

The Filson Historical Society

Mss. Silliman, Susan (Forbes), d.1878

A

.S584 Letters to sisters-in-law, Hen-
7 rietta (Silliman) Dana and
Maria (Silliman) Church.

1850, Nov.-Dec.

45x6
54x16

2 items.

by such bright & agreeable young
people I am glad to hear that
Maria is so much improved she
was so very miserable when we last
saw her. as to those New Yorkers
they have not written us & I believe
if we don't hear before this week
has passed that they have cast
us off entirely. I am going to
give you my Care story on another
sheet and you may tell Sarah
Porter & Mr. Skinner that I
thought of them many a time
& wished they were here to be
just as enchanted as we were
& as perhaps they might like to
hear of it you can keep your own
particular sheet to yourself, if you
see fit to let them read the other
don't think me egotistical it is
the subject that is so interesting &
those friends as well as yourself
will pardon my enthusiasm
for one & all much love. now I
pity your guide man let that index
be delayed a month or more ere
his eyes fail him or his health
suffers; he was ever too persevering
& industrious, I think you have
kept up the company mania as
well as your brother & sister used
to. Write every week if you can your truly S.

Louisville Nov. 15th 1850

My dear Father

Like cold water to a thirsty
soul was the receipt of your good
letter today one from Fanny also & Julia
two made us quite happy. I was sorry
not to have been able to finish my
romantic story (for it does seem like
a pretty fairy tale out of the Arabian
nights -) to your father and now I am
forgotten where I left off so that you
must excuse the repetition if I begin
again. This last week has brought nothing
of importance we have heard nothing
but old school and new school ever
since we came back. ^(Wed. evg) The children
seem to like their school very much
& we are pleased with their progress
Alice comes home at recess Susie
stays in till halfpast one the whole
of the afternoon is occupied in aiding
her studies about half my calls have
been returned I pay them slowly as
I need exercise. Bessie has learned
to creep ducks to the horses shakes his
head for no no, & meows like a cat
& has these past two weeks quite come
out & shows off very prettily His greatest

tick is creeping under the bed to
play to sleep, he will lift the curtain
after he is fairly under & laugh
aloud & as soon as you say rest
on him, the little spider is off for
out of reach to the remotest side
& then he stops to snarily laugh
again. I begin to think him not so
stupid after all. His father made
him a birthday present of a little green
topped buggy which he & his sisters
enjoy. I wish you would send me
a miniature pattern in your next
letter of Miss Fanny's winter garment
as Broadbrook had not opened before
I left. I had nothing new & have
to make something for Julie. We
have had very little or no cold
weather here yet. Mr. Farnum &
Miss Sheffield & her father arrived
here yesterday the two latter not
well but under Dr. David Randall's
care I trust they soon will be.
They have been to the Falls of St. Louis
- my Block Island, from the latter
place to St. Louis about 300 miles they
had the pleasant company of Fredrika
Bremer, whom they describe as very
ordinary almost ugly in face but
small person, modest unassuming
manner. very much of a lady.
Mr. Farnum said she walked &

and appeared in like our Pres.^s
lady Mrs. Woolsey. We have urged
them going to the Cave before they
return but at present they seem to
think home would be the most
desirable point. A man died with
Cholera, two state room doors only between
himself & Miss Harriet Sheffield &
this of course alarmed them.
There is no Cholera here & these isolated
cases are not infrequent upon the boats
but they are people who have imprudent-
ly exposed themselves, traveling when
they had preliminary symptoms.
With us there is now much small
pox. The children and Ellen were
re-vaccinated by myself last Sunday
but it has not taken though we
thought at first that it was going
to take. Ellen ^{Emma} seems satisfied
& gives satisfaction. She wished me
to ask one of your girls or one of the
aunts to inquire at Church about
her sister & know why they had
not written her & if you would be
so good as to mention in your next
if the report was that they were
well, she fears her sister has lost
her baby. We are pleased to hear
that Father is so well surrounded

Kind letter told me that. it was
all imagination. Your vivid
domestic picture gave us just
what we wanted to see & still
do want. those dear children
I think your family more my
bean ideal in good qualities &
true pleasure than any other I have
known. We were sorry to hear
that Walter's health had failed.
Did his foot ball race injure him.
There is no evil without its counter
balancing weight. & to have him
at home must be a pleasure.

You think that you should have
felt like smothering in the cage
but if you were in a room so high
that you could not see the top of
it with the purest air you ever
breathed I am sure you would
soon give up that idea. The Miss
Church was a grand looking lady
quite tall & very ladylike in all
her deportment, a little fastidious
in some things being a young lady
at 40 with very beautiful English
complexion fair & ruddy with very
black eyes & hair resembling Miss Fort
-el whose cousin she is. We were
much interested in her, as she
seems to be almost alone in the
world her father was Consul for

Louisville Dec. 22^d 1880

My dear Maria

I have intended
answering your letter every evening
this week as my two whooping coughs
occupy most of the day. but believe
I may as well give you a journal
of the week Monday evening we had
company in the house Mr. Vernon with
whom we stay wished to invite our
new Prof. Ede & his lady here & ~~them~~ some
20 others were asked to meet them.
It rained very hard so that we had
just people enough to sit at table
which was loaded Kentucky fashion
with birds, chicken salad, hot bread
of various kinds & coffee cake, sweet-
meats & jelly & oysters, This was tea
at 10 o'clock we had ice cream &
sake & jelly with Champagne a second
time. The Rev. Mr. Rucker an Episco-
palian clergyman with whom I had some
interesting conversation, he told me that
he was glad to hear that Mrs. Cook
was going to accept of the call to the
Church in New York as it was a large
& useful field. Mr. Rucker has been
an associate of Dr. J. J. & is a talented
man very fearless in expressing his
opinions. He made an address for

in the Presbyterian Church which we attend last Sunday in a united meeting for the Bible Society.

