

Lifelong Friends

THE LETTERS OF

HARRIET WOODWARD MURRAY & CATHARINE NICHOLSON FEW



CORRESPONDENCE FROM 1782 TO 1840

COMPILED & EDITED BY ALICE MURRAY RANDALL

2014

Lifelong Friends

The Letters of

Harriet Woodward Murray

March 22, 1762 – October 3, 1840

Catharine Nicholson Few

August 7, 1764 – August 7, 1854

In memory of

Elizabeth Hesselius Murray

March 12, 1832 – July 24, 1912

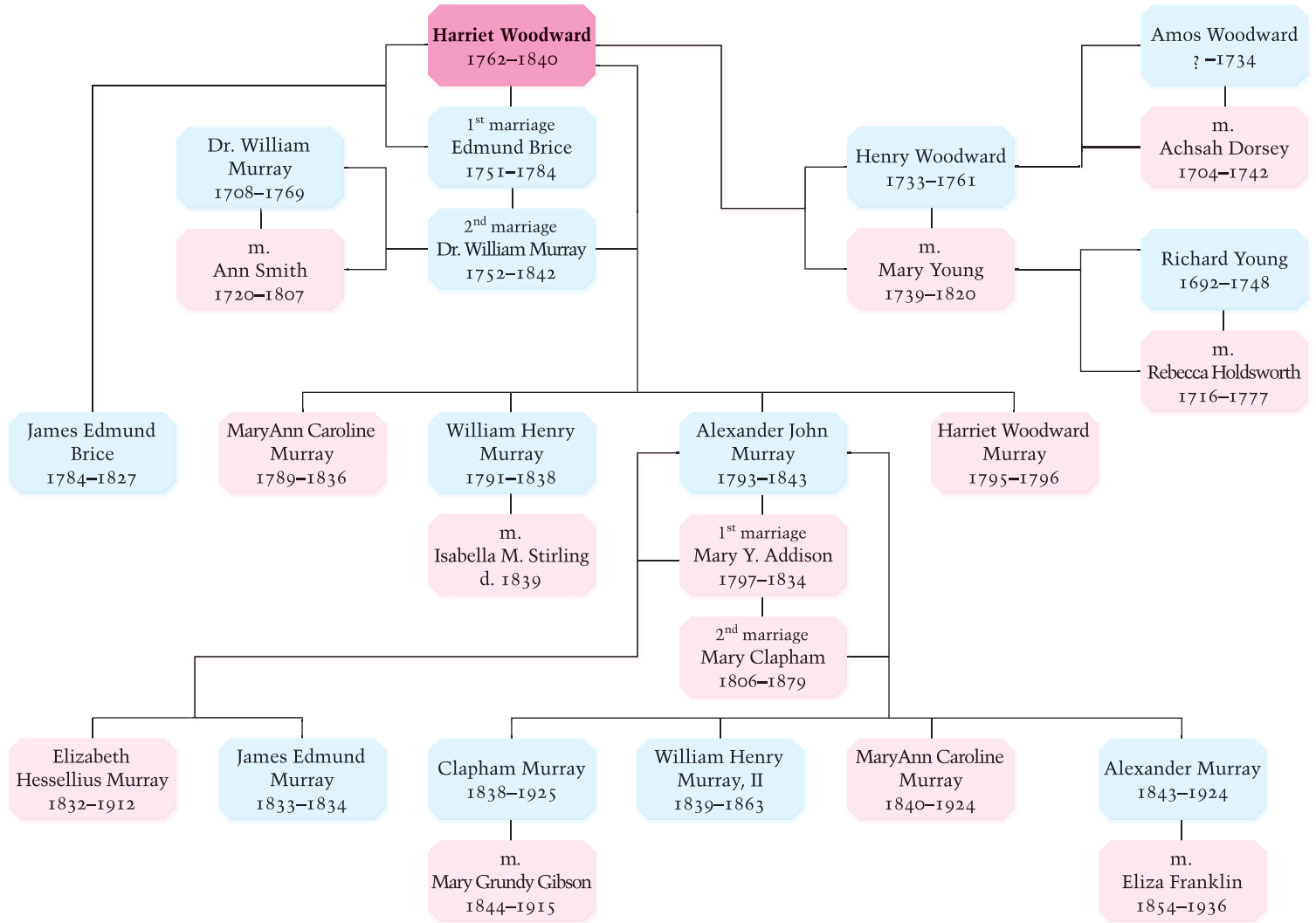
It was her care and diligence that saved these letters.

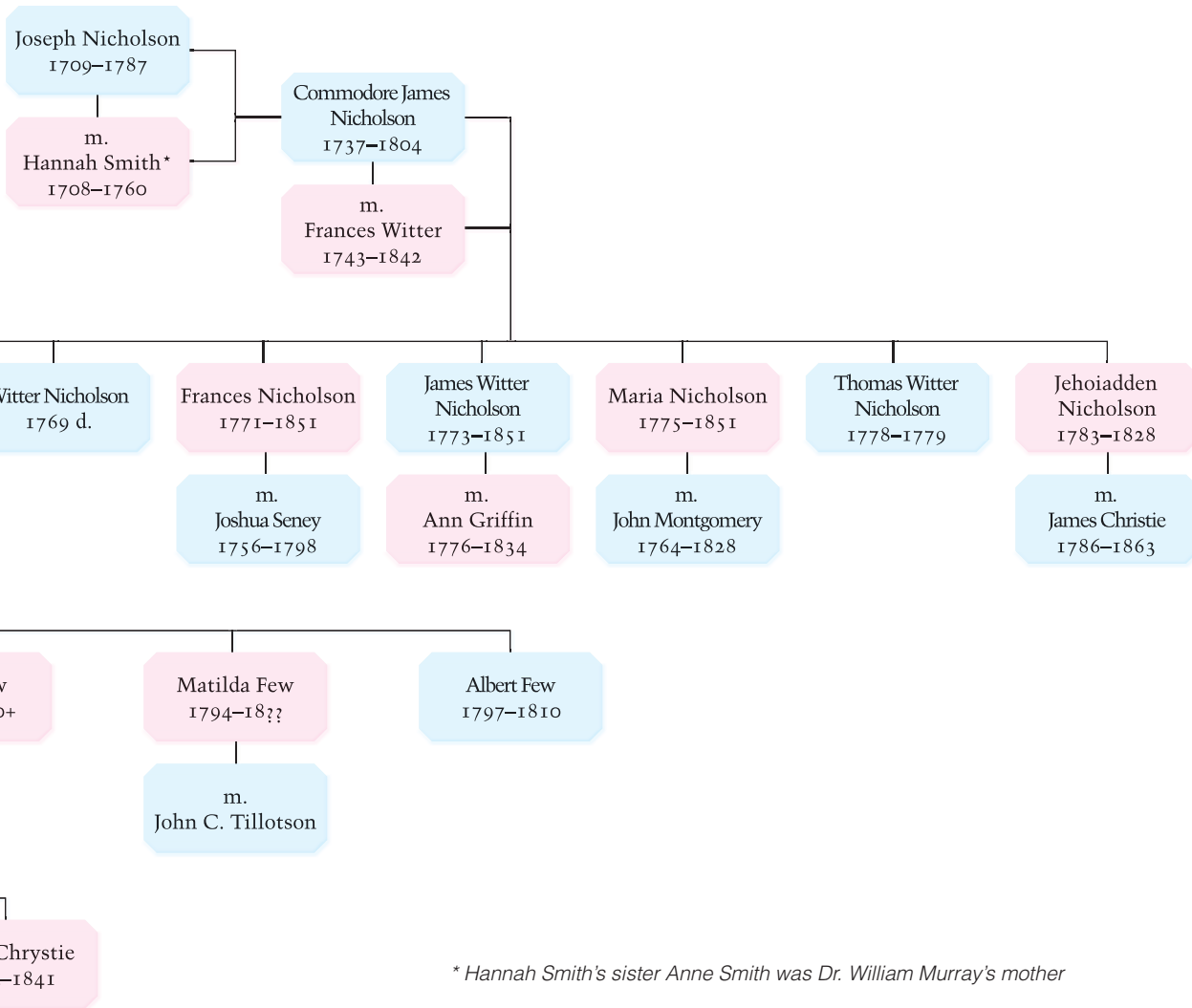
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PREFACE

This is a collection of letters dating from 1782 until 1840. The correspondence is between my great great grandmother, Harriet Woodward Murray and her lifelong friend, Catharine Nicholson Few. In addition to these letters there are several written by the descendants of these ladies, which are included in this collection.

In 1987 Harriet's letters came into my possession. To insure their survival for future generations, on October 9, 1990 I deposited the originals with one transcribed copy in the Maryland Archives. They are part of MSA SC 2301: listed as Murrays of Woodstock Farm, West River, Collection of Family Papers.

Harriet's granddaughter, Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, corresponded with the Few family during her lifetime. I am sure she was responsible for retrieving Harriet's letters and returning Catharine's letters to the Few family. In 2006 I transcribed Harriet's letters again on my computer so that they would be available to anyone who cared to read them. Then I became curious about the other half of this correspondence. I researched Col. William Few and found that Catharine Nicholson Few's letters were in the William Few collection at the University of Georgia, Hargrett Library. With their generous help I was able to transcribe Catharine's letters and put them in chronological order with Harriet's letters.

Orlando Ridout IV and Addison Worthington helped me identify places and people in the correspondence. Susan Wetherell's research on Owensville and Dr. William Murray was very helpful. Jane McWilliams encouraged me to finish this project and helped edit and organize the material. My son Murray Randall helped me navigate the computer world with infinite patience.

