was from you. And what is I think of it — I am sick and have been for two days. Nothing serious; but the inconvenience, I suppose, of an acclimation. I am bothered this evening, after a dose of medicine.

You are cursing and swearing in your letter at a most alarming rate over my short letter from Wheeling! Who in the devil, except your husband, would have written at all under the circumstances? at midnight?

in the confusion of a large company in a public room? — Sally, Sally, what makes you do so? But, besides all that: I have written to you God knows how often or how affectionately, since I have been here; when I find that you actually delayed writing to me at all until the 2nd of this month — more than a week after I had left home. Yet I am not disposed — notwithstanding my multiplied wrongs — to complain of you. For I may see you again; and I desire to see "in peace" that face which your own opinion, backed now it seems by others, sets down as so handsome. But when will I see it? Next Spring? next Summer? Guess. Well, without some change in the determination of Congress as expressed by a vote to-day, I shall see you this Fall. What do think of that? — If you have ~~any~~ on hand any intrigues affecting my rights and peace of mind, you had better consum-

Second page of this letter is missing.

Washington City,
Ho. Reps.
29 Sept. '57.

My dearest wife;

O! don't scold your poor husband so ferociously. I have written you sundry little letters like this, while in the House. For out of the House I scarcely have time to think. Would you suppose that these barbarians require your husband to assemble himself here by 10 o'clock in the morning, without allowing him to dispose himself until 1 at night! Little do they suppose that my destinies are so intimately allied with those of a most tender, devoted, angelic wife — of yourself; or they could never impose such hardships upon him. But Longfellow — like the Saviour in one thing, unlike him in every other — "is no respecter of

persons". My consolation is, that it will accelerate the adjournment of Congress — an event to which I look forward with as anxious and rapturous emotions — and more sacred and tender — as to the day of our marriage. Into the space between the close of this session and the opening of the next I shall condense a half a dozen life-times of cool-blooded man — Thirsty prospects — Anxieties — float before me and make me happy.

I wrote to you that I had prepared a speech. I see by the Easton papers of this morning that Mr. Meredith is "a clear, eloquent — upright lawyer and character — brilliant career &c." More honor in the family.

Most affectionately,
your most devoted husband,
Richd A. Meredith

S. B. Meredith.

Letter of
Packard & Knapp

WASHINGTON CITY
SEP 29

From
R. A. Monfort

FREE

Mrs. S. B. Monfort
Lexington
Ky —

Washington
Sept 27/1861

51 x 47

Washington City, Sunday night, 10 O'Clock,
Oct. 18t, 1857.

My dearest Sal:

I get all your sweet letters. They are dinned like "the bread of life". My spirits are magnified by them, if my spirit is not. Yet a little remnant of affected scolding runs through them;- just enough to give them their highest gust. No note on the day of adjournment yet! I can't therefore tell you when I shall see you. The 9th of this month was fixed by the Senate; but I doubt whether the House will consent to so early a day. By the 15th, however, I think we shall adjourn - if we adjourn before next summer.

Your last letter tells me that I had not told you that I had recovered of my little illness. Lord bless your loving soul! I have been well long ago. A dose of calomel of 10 grains made "Richard himself again," in one night. No time, my dear madam, for a gentleman of my disposition to be sick at so critical a juncture of public affairs. I would beg leave, very deferentially, to signify to your ladyship that your husband - insignificant as you and myself know him to be - has been magnified by the newspapers into a most considerable affair. My friends, I understand, have forwarded a few of the innumerable notices of his talents, eloquence, destiny &c - to the Kentucky papers for ~~pu~~ re-publication. I hope the perusal of them in my absence will not provoke a blush or any thing of the kind -

I dined with Mr. Webster to-day. You know the shade he sits in the eye of the world. Well, he loses nothing by the nearest approach: an exception therein to most others of his renown. In saying this, I exhaust the compliment.

Every day I hear the greatest men: I judge of them. Now and then I come right up to them in private. Two sessions hence and greatness shall be no mystery — I'll think it like a law-book — if I can.

For your edification be it known that I have prescribed to myself a month's reading in the records of Congress. How delightful it will be to you to sit in silence and watch your husband read! It will be so interesting. You know you always most enjoyed my society in mutings — as you said.

I cannot write you letters like I once did: it is un-congressional to write letters. To drop a note, is the utmost that is tolerated. You understand now the cause of what you vulgarly enough denominate my short letters. Can't be unfashionable for any white woman. I don't care where mother is. (I am awfully anxious to see the Jutipiles now that he has grown to be so fine a boy. I wonder if he sleeps well of nights? Its hard, you know, on a man that's been a long while from home to have an interruptions child for the first few nights after his return.)