Tuesday night Dr. Bell brought a new microscope for us to see & as we had a number of things which Mr. Tall had prepared for us that we had not before the opportunity of seeing we were very much pleased with this evening's entertainment. Wednesday evening my husband brought home Mr. Wartzel to tea, a Swiss gentleman a director in the blind Asylum at Lausanne, an intelligent foreigner whom we knew at New Haven last August at the Association. We took him to Mrs. Richardson's with whom Dr. Drake one of our most agreeable faculty men resides. Dr. D. had been writing an interesting paper upon Slavery which he read to us & it was after eleven when we returned. Thursday evening I was invited to tea where I had refused several invitations so had to go without my husband who was preparing for Friday evening's lecture & Saturday evening we spent at Dr. Miller's another of our personal brethren. Thus the week was closed & nothing done in the way of thanking my kind friends for their favors. The days were very much like

each other. We go down to breakfast at 8 o'clock immediately after my guide man goes to the Post-office & if he has nothing for me from thence to College Ellen brings Bennie down & he sits in my lap & eats his cup of bread & milk & has a play with the family & when this is over Ellen's meal is usually ended & we all walk up to our two rooms where we stay till the dinner bell rings. Susie has been alone to school the past week Alice coughs so badly that I have to spend half the time holding her in my lap & so she suffers. After dinner we return again to stay till tea time & this is the time I devote to the children's amusement & happiness; hearing Susie's lessons & looking over Alice m's & n's. Thus does one day go by & another while half of our absence is passed & I scarce realize that I have been here a month. You cannot imagine anything more purpose than your letter the evening before it came we were discussing all of our family circle mine & Bennie's & after giving you what was your due & yet would be flattery to write. I said I felt that something perhaps it was distance had estranged you & then this

The little ¹⁸⁵⁰ improvements - which you
have made seemed all that
was wanting to give your home
the pleasantest possible effect
and I shall be pleased to
approve your taste in window
curtains &c. when next I look
in upon you.

Does Annie think
she will ever sing like Jenny Lind
tell her if she ever should we
should have to keep it all to our
own relations & not allow her to
run about upsetting the world
as Jenny does.

My love to Maria
she is growing so tall I feel as if we
should have to say Miss Church soon

To all the young gentlemen from
my grown up boys down to the last
& least - my warm love. And as
Nattie has her little letter all
to herself I'll send her a kiss &
wishing you more happiness through
this year remain your friend
Sister Susie

Tell my br. John I had a great fight
for the Yankees the other night, had he
heard it he would have been much
Am. M. S. Church amused

22 Dec 1850
many years in some of the Southern
parts of France Her brother married
& came to Lexington, here she put
- cents eventually came to be with
this son & soon after he died &
now both parents are gone & there
does not seem to be much sympathy
with the sister in law & herself.
Miss C. was put under B. S. charge
by Dr. Bartlett & was much pleased
with so pleasant traveling companion.

I was much obliged to you for
the little drawing of cloak pattern
I have not made Susie's exactly
that, but combined the nice
arrangement of sleeve with a pretty
simple cloak here at present
worn. Susie asked me tonight
if it would seem vain for her to
say anything about it in her
letter to Nattie. I told her no
she sat up quite late for her to write
but left me to finish her epistles
She writes very many imaginary ones
& sometimes we find a half dozen
in the portfolio begun but she is
not yet satisfied with her writing
I hope Nattie will soon answer
it for Susie thinks very much of
all her absent Cousins & hopes
they will not forget her

Alice is very sweet & I do dread

this complaint. Its effects seem so serious upon Susie & foreboding of evil wills come as Alice is just the age of Susie ^{she took it} when this of a very light kind generally here but she coughs for 15 minutes drawing in her breath until she is completely exhausted & ready to lie down. Bennie has hardly whooped through he coughs as you see now in the enjoyment of Eugene's baby word you can appreciate our daily delight with Bennie, he says some new word or learns some amusing way of showing his knowledge every day & though he yields the palm to his cousin Eddie for getting along in the world on his two pedestals. will not yield in interesting babydom to any other fond parent in the Kingdom.

And I boastful - not too much so though of this gentle little sensitive fellow who had his eyes full of tears the first time he saw me take Alice in my lap to make a baby of her & yet he made no noise for some moments his little "grief" was too deep for utterance. He looks very much as Alice did at his age but is less active than either of my

children. Yesterday we received through Julia a very interesting letter of Jane Fitch Turnbull to Nettie. Telling of her affairs out upon the western coast. She seems very happy & contented with her lot. We were sorry to hear that your mother-in-law is suffering so much. Please when you next see her to give B... and my warmest regards. ~~She was~~ ever much esteemed by us.

Our rainy season has commenced we have as yet had no cold weather though we have seen the snow once but to night it bit blowing up after a violent rain ^{it is} now clearing we may have the beginning of our cold weather. We have had one long letter from our good sister in Nahonah & answered that a week or more since. Our joy at hearing from you all & being grateful for only good news as yet. Contrasts strongly with our last year's anxiety when every seal was broken with dread you must excuse the intermarks which my child is responsible for but I have past the period of copying a letter for such a trifle.