Punctuation has been modified for clarification. The spelling of some words has been changed to the modern spelling (colour to color etc.) In the correspondence Harriet's name is sometimes spelled as Harriett or Harriette. Catharine is sometimes referred to as Kitty. As needed notes are attached at the bottom of each letter. At the top of each letter is a reference library number reflecting the original source, either University of Georgia Hargrett Library or Maryland State Archives.

Alice Murray Randall

2014

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY



HARRIET WOODWARD was born March 22, 1762. She was the fifth daughter of Henry Woodward¹ and Mary Young. Six months before Harriet was born her father died at age 28. Henry Woodward was educated by the Rev. John Gordon, rector of St. Anne's Parish, who ran a school for boys in Annapolis. Henry was a successful merchant and landowner. He owned a stable of English racehorses which competed on the racetrack in Annapolis. He was church warden at St. Annes Parish 1755–56; and served in the lower house of the legislature from 1757–58. At the time of his death his property included over 4,000 acres in Anne Arundel County, lots in the city of Annapolis and a warehouse. He secured a mortgage for his friend Charles Homewood² on property later known as Bellefield,³ At the time of his death the mortgage was in default and Henry's estate was responsible for the debt.

Harriet's mother Mary Young was the only surviving child of Col. Richard Young and Rebecca Holdsworth. At her father's death Mary Young inherited his entire estate which included the property known as Primrose Hill, located about three miles from the center of Annapolis. Harriet was born and lived there until around 1788. Though much altered, this house is standing today.

On January 30, 1763, the widow Mary Young Woodward married John Hesselius, a well known portrait painter. The family lived at Primrose and later moved to Bellefield, property located adjacent to Whitehall. In addition to her five Woodward daughters, Mary Young had six Hesselius children. She died June 18, 1820, out-living all but two of her children. Mary Young Woodward Hesselius was very religious and concerned about the corruption in the Anglican Church. She embraced the Methodists and Quakers and held many meetings at her home, with the hope that they would influence the Anglican Church. She wrote a long poem describing her children. One verse describes Harriet:

*Some say she's too grave, but I think not at all,
Though she never exhibits at play or at ball,
Like the low, humble violet, content with the shade,
Nor envies the tulip its gaudy parade;
She fixes on virtue true pleasure to find,
And studies no graces but those of the mind.⁴*



MARY YOUNG

On September 11, 1783, Harriet married Col. Edmund Brice. He was the son of Judge John Brice. The Brice family owned acreage throughout Anne Arundel County and Cecil County and town lots in the City of Annapolis. When Edmund Brice was born on Nov. 24, 1751 the family was living on Prince George Street in a brick house built by Judge John Brice. This house still stands today. Edmund Brice⁵ took painting lessons from Charles Willson Peale. In 1772, with an introduction to Benjamin West from Peale, he went to England and Italy to study and paint. He returned to Annapolis in 1775. Two miniatures attributed to Edmund Brice are in London, one apparently a self-portrait. When he died he bequeathed his prints and drawings to Charles and James Peale. Harriet and Edmund were living at Primrose when Edmund Brice died on October 15, 1784. One month later (November 11, 1784) Harriet's son James Edmund Brice was born. She and her young son were living at Primrose when the first letter in this collection was written to Catharine Nicholson.

On November 6, 1788 Harriet married Catharine Nicholson's cousin⁶ Dr. William Murray of Annapolis. He was in medical practice with his older brother Dr. James Murray.



DR. WILLIAM MURRAY

In 1793 William Murray dissolved his medical partnership with his brother and bought a large tract of land 15 miles below Annapolis. He sold some of the land to neighbors and relatives and improved his portion of the property by building an addition to the small hunting lodge on the property, making it habitable for his family. By 1800 he had settled his family at Woodstock Farm, West River, where he established his medical practice. Most of Harriet's letters to Catharine were written

from this location.

In addition to her child by her first husband Col. Edmund Brice, she had four more children:

Mary Anne Caroline (1789–1836)

William Henry (1791–1838)

Alexander John (1793–1843)⁷

Harriet Woodward (1795–1796)



CATHARINE NICHOLSON⁸ daughter of Commodore James Nicholson and Frances Witter was born August 7, 1764. She was the eldest child of eight. Commodore Nicholson was senior Captain and Commodore-in-Chief in the Continental Navy. Although the family resided in New York, they visited friends and relatives in Annapolis. It was then that Harriet and Catharine became good friends. They attended parties and social events together. Catharine visited the Hesselius family at Primrose and recalled in her letters her fondness for this family.

Many years later Catharine told Harriet Murray's granddaughter Elizabeth Hesselius Murray about her visit to Primrose. The excerpt below is from Miss Murray's book *One Hundred Years Ago*, published 1895 (p.97):

I received another graphic picture of this family group many years ago from my revered friend, Mrs. Catherine Few of New York. She was the daughter of Captain (afterwards) Commodore Nicholson of the 'Defence' and was about that time visiting some very gay relatives at Annapolis. She was very young and much admired and entered with great zest into to the fashionable amusements of the society there, which she told me appeared to her much more brilliant than that of New York! One morning she rode out with one of her young admirers to breakfast at Primrose. When they entered the porch they found the door open and the family assembled in the hall at prayers. As they stood and listened, the contrast between these peaceful morning devotions and the gay and thoughtless scenes through which she had been passing made a deep impression on her mind and led to a lifelong friendship for one of its members (Harriet, afterwards Mrs. Murray). I have still in my possession their carefully preserved correspondence of more than half a century.

Catharine Nicholson and William Few were married in 1788. William Few was born in Baltimore County in 1748. When he was 10 years old his family moved to North Carolina and later to Georgia. He was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention (1787), surveyor general of Georgia, Judge of Richmond County Georgia, and U.S. Senator (1789-1793).

They lived in Georgia until William Few's health declined. He moved his family to New York where he continued his career in politics and commerce. In 1803 he sold



WILLIAM FEW

his plantation (Hesperia) which was near Augusta, Georgia. He owned property in New York City and upper New York State. Catharine and William had four children:

Frances (1789–1885)

Mary (1790–1872)

Matilda (1794–1878)

Albert (1797–1810)

INTRODUCTION TO THE LETTERS

Although living many miles apart, Harriet and Catharine maintained a very close relationship. When possible their letters were transported by relatives or friends. One of the carriers was Albert Gallatin (Secretary of the Treasury) who was Catharine's brother-in-law. They exchanged news and gossip about mutual friends and relatives. Catharine's letter of Nov. 29, 1791 told about her sister Fanny's mental condition at the time of her pregnancy and the difficulties with the relationship between Mrs. Nicholson and Fanny's husband Joshua Seney.⁹

They shared books. They advised one another on how to raise their children to become good Christians. Catharine stated:

I find a difficulty—their passion, their propensities are the same as others—they see not as we do—reason alone will not convince them.

Harriet's letter of January 11, 1808 gave Catharine some advice and sympathy. Religion was very important in their lives. Catharine was concerned about William Few's religious beliefs, and had to be assured on this matter before she would consent to marry him. They discussed the religious books and sermons they had read. When William Few was in Georgia he attended a Methodist Camp Meeting of 5000 people which he describes in a letter to his wife.

They worked together to publish Harriet's book of extracts of poetry and prose by different authors. This was not a very successful venture. Enough subscriptions were gathered to print 400 books. However, many of the subscribers did not follow through with payment, leaving poor Harriet with the bill. From the correspondence, I believe that Catharine subsidized a portion of the publication. Because of their inexperience in the publishing world, they may have been cheated by the book sellers.

They supported each other in their times of stress and grief. The War of 1812 affected both families. However, they disagreed politically. Catharine Nicholson's family background was military and she supported President Madison's Declaration of War. Harriet supported the Federalist and was against the war. Her mother's

Quaker beliefs had a huge influence on her. She was not happy about her two sons participation in the conflict. Harriet's son William was badly wounded at the battle of Bladensburg. Catharine's daughter Frances went into deep depression over the death of her friend and sweetheart, John Chrystie.¹⁰

Harriet thought that her son Edmund would be a suitable husband for Frances, and conveyed this idea to Catharine. Edmund went to New York to visit the Fewes and called on daughter Frances. Much to Harriet's disappointment and some embarrassment, this match was not successful. Frances determined that she would never marry and was still grieving over her loss of John Chrystie. October 10, 1818 Catharine wrote in detail the sad story of Frances' grief. Later Frances married John Chrystie's younger brother Albert.

In 1814 Harriet gave an account of her youngest son Alex:

My Alexander has left us to try his fortune in Allegany County, to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Perhaps it is better for him than a situation that would please him better. He is a gay volatile lad, and a City life would not be so safe for him. He will at any rate be out of the way of temptation to follies which young men are apt to fall into who live in Towns.

Alex soon settled down and managed Woodstock Farm.

In December 1830 Catharine's daughter Matilda sailed on the ship Florian to Georgia to visit relatives. It was struck by a violent storm and nearly shipwrecked. Catharine described this event in detail.

Catharine and Harriet were constantly trying to bring their families together. Catharine's three daughters made several trips to Baltimore, Annapolis and West River and called on the Murrays at Woodstock. A postscript in Catharine's letter dated May 23, 1821 refers to this visit:

Remember me also respectfully to Doctor Murray. Fran tells me I should envy his napping chair as he calls it if I could once get sight of it — When we last met at West River some thirty or forty years ago, we did not calculate on the pleasures to be derived from resting our grey heads on a comfortable napping chair!

The ladies finally got together in 1833 when Catharine traveled south with her daughter Mary to visit relatives and friends.