— Give my love and a kiss to the widow Jointe — love to Aunt Betsy — Martha — Ann — George — and all —

Most affectionately
your devoted husband,
Richd. H. Henefee

S. B. Henefee.

Washington City, Ho: Reps.
3d Oct. 1857.

My dearest wife:

Happy to inform you that the 15th inst. is fixed on as the day of adjournment, which will bring me to Lexington by the 25th. Hope it's satisfactory. I go home but on one condition. Jointe must have been married ten days before I arrive: otherwise I visit the North in the recess. Fact, 'pon honour!

Called to vote. Good bye.

Most affectionately,
Your husband,
Richd. H. Menefee

Mrs. J. B. Menefee.

WASHINGTON D.C.
OCT
3

Fr
R. H. Kenn
BAKER

Mrs. J. B. M. Kendu
Farmington
Me.

Sept 1863

Wheeling, Va. 29th Nov. 1837

My dearest Sal:

I reached here this morning at day-light, and will set off again at 10 this morning. I am extremely well, and have had a very agreeable journey. Mrs. Crittenden you already know is with us, and of course greatly adds to the pleasure of ours, as of all other parties. There is one particular however, attending her which detracts very greatly from the pleasure which I might otherwise derive from her society, which is, that her presence perpetually reminds me of your absence. How perfectly happy we might have been had you been with us! every thing would have been so new and so delightful to you! Still, I might not have had the satisfaction of a-

musing myself at your mistake over all. you send, if you had acted on Mary's plan of seeming familiar with it all. Altogether, I half regret that I did not take you on, instead of leaving you to be forwarded in February. The weather is more pleasant, the company more agreeable, and last and least — your husband's arm to support you. Your visit to Washington, as I fully explained to you, will break me up at all events; and I hardly see why I should not be allowed to meet my fate in the manner most comfortable to myself: to flicker up a high flame before I go out. But it's all over with me till February. My prospect of an agreeable winter rests henceforth on the prospect of your arrival at the close of it. —

I have written to Mr. Ragland at Lexington to send accent Betty to Lexington as soon as he can, without intending

to interfere with his right to keep her till Christmas if he insists on doing so (which I suppose he will.) Her little boy is to go with her. If you find it necessary to write on the subject, you may address your letter to Wm. M. Rapland Esq. at Dunnsville. I have not heard from her husband's partner; but almost take it for granted that he cannot hire him.

I have nearly read the book I [illegible] ing to. It is valuable — a [illegible] title aunt Betsy — to the said of the production of a man. One of its strongest and most just recommendations is order in all our doings. You must accordingly write to me in some regular order — just as often as much as you can. I was always an outcast from all that took the order; but will write to you often — in order — give my love to Ma Peggy and the family.

Most affectionately
Your devoted Son
Richd. H. Menefee

Mrs. S. B. Menefee.

Sarah Sarah B. Henderson

From
W. Henderson

Mrs. Sarah Bell Henderson
Lexington
Ky.

Apr 29, 1861

Washington City, Dec. 12th, 1837.

My dearest Sal,

A parcel of dull devilment is going on around me, which enables me to withdraw from society awhile to scratch you a short note, to let you know that I received a letter from you in, or almost in, the time I thought I had a right to expect. I had previously written you three, which, I think, is about the proportion my love bears to yours. I am extremely solitacious of late — lamenting not bringing you with me. And after as deliberate consideration as so agitating a subject would allow, I have come to the conclusion that you may come to Washington, whenever the state of the weather, company, or your own

inclination shall suggest it. I know of no one coming from your neighborhood to Washington, with whom you would consent to travel. — Think of this, and let me know whether it would be agreeable to you to remain here so long, and what would probably be your opportunities of getting here before February — On further trial, I have no opinion of sacrificing for more than half my time, the only substantial happiness I ever commanded — the society of my wife. It may cost money, but money, in my view, was intended to buy happiness with, and in buying your company, at any price, extravagance would be impossible, at least I think so — Kiss Joseph.

Farewell,

R. B. Merefee

Mrs. J. B. Merefee.

For
Athenia

Mrs. J. B. Menefee
Lexington
Ky.

Washington Cty, Dec. 22nd, 1837.

Ho: Reps.