October 8, 1831 Catharine commented on the Nat Turner negro rebellion in Virginia and her concern for Harriet's safety. Harriet answered in a letter dated November 11, 1831.

August 11, 1832 Catharine wrote about the terrible cholera epidemic in New York. She also described the 1835 fire in New York City and how it bankrupt many wealthy families. In November of 1832 Harriet commented on the event of the death of Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

In 1827 Harriet's son Edmund, who was serving as consul in Haiti, contracted Yellow Fever and died. Her daughter Maryanne died in 1836. Her son William and Isabella Maria Murray's family was devastated by scarlet fever and tuberculosis. Four of their nine children died as well as the parents. Harriet's letter dated June 22, 1839 explained what happened to the orphaned children.

Harriet was left with one surviving child (Alex) with his young family and her elderly blind husband. In a letter written in July 1840 she wrote a very touching description of Dr. William Murray:

My Husband and self move on much as usual, his health is very good and but for the loss of his sight, would, I believe enjoy life as much as he has done for many years. He can scarcely discern one colour from another; yet he watches the monthly rose bushes, and regularly brings me his morning offering of a rose, when he can find one. Few have been permitted to live so long together as we have, and I may add very few have been so uniformly affectionate, and so unwearied in their attention as he has been to me. I can never be thankful enough, that it has pleased God to give him that perfect resignation to his will that I have never heard him express anything like discontent. The chief of his time is spent in holy meditation and prayer. There is nothing of the quarrelousness of old age about him, a perfectly subdued temper and happy mind.

Harriet's favorite grandchild was Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, known as Bet, Alex's child by his first wife Mary Young Addison.¹¹ She mentioned Bet in many of her letters. Although her relationship with her son's second wife Mary Clapham was cordial; it was not as strong as her ties with Alex's first wife, who was her half-sister, Elizabeth Dulany Hesselius Addison's daughter.

The last letter in the collection was written by Prudence Ridout, who was Harriet's niece. She wrote to Catharine to tell her about the death of her dear friend who died on October 3, 1840. Catharine Nicholson Few died August 7, 1854 at age 90.¹²

PRIMROSE, BUILT BY
RICHARD YOUNG,
WHO DIED IN 1748
(PHOTO C.1890)



PRIMROSE, 1999

WOODSTOCK, 1796
(PHOTO C.1890)



An addition was made to the rear of the original house before 1800. On Aug. 19th 1929 the house burned to the ground. William H. Murray, 3rd built another house on the old foundation.

Notes

- ¹ Henry Woodward: Edward C. Papenfuse, et al, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789*. 2 Vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, 1985). Jane Wilson McWilliams, *Annapolis, City on the Severn* (2011)
- ² Charles Homewood: was a classmate and friend of Henry Woodward at Rev. Gordon's school in Annapolis. Charles mortgaged his land holdings to John Brice for 1,761 pounds sterling. John Brice called in the loan because Charles violated the terms of the loan and was living beyond his means, running up debts to merchants in Annapolis. Henry secured the loan for his friend and demanded full control of the plantation, hoping strict management and improvements would make his investment successful. Unfortunately he died before any of this was accomplished leaving his widow with this debt. Later, after the widow Mary Woodward married John Hesselius, they renamed the plantation, Bellefield. The house on the property burned in 1939, leaving only a carriage house. (ref. Orlando Ridout IV.)
- ³ Bellefield: In 1795 after Charles Homewood's death, his daughter, Mary, brought suit in Chancery court against the Woodward heirs to gain title to the mortgaged land. She stated "that because Homewood was of very feeble and weak mind with few lucid intervals, he was at the mercy of unscrupulous men like Woodward". The suit was not successful and Henry Woodward's family kept the property.
- ⁴ Mrs. Hesselius poem: printed in *One Hundred Years Ago; or, The Life and Times of the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, 1769-1848* (pub 1895)
- ⁵ Brice: ref. Charles Coleman Sellers—*Charles Willson Peale* (1969)
- ⁶ Cousin: Catharine Nicholson's grandmother and Dr. William Murray's mother were sisters. (Hannah and Anne Smith)
- ⁷ Alexander John—my great grandfather—youngest son of Harriet and William Murray
- ⁸ Catharine Nicholson miniature, Metropolitan Museum of Art collection
- ⁹ Joshua Seney—delegate and representative from Md. He was a member of Continental Congress 1789–1792
- ¹⁰ John Chrystie: United States Army Lieutenant Col. played a major but controversial part in the Battle of Queenston Heights during the War of 1812. He died of injuries in 1813. There is a street named for him on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.
- ¹¹ Mary Young Addison—gives birth to a son on 9/25/1833 who dies 7/7/1834. She dies 6/9/1834, one month before her baby dies. (ref, Quaker Burial Ground, Galesville, Md.)
- ¹² Catharine Few: obit. ("At Hastings, NY, Catherine Few, relic of the late Col. William Few and daughter of the late Commodore James Nicholson. 90")

THE LETTERS . . .

ms3245b02f05 19-20-21

Miss Harriett Woodward
Primrose Hill
near Annapolis

Philad- January the 24, 1782

What shall I say to my Dear Harriett for my long silence the want of opportunity it was in a great measure owing to, and I know she will accept of my apology when I tell her that the recollection of my neglect has given me more pain than my trifling Epistles could have afforded her pleasure, for tho I did not write, yet scarcely a day has passed since I left her that I have not thought on my Dear absent friends at Primrose Hill and do hope she will believe me when I appraise her that the time I spent at that dear place will ever be remembered with the most sincere and grateful pleasure.

I am afraid you have given over all thoughts of coming to Philad tho I still hope the happiness of seeing you with your Dear Mama at the return of Spring. I left Annapolis very unwell with the ague & fever. I was distressed at it not being in my power to call and see you tho I did not know when we should set off, it depending on the wind and weather.

It is a long while since I have heard from any of our Baltimore friends. I have not one correspondent there. I shall write to Mrs. Rogers* by this opportunity as both Mama and myself wish very much to know how they all do. The Col. I think is very unfortunate after having almost gained the prize as a reward for his hopes and fears to be so near parting with it forever. I long to know if Miss Buchanan has yet recovered.

Primrose I imagine looks very dull this dreary weather. You have often said my dear Harriett that retirement would not suit my lively disposition and you wondered I should be as contented as I was when with you but when I think of your dear friendly neighbors, Mrs. Thomas and her amiable daughter, you will scarcely believe me when I say with such society I know nowhere I would rather spend my days than in the neighborhood of Primrose.

How does Caroline do—tell her I love her very much and all the dear little girls. I hope Charlotte and Miss Nevett still continue their intimacy for I think Polly is a very fine child. If you see her do my dear tell her to give my love to her Mama and Papa. Remember me affectionately to your Mama and sister Nackey* All the family joins their best love to yourself and them. May I hope for the pleasure of hearing from you. Do my Harriett write by every opportunity. I will take great pleasure in answering all your letters and believe me to be with the most unaffected regard. Your sincere friend,

K. Nicholson

Give my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas that young lady promised to copy me 2 pieces of poetry out of her book if she has not forgot them I will be obliged to you to enclose them in one of your letters which I hope to receive very soon.

*Rebecca Woodward Rogers, Harriet's sister.

*Achsah Woodward (1758–1784), Harriet's sister.

ms3245b02f05 16(addressed envelope)-17-18

Miss Kitty Nicholson's Letter [when at West River?]
 Miss Harriett Woodward
 Capt Middleton
 Primrose-Hill

September, the 15th, 1782

I would have visited my dear friend on Tuesday but was obliged to leave Annapolis on Monday Morning and indeed I know not when I shall return. Doctor Murray writes Mrs. Murray is dangerously ill, he has wrote for her friends and expects them any moment. As company would be inconvenient at this time I imagine we shall not return until we cross the Bay. It is unfortunate for me as I wished to spend as much of my time with you as was possible but you know I am obliged to attend Mrs. Murray's movements. I am fond of the country and West River is an agreeable retirement as I enjoy the society of friends I sincerely esteem. Yet methinks I should spend my hours much happier could I divide them at Primrose. I should pass them with my dear Harriett who will believe me when I assure her nothing would give me greater happiness.

Caroline* I hope has perfectly recovered and don't forget to tell her Capt Middleton often request. I will give him the little keep-sake she gave me by that she must not suppose I have disclosed [her fun?] No not for the world—I wish much to hear from home. Should you my dear girl see anyone from Philadelphia that you think may probably know something of our family enquire particularly and write to me by the first opportunity. I would add more but have not time.

Adieu my dear girl remember my affectionate love to your Mama and Sisters. Yours ever faithfully,

K. Nicholson

*Caroline Hesselius, half-sister to Harriet

ms3245b02f05 13-14-15

[Catharine Few to Harriett Woodward Brice]

New York, the 29 of August, 1785

I am much obliged to my dear Harriett for her last letter—Various indeed my friend have been the afflictions you have experienced since we last embraced, and but how few of your years could have added (after a recital of them) with any confidence that “all my support was God and I have reason to praise his name”. How few of us think of making him our friend till trouble oppress us, and how shall we dare to look to him in adversity who we refused in prosperity? This was not an aggravation of your grief and what a consolation to know and feel that “everything works together for good to those that love him”.

And is my Harriett a Mother too since I saw her? Sweet little Innocent! May you live to repay her for every pang of woe she has ever experienced. Gladly would I pay a visit to Prim Rose and be introduced to my young friend but at present I am confined all together at home by my dear Papa's absence

who is still obliged to follow his old occupation and a painful one it is to his family who are ever anxious on his account. Last Winter we expected his return from France three months ere he arrived and as we received no letters from him concluded some fatal accident had happened to him tho each was afraid to communicate their sad thoughts to the other and when the sorrows of my dear Mama's mind had I feared from her ill health brought her into a decline, he arrived in New York after eleven months absence. Thus my dear Harriett, you see trouble seems to be the lot of man. He has again left us and is gone to France so that I have very little prospect of visiting you shortly. I have indeed my dear Friend wished anxiously to relieve you of your melancholy. Ideas as you have often flattered me by the most pleasing appearances that the society of your lively companion has given you pleasure, true, I am not quite so thoughtless and gay as I once was but I think you would not be displeased with me. Your sister Rogers says she had always hopes of me when a few years of experience were added to me, and may I not hope her dear sister still retain her partiality for me tho at the distance of two hundred miles and after the absence of three years, sometimes to the appearance of others friendship seems almost extinguished by the cares and troubles of this life, thus my dear Harriett did I think of your silence I could not believe you had altogether forgot me. My affection for you was the first finer feeling that animated my heart when I was too young to give it vent by words, but you I believe perceived my preference for you above all my other companions and kindly offered me a share in one corner of your heart, I have not been with you much since we grew up but I may say with propriety that tho changes of habitation have obscured the remembrance of many of my former acquaintances my dear Harriett gains all the affections I have ever felt for her and I may add till her sufferings reached my ear I indeed knew not how much I loved her.

I am much obliged to you for your account of my Maryland friends it will ever give me pleasure to hear from them, for tho we are very happily situated in New York I feel a very great partiality for them as does every individual of our family. I often wish it was my lot to be in the neighborhood of your dear Mama and her Harriett in just such another little peaceful retreat as Prim Rose. I am glad to hear you have not left it as it must be a great consolation to her to have you with her since her late heavy affliction.*

Mama has not given us any addition to our family since we came to New York and their is no material alteration in it since we left Baltimore except a little girl born when we lived in Philadelphia.* I am glad to hear your friend Miss Jennings* is so happily married.

Will my dear Harriett continue to write to me as often as she has leisure. Her correspondence will be the source of real pleasure to me—Remember me to your Dear Mama—when you write to your sister Rogers tell her my best love still attends her. Inform Caroline I remember her with great affection. My love to all your little sisters and brother, John. Kiss your sweet little baby and let me know how he improves.

My dear Harriett apologized for her letter; how shall I then send mine, but let us write without reserve and friendship without ceremony [?] in our

epistle writings then I shall not feel ashamed to send you one of my scrawls in return for your letters.

Sincerely my Harriett, Affectionate,

K. Nicholson

*Jehoiadden Nicholson b. May 2, 1783.

*Miss Jennings—Juliana marries Col. James Brice May 24th, 1781.

*Mrs. Hesselius daughter Achia age 25 died Sept. 16, 1784 -family bible.

ms3245b02f05 11-12

[The following is part of a letter from Catharine Few to Harriet Woodward Brice, not dated, probably written in 1787.]

. . . every particular concerning the circumstance which you do me the honor to interest yourself in—my dear Friend one part of your letter extremely affected me. God grant the severe trials thro which you have gone may be sanctified to you. You will then have no cause to repine and what a sweet consolation must it be to you to know from his own word that “whom he loveth he chasteneth”. May your friend profit by your tender and affectionate admonition. I was much flattered by the account your friend gave you of “My Swain” (as you call him) as to himself there is indeed but one thing wanting to make him every thing I can wish—but that O! how important—for alas my dear Harriett what so deceitful as our own hearts and what can their be so apt to lead us astray as a dear amiable connection who knows nothing of religion (and whose situation rendered him acceptable to all the vanities and follies of life) and the more good qualities they may have independent of that the more dangerous and [shining?] the ruin is to us. This has been the cause of much sorrow to me before and I may say since our engagement. There is another circumstance beside which has given me much uneasiness but which I have found less difficulty to obviate than the former. The distance of Col. F situation from my friends—his consequence of prospects in Georgia will not admit of his living here—I must therefore bid adieu to my friends and separate from them a thousand miles. This seems to give my dear Mother much distress, but I am in hopes she will get more reconciled to it as she becomes more acquainted with him. He is now in Philadelphia and I do not expect him until the signing of Convention. He will then sail for Georgia on business and I shall not see him after that until spring. So that you see I have no thoughts of bringing “matters to a conclusion” yet a while.

I wish I could my dear Harriett meet you this fall in Philadelphia. How delighted should I be to see you once more. Tell me have you determined on being there. I don’t know what efforts would make were I sure of that—tho at present . . .

*This letter was probably written in 1787 before Catharine Nicholson Few’s marriage and Harriet’s marriage to William Murray.

ms3245b02f05 8-9-10

[Catharine Nicholson to Harriett Woodward Brice]

New York August the 30th 1787

Had I for a moment ceased to think of my Harriett with that tenderness which our long friendship ought to render mutual, the receipt of her last letter would have called forth with redoubled ardor every affection of my heart—but believe me this was not the case. I have been silent it is true, but attribute it to any other cause for I feel it did not proceed from that, nor shall you say again that neglect in our correspondence originated with me, but I have more apologies to offer and on this score I can acquit myself more to my satisfaction—could you have known my feelings when obliged to leave Baltimore without seeing you, you would not have accused me of indifference. Mrs. Rogers told me they expected you any minute and my anxiety to see you increased as while I staid, for I had not an idea of being disappointed but unfortunately for me Papa received letters from the Eastern Shore which demanded his presence as soon as possible and so unexpectedly did I go that we were trying to fulfill an engagement to dine, but we were summoned to decline that, pack up our clothes and go on board a boat immediately. There was no writing—The command was positive—and we sailed in two hours—such was the circumstances which prevented my seeing you—and believe me sincere to see you was by far the most powerful inducement. I had to wish to stay. Many are the changes you have experienced my beloved friend since last we parted but they are changes which have endeared you the more to me, while I knew you were happy and unfeignedly rejoiced in that happiness—but when the prospect changed and you wanted every consolation which the tenderness of your friends could suggest—it was then I mourned the distance that I don't know by what means I shall accomplish it and wish you would extend your plan a little and pay us a visit in New York. It is but one hundred miles farther.

Our family is the same in number as when we left Baltimore only with the addition of one little girl* who is now four years old. Mama has her health pretty well and often talks of you all with the tenderest affection. My sisters as well as yours have become women two of them at least since you saw them. I wish I could see your sweet little Boy. What a new scene would it be to me to see him with you in this interesting character and should that never happen you must teach him to regard me tho he should not know me as his dear mother's friend.

I am much obliged to you for your intelligence concerning my Annapolis friends. Present my compliments to Doctor William Murray when you see him and thank him for his remembrance. I am sorry you have by this time lost Mr. and Mrs. Thomas. I fancy you can but badly spare such pleasing and attentive neighbors as they were. How come my dear Harriett that I have not received your letter before? It is dated in June and it now the latter end of August. Maj. Ross* called on me but I have not had the pleasure of seeing him tho I hope to be better acquainted with him while he stays in New York—particularly as he is a friend and favorite of yours.

You see I have not "failed to write" immediately on the receipt of your delightful epistle for which I thank you over and over again. May no accident

intervene to prevent my hearing often from you. You see I have not forgot to converse with you with all the unreserve of a bosom Friend and why should distance lessen the confidence which as ever subsisted between us two.

Tell me more of your Charles Town trip and if you really have any thoughts of such a thing. When shall I hear from you? Do not let it be long. Since you make apologies for bad writing I think I ought—but shall wave it for the present and only say I wish my best letters were wrote half as well as yours.

Well my dear Harriett remember me most tenderly and affectionately to her Mama and sisters and believe me most faithfully yours,

K. Nicholson

*Jehoiadden (1783–1828).

*Maj. Ross, son of Dr. David Ross who married Arianna Brice (ref. McIntyre index p.86 Md.Arch.)

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[Catharine Few to Harriet Woodward Brice]

New York, March the 18th 1788

By Mr. Curson* my dear friend I have an opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your last letter. He tells me he shall have the pleasure of delivering this to you himself and if you will be so good as to write forwarding your answer immediately he has requested me to enclose all my letters to him as he has frequent business in Annapolis, and I think it will be an expeditious mode of conveyance for us both.

Maj. Ross has promised to take tea with us this evening. I have not as yet seen him since his return to Congress. He called when I was from home. Hannah asked many questions concerning you. You know I do not suspect you of vanity, so, tho I decline telling you what his reply to them were, you must not think my silence is on that account. Had you not confided in me concerning the pretensions of a certain cousin of mine, I should that very morning have discovered how much more reserved you were than your friend. He observed that he believed. your conduct had amounted to a refusal. Of the Gentleman* I know but little as I have not seen him since I was in Annapolis, and my judgment of men of manness is totally altered since then, that I by no means rely on my earliest opinions. This I know, that he is a great favorite among his relations, and you will not suspect my sincerity that when I own I pity him the more for being [susceptible ?] since, tho in retirement, he has discovered and prizes the merit and accomplishments of my Harriett. Might I offer my wishes which I well know will not be thought presuming, it is that my dear Friend would exert all the fortitude that christian resignation can alone inspire to resume her former tranquility. You need not be told that to these who rely on the promises of an unchangeable God that the past shall "work together for good" it would certainly be best for your dear little Edmund to find in the second choice of his Mother a guardian and a friend. Forgive me my dear if I have said too much. May the path of your duty be made plain to you and your future happiness in some measure obliterate the remembrance of your former peculiar misfortunes. Only permit to add that the observation I have made concerning connecting yourself to some man worthy is by no means confined

to the person we have been speaking of. In this case not only your inclinations must decide but my judgment need never be intrusive on my friend who is so capable of choosing for herself.