My dearest wife,

I do not sit down to write you a letter, but being already sitting, I have a kind of impulse to commune a little with my pretty sweet-heart. You continue to refer to the long-promised letter that is to be interesting. I have at length determined to signalize the new year by perpetrating that letter. You may accordingly expect it about the 10th day of January in the year of Christ, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight. One effect of the letter I will undertake to predict: an instant determination to forsake mother, child, all, and cleave unto your husband! It is of no avail to contend any longer that any sufficient reason

does or could exist for a separation of two
young lovers - ~~so~~ ardent, devoted, enthusi-
tic, as you ~~exist~~ we are. We are grow
old though young now; and a period o
health, and purity, and hope is inter
by separation instead of being sanctif
as it might be, by union in reality. But
have signified my opinions if not my co
mends, in former letters. It is almost
that I had heard from you on the pro
sition therein contained: which I am
with all the anxiety which a dignified
Christian mind property entertain —

You speak of my health. I am
ing, imperceptibly, of not exactly a broken
but a bending heart, over my solitary c
dition — Farewell. Kiss the Piggy fo
Love to all — ~~[illegible]~~
in remembrance of me. Most affectionately
your husba
R H Kenede

S Belle —

From
R. A. Menefee

FREE

Mrs. S. Belle Menefee
Lexington
Ky.

Dorothy

23

Dec 22 1863

From
R. A. Menefee

FREE

Mrs. S. Bell Menefee
Lexington
Ky.

~~Dowell~~

23

Oct 22 1861

Washington City, Dec. 24th, 1837.

My dearest wife,

The sun is just setting this quiet Sunday evening, and your disconsolate half, left a little to himself, travels with a sorrowful heart to the distant land where dwells all that sweetens life, and longs to write or think or do anything that concerns her. I do not consider it of any importance what I write. The pleasure does not arise from that; but merely from the reflection that the marks I make — the paper I use — will be read and handled, and perchance be kissed, by her whose eyes will trace these lines with such joy and whose heart will leap as she breaks this seal! I believe it is this idea that lies at the bottom of the unity which has always distinguished my correspondence with you. Once become cold, rational, un-enthusiastic, and in all probability my correspondence would at once conform to the change. But so long as enthusiasting love is — as I pray it ever will be — in the ascendent, you must expect from me love, love, love — alone never! "Fair one, choose be-

tween the two." But that is needless: your choice has both been made and acted upon for years; and, except in the instance of your exacting one sensible letter which has been a subject of much discussion between us, I have perceived in you no wish to compel me to depart from the ancient usages under which we have been the happiest pair I know of any thing of. So thoroughly am I impressed with the danger to which our happiness might be exposed from so serious an innovation, that, although I proposed in a late letter to distinguish the new year with such a letter as you have so inconsiderately required, prudence compels me to retract my determination and avert a further expression of your displeasure. "I dismiss this branch of the subject" by urging upon you a prayerful regard to the consequences which may flow from rash interferences with hearts — for the most frail too fine of texture to admit of human interruption. Hearts! — Heaven! — they are kindred words.

I was a little disappointed, my dear, in not getting a letter to-day. I do not know that I ought to have expected it: but I needed one. It would have soothed me.

And in fact they are all that do or can soothe the rough pursuits of a life as active and exciting as mine has been, is, and no doubt will be. You should think of this; and write often, very often. It is all that represses my savage disposition; for I am thus inclined beyond dispute.

— When shall I see you? Who will come with you? Can you endure a winter journey over the mountains? But I know you can "do or die", — if your husband is at the end of the effort. I have already taken a room with a view to the accommodation of two people who must manage to sleep together. Write me about your money affairs — Kiss Joinette —

Most affectionately,
your devoted husband,
Richd H Thompson

Mrs. R H Thompson

Free
R H Menefee

WASHINGTON
DEC
1861
D.C.

Mrs. R H Menefee
Lexington
Ky.

51 x 47

Washington, Ho: Reps –
29th Dec., 1837 –

My dearest Sal,

For your sweet little letter received yesterday, I will make one little effort to add a little more to the big love I feel for you, though I have but little hope of succeeding as that love is great already even unto omnipresence – nature affords no space for its extension. It's a fact absolutely; yet, still, a thing not to be publicly talked about. —— I have been expecting to hear from you about coming to Washington without delay, "the weather permitting and no power this Providence". – I have come to sundry sage conclusions, over

which I am sure you will rejoice even unto tears — for your happiness lies at the foundation of it. It is worth (to you) a winter's journey to Washington to hear it revealed: for its revelation is reserved for your own ears in propria persona.

I received a letter a day or two ago from your uncle William Allen. It was rather despondent, I thought; but manifested a kindness towards me and an interest in my welfare, so naturally and sincerely expressed, as really to affect me — not a common thing you know — for your information I will add that I immediately answered it.

Give heed to my letters of invitation to visit Washington — make whatever arrangements you choose about a servant &c. and let me know how much money you want, or rather, can spend: for

I am opulent as a Hindoo Nabob —

Most affectionately
Your devoted husband
Richd Blackmore

Mrs. S. B. Monroe —

Free
R. H. Menifee
FREE

Mrs. R. H. Menifee
Lexington
Ky.

Dec 29 1853