I had a letter from Miss Pettit. I had made some particular enquiries concerning your looks. After having informed me of what I wished to know, she sums up all by telling me she discovered a remarkable likeness between you and me. Do not doubt me my Dear Friend when I tell you I never was more pleased or flattered by an observation of this kind in my life.

Poor Mrs. Murray. I am distressed at the situation of her family. So be in particular in your next and inform me how they now are.

Maj. Ross tells us that you have made great progress on the Harpsichord, and play elegantly. I wish you could favor us with your company this afternoon. Tho I think I should scarcely permit you to play either, I have so much to say to you. Have you my dear a tune to give me the words of which in "[?]" my beloved sounds" I think it is [?] in your collection. I want some music of that kind for I have none that I can play with satisfaction to myself, particularly when I am alone.

I know my dear friend will be kindly anxious to know how my own affairs are situated by the last reply from Georgia I have had no letters. It is near the time Col F. designed setting out by land for New York. By his not writing, and from a passage in a letter from a gentleman to the delegate here from that state concerning my friend I have some reason to hope his journey has been expedited and that he is now on his way.

Hannah* desires to be particularly remembered to you and wishes she had the pleasure of being better acquainted with you. I wish I could introduce you to her. Me thinks you would not be displeased with the Sister of your friend. Mama's best love to your Mama and self. My compliments to your Sisters. I [?] when on the return of Spring which will release them from confinement which is generally irksome to very young ladies.

I would apologize as much as possible because I know nothing better is to be expected from me in the writing way, but indeed I am ashamed of the comparison when I look at your charming letter and my wretched scrawl. Adieu my loved friend and believe me ever thine,

K. Nicholson

*Mr. Curson—Richard Curson, wine merchant of New York and Baltimore. (See Jacob Hall Pleasants, *The Curson family of New York and Baltimore, and Their English Descent* [1923].)

*gentleman—This is Dr. William Murray who is courting widow Harriet Woodward Brice. Harriet's first husband was Edmund Brice. They were married Sept 1783. He died in 1784, leaving her with an infant son (James Edmund Brice), whom Harriet refers to in her letters as "Best of Sons."

*Hannah—Hannah Nicholson, Catharine's sister.

[Harriet Woodward Brice to Catharine Few]

Primrose Hill, April 24, 1788

Yours dated March 18th forwarded by Mr. Curson came safe and speedily to hand, my dearest Girl, and I am really ashamed that my acknowledgment for the favour has not been forwarded long ere this, but lest you should think me more culpable than I really am I will tell you the cause. You must know, immediately on my receiving your letter I sat down and answered it. (I was then on a visit to my good friend Mrs. Gough). After I had said all I had to say, and with one thing and another had made out a very long letter. I stuck it over the fire place, that I might not forget to send it by first opportunity to Baltimore, when somebody's curiosity so over came their honour, that my letter was snatched off, and from that day to this I have not seen or heard of it. Sometimes I have flatter'd my self that unknown to me someone had put it into Mr. Curson hands as it was directed to his care, but it is now my fear that it has been broke open, which tho' mortifying I must put up with seeing there is no remedy.

It is now the season that all along I have promised myself you would visit Primrose in. I am very impatient to hear how you have determined the matter, from one circumstance mentioned in your last I have had my fears that you have not concluded according to my wishes, the return of a certain person to New York with [. . . . ?] to Maryland altogether I am truly afraid. This thwarts the desire of my heart exceedingly which is to see you and that speedily, do let me know my Dear what I am to expect, and ease me of my suspense which I must feel till I see or hear from you.

I returned from Baltimore this day fortnight, where I spent a most agreeable three weeks, altogether with Mrs. Gough, as I left sister Rogers with Mamma, a circumstance which rendered my stay more agreeable as I can never leave her only with the girls and feel perfectly easy. They are too young and lively to be suitable companions for her.

Mr. and Mrs. Gough with Sophia and her husband are all in Annapolis, where they stay till the sessions of Assembly is over. At present there is a great to do on account of the new Government. The convention now sets in our city and the people are much engrossed in politicks, but the majority is so great in favor, that tis thought they will soon break up. What are you Kitty? Federal of Anti-Federal? I think I can guess from the part a friend of yours has taken. We are very apt to be influenced by those we love and have a good opinion of. I find myself much interested tho I know hardly anything about it, and as all my friends are Federal I am a staunch one. We don't differ in opinions I hope.

What can it be that Major Ross has told you of me, as it is not a fear of raising my vanity that kept you from telling me. I think perhaps it was a fear of hurting my feelings by hearing his unfavorable opinion of me. However I comfort myself with this reflection, That I strive to keep from offending everybody, and if I am disagreeable it is from nature, consequently it is not my fault but do give me a hint in your next that I may see whether I am out in my conjectures.

There is a room full of company and such a chattering that I scarcely know what I'm after but as there is an opportunity to Baltimore tomorrow I would

not let it slip without scratching a few lines to you. Do let me hear from you soon. Remember me in the most affectionate manner to your dear mother and also Miss Hannah. I should be very happy to renew my acquaintance with her, tis a pleasure I promise myself when she next visits Maryland.

My dear Edmund is very hearty, but not half so handsome as in the winter, the wind and sun has so changed his complexion that he looks quite homely. I received a polite letter from Miss Pettit the other day, but I've not yet answered it. I am exceedingly pleased with that young lady. I suppose it is owing to her attachment for you that I feel so particularly interested in her welfare. Do give my love to her when you write.

Farewell my Dear Dear Girl, love me and believe me at all times to be ever and ever your unalterable and truly affectionate Friend,

Harriet Brice

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[Written on the envelope "by R R", Rebecca Rogers Harriet's sister.

This letter was being conveyed through Rebecca Rogers]

"Mrs. Cook's [skow!] went this morning R R Mr. Bean journey man is in jail so I have to look out elsewhere for yours."

Mrs. Harriett Brice
Primrose Hill, near Annapolis.
Mrs. Harriett Brice
Master James Edmund Brice
Annapolis

New York, August the 13th 1788

Whenever I am remiss by not answering my dear friends letter, the reflection is more painful to me than writing can be to the most indolent creature on earth, yet this procrastination so frequently takes possession of me that tho I am often visiting you in idea, some other time seems always more fitting than the present for writing, but while I am condemning myself I must not forget to tell you that I have not been altogether so neglectful as you might suppose from not hearing from me so long. I wrote to you the 5th of July, but because I did not send it off immediately I got out of humor with it and here it lies before me ready to be committed to the flames, but how is it my dear Harriett you were not always so ceremonious, it is a long time since I have received a line from you. I hope you have not been prevented writing by ill health.

Shortly after my last letter to you my friend relieved the anxiety I felt at not hearing from him, by appearing in person and the 8th of June, I gave him my hand who had long before an interest in my affections. My happiness does no longer depend upon myself and I feel it is but too intimately connected with that of another. You my loved Harriett will not be surprised at hearing me say this. For alas in these tender ties, what danger is there in fixing our supreme affections beneath the skies. Col. Few's once more leaving me and that in three or four weeks not a little damps my present happiness in his society. He must spend the winter in Georgia as he is building and preparing for our residing there and business of the public calls for his attendance there in a short time.

The constitution of that state is to be revised, they have appointed several delegates to meet in convention for that purpose. In consideration of his return this autumn, they have chosen him one, as it is a matter of much importance to the inhabitants (and in all probability his lot is cast in that state). He must go. Were it a more favorable season for traveling I should certainly go on with him as far as Baltimore, that I might spend some time with you. My dear Harriett, I wish to see you exceedingly, I have thought over the matter very seriously but it will be impossible to return in the winter and as it may be the last I spend in New York for some time. Mama would be distressed that I should pass it from her.

Col. Few says he saw Mr. Rogers* in Baltimore as he passed thro the last time, and regrets that he did not know of the friendship that subsisted between his family and ours, or he would certainly not have thought his deep fatigue a sufficient apology for declining accepting Mr. Rogers invitation to breakfast. He says he was much surprised when Mr. Rogers at parting with him desired his compliments to Mrs. and Miss Nicholson; I must not forget to remember him to my dear Harriett. He hopes to be numbered among your friends.

How does our dear little James Edmund? Remember me to him with a kiss. My love to your Mama and the young ladies.

Adieu my dearly beloved friend. Will you write to me soon and tell me that you pardon my long silence and still think of me with your accustomed partiality.

Believe me as ever, yours,

K. Few

*Mr. Philip Rogers, Harriet's brother-in-law

MSA SC 2301- [need citation]

[Harriet Woodward Brice to Catharine Nicholson Few]

[Letter written to Catharine Nicholson, who married Col. William Few on June 8th 1788. Envelope missing. It was probably written in October 1788. Harriet's first husband died Oct. 17, 1784. She remarried Nov. 6, 1788.]

Never till my return from my long ramble, which was the 17th of Oct. did I receive your charming letter dated August 30th. For you may be assured it should not have laid till this time unanswered. I caught at it the minute I entered the house, and feasted on the contents. It was indeed a most pleasant and welcome refreshment, and I really enjoyed it. I have since blamed myself that I did not sit down immediately and answer it, for then my feelings were all alive and I could have found abundant subject.

Accept of my sincere thanks my dearest girl for the many expressions of tenderness your letter contained, they were congenial to my heart and I doubted not of their veracity from the similar sentiments that I know is there, in return, which I may say with the strictest truth has experienced no diminution from time or circumstances, do I think it possible.

I feel quite vain of the confidence you repose in me. My love, which I will strive to deserve, believe me kitty, few. . . .I may venture to say . . .

[letter torn, incomplete]

May your soul be under the influence of his. . . then you will be safe, I sympathize most sincerely in the uneasiness you express with regard to the religious principles of your friend. At the same time I rejoice to think it should be a concern with you. Alas! too few think it of importance enough to be anxious about it either in themselves or others. To you (in confidence) my dear I confess it was a source of the greatest anxiety I have ever experienced before I was married, and my fears and affections carried such a conflict that sometimes I thought it would almost end my existence. But this I must say in justice to my dear departed friend, that every promise he made me with respect to that point he strictly adhered to, and I never had the smallest cause to repent of the confidence I reposed in him. . . . May you my dear be blessed with a companion as condescending and as perfectly sweet tempered; from his character there is no reason to doubt, and then most assuredly it would be still more desirable to have him a religious man. Yet, as matters are circumstanced you must hope for. . . . and use your influence by every gentle means to. . . over to your way of thinking; at the same time pray. . . Father of mercies that as all hearts are in his hands that change which is necessary. I cannot tell you the hundredth part of what I suffer'd on this very account, the sleepless nights and the sorrowful days, but it pleased God that none of those evils I dreaded were permitted to happen. I trust my love you will experience his mercy in like manner. But O! my friend you must keep your heart with all deligence and omit not your duty to God on any account, as you will be more exposed to temptation; it will require more watchfulness on your part. O my love forsake not that living Fountain for all this world calls good. Or great. As there is no pleasure to equal a sense of his favour, so there is no situation so all together comfortless as that of having him for our enemy.

In the fullness of my heart I have said a great deal on this subject, be not offended my dear if I've been too plain, every sentence was suggested by pure affection, which hopes your forgiveness. O' Catharine, I long to embrace you, when shall we meet? Let not anything induce you to. . . . Southward I charge you, before I see you. You. . . have my full consent to your marriage 'till. . . little conversation with you, don't think that. . . . guish my right and title to you without being ask'd and that in the genteelest manner. . .

I heard today that Major Ross was in Annapolis. I'm in high expectation of a letter. If you have let him leave New York without one I shall positively quarrel with you. This is the 4th long letter I've wrote to your one, don't think I will tamely submit to such doings. I will not close this till I know how you have behaved that I may proceed accordingly. . .

[The handwriting below shows a different pen. The following paragraph was written after Maj. Ross failed to deliver a letter from Catharine Few.]

O you bad girl, so you have neglected writing I find. What do you mean by such behavior. Indeed Kitty you hurt me exceedingly. I will say no more but leave your own conscience to reprove you, who I hope will be faithful to its charge.

Farewell my dear, I still remain with the warmest affection ever, Yours most sincerely,

H. Brice

[Catharine Few to Harriet Woodward Brice]

New York, October the 15th 1788

Ever welcome are the friendly wishes of my Harriett—tho on this occasion they were longer delayed than the thousand unmeaning ones which I have received. They were acknowledged with the gratitude due to the affectionate heart from which they proceeded. I have already experienced the parting in which my friend so kindly sympathized with me. Mr. Few sailed for Georgia three days after I received your letter. I have not yet heard of his safe arrival, but from the appearance of the weather here and constancy of favorable winds I have every reason to hope he has had a short and agreeable passage. How gladly would I have alleviated my sorrow at the absence of one friend by supplying the vacancy with the presence of another, but it is not my “being married” which prevents, the season of the year is the only difficulty, had it been summer when my return from Maryland might have been effected in two or even three months most willingly would I have accepted of the affectionate invitation of my Harriett, but the winds howl already and every thing wears the appearance of an approaching Winter, which is an obstacle insurmountable to a timid female whose home is accessible only by water and the ice continually floating about makes the passage of our rivers very unsafe in that season but when disappointed of one scheme how immediately does our companion hope offer us another, may I venture to tell my Harriett what are my thoughts, why not? She is the friend of my heart, she will take pleasure in the accomplishment of my wishes because to human appearance my happiness will be increased by it. Col Few as I have told you my dear is gone to Georgia, his private business called him there, as he has not yet made the necessary arrangements for our residence there, but I am told by his friends that it is more than probable he will be appointed one of the Senators or Representatives to attend the new Legislature. If so I shall be so blessed as to live a little longer in my native City surrounded by my beloved friends and have the prospect of spending some part of my time with my dear Harriett, for I am determined if nothing prevents, not to delay seeing you sometime next year, either on my way to Georgia or design a visit to you and you alone. Don’t think I am too sanguine for it is a plan I dare not think of too often since I am well acquainted that nothing is more precarious than the voice of the multitude and I trust that God whose goodness to me I can trace from my earliest infancy will still condescend to direct in this as in every other event of my future life and make his disposals in providence subservient to my real interest. I know my beloved Harriett how rarely the Character of a Statesman and a Christian are united and I know my own heart not all the advantages of present good would induce me to resign the dear hope of one day numbering the partner of my life among the followers of Jesus Christ. He is now disposed for Retirement and confesses himself satiated with public life, from his earliest youth he has been engaged in politics and now his every wish seems to center in the cultivation of his farm.

My friend I hope is long since convinced of my unalterable interest in her happiness. God grant that her present election may prove a source of real blessing to her and that the storms which clouded her earlier prospect may but

make the sunshine of the present more bright to her by having experienced the reverse, Doctor M__ is a worthy and excellent man, such a one as will no doubt make my Harriett and her little Edmund happy in the connection they are about to form. I once thought I had said too much on this subject, because for some time that part of one of my letters remained unanswered, but I may now venture to tell you that I rejoice that you have overcome the delicacy of your feelings. I knew time alone would reconcile an event of this kind to a woman of your sensibility, and I always hoped his constancy would surmount the difficulty. Do not think I blame you my dear girl, no I love you the more because I think you have acted with the propriety of discretion which I would ever have expected from you. I thank you for the confidence you repose in me. I think you will not regret it because I love you and therefore your secrets are my own.

Mrs. Rogers is by this time I hope recovered. Give my love to her and her worthy Husband. Remember me affectionately to your Mama and Sisters. May I venture to trust you with my best compliments to Doctor Murray.

Have you got any sacred music for the harpsichord my dear girl that can be enclosed in the compact of a letter. If you have you will oblige me to copy it and [?] absent in amusing your forlorn Kitty this Winter. Excuse my troubling you with my wants.

Your letter lay a very long while in Philadelphia. I think my dear if you were to send it addressed to the care of Mr. Richard Curson /Baltimore they would sooner arrive in New York. I shall write to him on the subject. I know he will willingly take charge of them.

All the family desires to be remembered to you with sincerest regard, I am my dear Friend with real regard and tender affection ever thine,

K

MSA SC 2301-2-4

Mrs. Catharine Few
New York
han'd by Mrs. Randolph
Annapolis

July 13, 1790

My Dear Friend,

Tho' I have every reason to believe my letters are of no consequence to you, having never had any encouragement from you to continue them, yet I cannot let so immediate and good an opportunity pass without reminding you, you have still such a friend as myself whom neither time, absence, or even neglect can make forget you. I have frequently made enquiry after you from those I have thought most likely to give me information respecting you, but with no success, nor have I ever had one syllable of intelligence of you since Major Ross left Congress nor for some time before. How to account for it, I know not. I wrote to you immediately on my marriage giving you an account of it and begging to be informed particularly how you were etc. etc; but I never got an answer. You must think My Dear Kitty how mortifying. . . friendship any

seeming neglect is, and say if I have not had cause for suspicion. My time is so occupied with family affairs since I became a House Keeper that I find but little leisure for writing. Yet me thinks however urgent circumstances may be, I could always find a pleasure in stealing an hour to converse with you in this way; and it is a demand my affection for you seems to authorize me to make. I must therefore once more beg you to let me hear from you. Since I have changed my name, I have added a sweet little Daughter to my family to whom I wish to (also her dear Brother) introduce to you. I think you would join me in saying they are both sweet creatures; at least it is the invariable opinion of Doctor M and myself, and in contemplating the perfections of our dear Mary Ann our constant conclusion is there is no finer child in the world. I don't doubt but by this time My Dear you can account for the extreme partiality of a Mother. I long to know every circumstance respecting you. Have you determined to live in New York or do you still propose going to the southward. I suppose as Col. Few's Public appointment still keeps him from Georgia, you will hardly go there without him. There seems not the smallest probability of my seeing you I think unless, when you do go home you fulfill your promise of calling on us. I can't tell you how happy it would make me, but I look on it as a matter at such a distance that I can scarcely anticipate it.

I know of no circumstance respecting your friends and acquaintances here that is new or interesting. No doubt you have heard by this time of the death of Capt. Ridgley,* whose immense wealth has made his exit a matter of so much comment to all his numerous relations, every one of each trying to make themselves most agreeable to him that they might be the happy partakers of the largest share of his fortune. However as is generally the case, some have been most mortified and disappointed on the occasion. He has made Mrs. C. . . . brother Charles Carman his principle heir, on the condition of his assuming his name, which I daresay he will do very readily for the valuable consideration. The Capt. tis thought died worth 150,000 Lb. Alas! What does it profit him now. I hear one of the name of Nicholson has rec'd a handsome legacy; but I do not know which of your Uncle's sons. I saw your Uncle Ben the other day. He was very well. He informed me Mrs. Nicholson has lately added another to her little family. So there is no fear of that name becoming extinct.

I believe I told you in a former letter that Polly Thomas (with her Mother & Brother) had gone to reside in England. Since which, would you believe it, she has been married to one of the cleverest men I know, and is now in constant expectation of paying a visit to her native country. Notwithstanding all the fine things she has seen, she professes the warmest preference for the woods and fields of America.

I have taken the liberty my Dear with this letter to introduce to your particular attention to a Mrs. Randolph* from Virginia who is now moving (with her Husb'd and children) to be an inhabitant of your City. I will not pretend to speak of the virtues and amiable qualities of this lady, whose distinguished merit might fully justify every encomium a much abler pen than mine could pay. But this I am sure of, you will find her a very valuable acquisition to their Society, tho' not the most beautiful or elegant in her person. Her eldest Niece,

Miss Courtney Norton, I am much pleased with. I think her a lovely girl and if Maria* is of the same opinion she will be fond of her as a companion.

My paper will not admit of my enlarging much more. I must now beg you to make my love acceptable to your dear Mother and Sisters and best respects to your good Man. My Husband is a bed and asleep or would join me I'm sure. I have been up ever since five O'Clock scribbling to you. tho' I am seldom in bed later than that hour if I am well.

Ever & Ever faithfully & Affectionately yours,

H. Murray

*Capt. Ridgely, Capt. Charles Ridgely of "Hampton," left his estate to his nephew Charles Ridgely Carnan on the condition he change his name to Charles Carnan Ridgely. This Charles Ridgely's sister, Miss Carnan, was Harriet Woodward's father's first cousin. The second Charles Ridgely's wife, Priscilla Dorsey, was sister to the first Charles Ridgely. Both of these were Aunts to Mary Dorsey and took care of her after her mother died in 1802. Mary married Dr. William Murray's nephew Daniel Murray in 1808.

*Maria-Catherine Few's sister.

*Mrs. Randolph (Elizabeth) wife of Attorney General Edmund Jennings Randolph.

ms3245b02f05 28-29-30

Miss Harriett Murray
Annapolis

New York, August 5th 1790

I have this moment received your letter my dear Harriett and hasten to answer it. I feel wounded by your reflections, altho I have too justly incurred your suspicions, but you must. believe it to be only the appearance of neglect, for however seemingly in attentive I may have been I have never ceased to think of you with the sincerest admiration and tenderest friendship, when I received your last letter I was just taking a long farewell of Col. Few, he sailed for Georgia a few days after, my mind was oppressed with his absence at that time. It was impossible for me to write, but I delayed it too long, frequently I thought of you and poured out the warmest wishes for your happiness altho I never sent my congratulations on your change of situation. The March following Col Few returned and in April my little girl was born. I was two months confined to my Room for that occasion with a severe illness. On my recovery I went to the Country and continued there until autumn, but I cannot say that my health was perfectly re established till in the Winter. There my dear I have given you a little History of my affairs. After which you will not be surprised that I can so unfeignedly concur with you in the opinion that your little James Edmund, Mary Ann and my Frances are the three finest Children in the world. The latter is just fifteen months old, has cut almost all her teeth and begins to talk. I wish our little Family could meet. They I daresay would be pleased and I am sure it would make me as happy as any thing in this world could. I do not despair of it, altho with you it seems so distant that I hardly dare anticipate the period. When the late question respecting the residence of Congress was agitated it was for some time thought Baltimore would be the place and I assure you the prospect

of being so near you was the only thing that reconciled me to the idea of leaving New York, however that is at an end and Philadelphia is to be the place, by that arrangement I have been prevented from seeing your friend Mrs. Randolph, the Attorney General has come on without his family. I suppose they remain in Philadelphia as he told Col Few he intended to reside there and practice the Law, it would have made me very happy to have been introduced to her as she is an intimate of yours and a favorite I suspect she is a little more in my style than the generality of strangers who visit New York all of whom I am constrained to pay some attention to and I think they are more gay than the citizens themselves.

I am glad to hear your friend Miss Thomas is well married, she seemed to be a deserving girl and I dare say her revisiting America will be a gratification to all her acquaintances, she is not singular in preferring her native country, many that have left New York at the conclusion of the War are languishing to return again.

My Sister Fanny, who was not grown up when we left you, was married about 13 months since to a Mr. Seney* of your State but I fancy not among your acquaintance as he comes from the Eastern Shore. She goes to her home as soon as Congress rises which it is expected will be the latter end of the present week. As for myself and family we remain here, how long is uncertain. I have no thoughts of making a visit to Georgia very soon as Mr. F's business detains him there the greatest part of the time. Harriett I wish to goodness you would go and live in Georgia. They say it is a fine thriving for industrious young people and I am sure if you continue to rise at five I shall profit by the good example and we shall do very well together. Tell Cousin William I have a very good plan in view and want his concurrence much. I have thought of it before but never dared mention it for fear your Ladyship should talk of leaving Mama or a hundred other obstacles which, if you are any thing of an adventurer, might easily be surmounted, certain I am that we would be very happy together and mutually assist each other in our Domestic plans of Housewifery, Education of children etc.

The poor Miss Pettits have met with a great loss lately by the death of their excellent Mother, I don't know whether you were acquainted with her but she was indeed a valuable woman and much regretted by all her acquaintance.

I will not say any thing about writing to you soon again, whatever my intentions are, but I must add I feel truly grateful for your unmerited goodness and unless I am very much deceived in myself you shall not again have cause to reproach me for my unpardonable silence. Remember me most affectionately to Doctor Murray kiss your dear little ones for me and accept of the best love from all this family to your self and your good Mama.

And believe me my ever dear friend Yours most faithfully,

K. Few

[This letter is in response to Harriet's letter of July 13, 1790.]

*Mr. Seney-Joshua Seney (b. 3/4/1756 d. 10/10/1798) Ref. Nicholson family tree(Bruce L. Nicholson)

ms3245b02f05 31-32

[Catharine Few to Harriet Brice]

Nov. 29th 1791

Often my dear Friend have I determined to write to you since last I received your affectionate letter, but feelings of the most painful kind withheld my hand, exquisite has been the distress this heart has experienced since last it expressed the tenderness it never ceases to feel for you. Your favor of the last came to hand in April, it found me in sorrow, sorrow which to the unused to trials I thought great, but I have since experienced it was only comparatively so. My little girls, one two years old, the other [?] months I was compelled to have inoculated in the absence of their Father. The symptoms which attended their illness were favorable but severe, and my anxiety for them was (I confess) beyond bounds. They recovered and my apprehension was scarcely removed when the eldest sickened with an inflammatory fever which was truly distressing to me, however it pleased the Lord to restore her to me and I thought my enjoyment seeing them both well and happy exceeded my sorrows; but alas it was but a transient calm succeeded by more poignant woe. Toward the middle of June Mr. Seney (who married my sister Fanny) after having been in New York almost the whole time since the rising of Congress, the session before the present, proposed going to Maryland to stay a few weeks and to return to be with my sister in her approaching confinement (for she was far advanced in her pregnancy) he was scarcely gone when to my inexpressible astonishment, conversing with her alone, I found her ideas quite deranged. I hastened to acquaint my dear Mother with it in order to obtain some medical assistance which might be of use, but vain was every [?] it got to a height beyond expression dreadful, four persons at times were required to hold her, and reason was entirely gone, O my Harriett, had you seen my venerable parents, sunk by the weight of their affliction, often times obliged to take refuge from their own house to save themselves from the anguish of her piercing screams, you who have been taught to feel for others would mourn for the sorrows of your friends. The Physicians advised Papa to find an express for her husband, thinking his presence might be of use to the dear sufferer. A fortnight expired, and he arrived. She knew him, wiped the tears from him and seemed to sympathize in his distress. She seemed rather better, more governable and we were flattered that her recovery would be perfected at the time of her lying in. Mr. Seney having brought his mother with him and the house crowded my dear mother persuaded me to take lodgings a few miles from town where I could hear twice a day from home. She thought it would be better for mine and my children's health.

I had scarcely got fixed when (three days after his arrival) Mr. Seney contrary to the advice of the Doctor left our afflicted family and returned to his home. My Mama remonstrated with him concerning the inhumanity of his conduct and before Fanny (not thinking that she had reason sufficient to understand any part of the conversation) told him that if he left her then she hoped never more to see his face again, lamenting that there ever had a connection taken place between him and the family, he went. The consequence was that the poor creature took an utter aversion to the family. Mama in particular, she has

since said that she knew Mama chide him but could not connect the conversation sufficiently to inform herself for what purpose, she called incessantly for him and (as her physicians apprehended) evidently grew worse from that time. Papa wrote to him informing him of this, but received no answer. Six weeks after this she lay in, but (dreadful to remember) no change took place. I am in from the country and Papa took my lodgings for her. Here the air a change of object and exercise gradually restored her. Mr. Seney I suppose was informed of this by a letter from herself, and when his child was two months old he first beheld its face. His conduct since that is only equaled by that I have been relating, but his connection with my unfortunate sister silences me and prevents my pursuing the subject. I must make my excuse for continuing it thus far. Many things have been misrepresented by Mr. Seney, and my dear Parents as well as the rest of the family been greatly injured. You knew them too well to [indict?] anything of the kind, but I wished to make you acquainted with circumstances that if occasion offered you might have an opportunity of justifying your friend. This I should have done before but I dreaded taking my pen for that purpose.

We left New York the last of October and here we shall remain till the present session of Congress is ended. Mr. Few talks of going to Georgia with his family in the spring, as yet it is uncertain. I frequently talk to him of paying you a visit, he says "perhaps we may" should we continue in this part of the world. My dear Harriett was kind enough to enquire about my little ones, two little girls makes up my present nursery. The eldest we call Frances, the youngest Mary, the one very fair with yellow hair, the other a brunette—both in pretty good order for their age. Their Papa is extremely attentive to them and I think they are not spoiled. Frances would be delighted with . . .

[The final page seems to be missing.]

ms3245b02f05 33-34-35

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Annapolis, Maryland
Rec'd May the 22nd 1798, Haylands

Hesperia near Augusta, April 18th 1798

Among the many friendships formed in early life, many of which were merely the effect of capricious and youthful fancy, and amid the changes of life are totally forgotten; that which I once profited and which has never ceased to exist once more induces me to recall to your remembrance your too neglectful friend. My dear Harriett I will not attempt a vindication, my conduct will admit of none, but I must beg leave to add that I have never ceased to lament the suspension of our correspondence, that I have read your letters (many of which I yet own) with the most affecting pleasure and regret and that I have experienced the most disagreeable sensations arising from my own folly and negligence. Can you forgive me? In the sweet hope that you will, I will proceed to give you a little account of myself since my departure from my Native country. We live about twenty miles above Augusta, once the capital of this State on a large and handsomely cultivated farm. It is retired, or affording but little of that kind of society in which the heart and judgment interests itself,

and on which one might pass their days unenvied by the gay world; but where, could I be blessed with such a friend as yourself or with those dear connections from whom alas I feel so effectually separated, I could enjoy as much content as any other spot of the globe. My Husband who has a very active mind has employed several manufactures of different kinds, which serves to enliven the retreat and gives it very much the air of a place of business. My dear little children three of whom I have with me [Vig?][?]—Mary, Matilda and Albert are a source of amusement and comfort to me; and the only Family vexation I now have is the absence of Mr. Few twice a year, who still continues in public life and whose office calls him to different parts of the State. My prospect of visiting New York is at present but very uncertain, yet I still hope it will not be long before it will please God to point out some method by which we can consistent with our Duty make a visit to my parents, my very heart longs to see them and every letter I receive from them adds to my anxiety. How is it for us my Dear Friend that we have a hope beyond the Grave and that we may on assured grounds anticipate the period when sorrow of parting shall be done away, why should you and I then because we are separated in this transitory life, neglect to cultivate a Friendship which I trust often unites our prayers before the throne of that God whom we both serve? Forbid that it should be so my Harriett—and write often to me, the posts are regular and the postage trifling; if you have a private opportunity to New York Mama can often send your letters to me, but do not wait for that. Remember most affectionately to Cousin William, kiss your children for me and tell me how many you have, what their names are etc. Should my venerable Aunt Murray* still be living tell her my respect and love awaits her, also do not omit mentioning them to your excellent Parent but it is so long since I have heard from my friends in Maryland I almost fear to particularize them you know whom I used to love and the lapse of time has not effaced them from my remembrance.

Adieu my ever dear Harriett, let me know soon that this is not an unwelcome Epistle and believe my dear Friend and Cousin ever yours,

Cathae Few

* Aunt Murray—Anne Smith Murray sister to Hannah Smith Nicholson

[Part of a letter from Catharine Few to Harriet Murray, probably written a short time after Joshua Seney's death, Oct. 20, 1798.]

. . . . of visiting New York the ensuing summer, at any rate if it please God I do not think it will be very long before we go to New York. We shall go by water which will make it somewhat inconvenient (having no carriage with us) to make our West River friends a visit, yet I think if it be possible I will certainly set my face towards you after I arrive in New York.

My friends have informed me of the death of the Husband of my unfortunate Sister Seney.* Poor girl has she not indeed been the child of sorrow? I sincerely lament her loss—and waited not for the grace to bring every resentment—I hope Papa and Mama are with her before this time as they wrote me it was their intention to go to her if she could not be prevailed to come to them.

I thank you my dear Harriett for the little narration you have given me of the changes which have taken place in our family connections since last I

heard from Maryland; they are mostly of the agreeable kind. You do not mention your sister Rogers among them, my early friendship is not forgotten and I beg you will make my sincere respect and affection acceptable to her.

Frances our oldest child is in New York, I have not seen her for almost three years, she would make a very excellent companion for her Cousin Mary Ann, she will . . .

*Joshua Seney died Oct. 20, 1798. His second wife was Frances Nicholson, sister of Catherine Few.

ms3245b02f05 36-37-38

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
Recommended to the particular care of the
Honorable Mr. Baldwin, Philadelphia

Hesperia, December 31st. 1798

It is sometime my ever Dear Harriett since I received your letter and I do not hold myself altogether excusable that I have not answered it before this time: We have been much afflicted thro out the summer with sickness in our family; Mr. Few in the discharge of the duties of his office was obliged to remain sometime in a very unhealthy part of this state, and returned extremely indisposed, a remaining weakness continues with him still, which gives me a good deal of concern. My self and my little ones also have been visited with intermitants occasioned by the raising of a [mill leat?] on the farm. These circumstances and the anxieties arising from them have rather unfitted me from writing, and will I hope in some measure excuse me to you.

I was a great deal affected my dear friend with the changes that have awaited you since last I saw you, or rather since last I heard from you. Happy for you my Harriett that the hand of your heavenly Father has been manifested and sanctified to you in the midst of all his dispensations.* Yes! I trust I can witness with my Friend that he does all things well. You beg me to be particular in relating our little concerns; it has pleased the Lord to bless us with four children, Frances, Mary, Matilda and Albert. The two first were born in New York, the two last in Georgia. After Mr. Few's commission in Congress expired we came to this State by water, where in stead of the gay world, with which you kindly feared I was too much occupied, I have lived in almost continued retirement; but enjoying for four years the precious blessing of health almost uninterruptedly, the two last we have suffered severely from sickness, owing to the circumstance I before mentioned. Trials from whatever cause they arise, I believe, is the Christian is made to rejoice in them. Alas how great has been your experience my Dearest Friend in this thorny Path, often, and often has my heart affectionately sympathized with you. But I continue to make you a little more acquainted with our present situation, we have a number of very decent neighbors, and one or two that the world might even term fashionable, but not one that affords that interesting kind of society in the intercourse of which the heart reposes itself and finds its sorrows allayed and it enjoyments heightened. Frequently does my Husband and myself form the romantic wish that you were settled near to us. A Philosophic farmer is characteristic of my friend and

I believe my Cousin William and himself would be the happiest of neighbors. While you and I—but here I cannot say enough I cannot express my own feelings.—Our children formed to habits of affection in their earliest years would grow up in the tenderest friendship— but whither am I running—Let me tell you how these ideas had taken hold of my imagination—In your letter you tell me you have purchased a farm and by industry and economy hope to live above want. The observation affected me extremely because I could not but wish that the situation of my friend might be ever far removed from the absolute necessity of either frugality or industry—now as this country does afford both from climate and soil the most flattering prospects for the attentive Farmer I wish that my Cousin William had contemplated these advantages with many others that might have occurred. It certainly for the acquirement of property is to be preferred to the older states—and we have an excellent academy for the education of youth conducted by a very pious and learned minister-----.

I have some prospect be ten years old in April, and her Aunt Maria writes me she is very amiable and promising, indeed she is herself a correspondent of mine also. Our second child Mary is just eight years old, a little creature remarkable for her love of reading and I believe very much resembling her Mother. Matilda our third, a fair complexioned sweet tempered child, will I think make a good friend for her Cousin William, altho she is some years younger, she will be five in February. Master Albert (our only Boy) is to his parents tho only two years old a very surprising child—sensible and manly

[Lots of blank space, patching of paper.]

Remember me my dearest Harriett affectionately to your excellent Parent. [?] neighborhood of Mrs. Thomas I do [?] me also to them with sincere respect. Present my best love to Cousin William and kiss the dear children for me. Mary sends her love to them but most particularly to her Cousin MaryAnn. I have not as yet mentioned Master Brice, but believe me my Dear I am sincerely [?] in the . . . you tell me his youth affords of his future.

I am my dearest Harriett, Your sincerely affectionate friend,

Cathae Few

I enclose my letter to Mr Baldwin, member in Congress from this state, and who I know will take pleasure in forwarding an answer to me.

* dispensations: may be referring to the death of Harriet's 4th child Harriet Woodward b.9/16/1795d.6/30/1796

ms3245b02f05 40-41

[Catharine Few to Harriet Murray]

Bushwick, Long Island, June 28th 1799

We arrived in New York about the middle of May, and since I have been planning to write to my dear Friend, I have as yet received no answer to my last letter, and am somewhat afraid it may make a tour to Georgia before it reaches my hand.

To you my Harriett I need not (were it possible) describe the emotions which possessed my heart when returning after six years absence to the bosom of my

native country and dear connections; it was a feast of the affections, an enjoyment which does not often occur in the short period of human life, and which I do believe is necessarily so arranged by the infinitely wise disposes, who knows our frame, who knows that the awful depravity of which we are all the unhappy subjects renders us peculiarly unfit to adore and live to the glory of the giver when he most liberally dispenses his gifts. Perhaps this is the reason why his people are in general an afflicted people.

A few days since we left the City of New York, and are now on Long Island, where we intend to continue during the Summer season. It is a very beautiful place, situated on the banks of the East River, and so near the City that our intercourse is by no means interrupted. I often think of the pleasure which I have hopes yet remains for me in embracing you once more before my return to Georgia. Should our cities continue healthy, and I be so fortunate as to meet with a companion traveling towards Annapolis, I shall endeavor to leave my cares behind me, and make you a visit towards the Autumn. This I can assure you my Dearest Harriett, that whether I accomplish my purpose, or not, my affections are sincerely drawn towards you and yours. So short, so transient are all our enjoyments in this life, particularly that pleasure which is allotted to me in the visits I am making to my friends a pleasure so unavoidably connected with the separation which must ensue that therefore it is not so anxiously sought after as it would otherwise be, were I permitted to make a longer stay with them.—But our Friendship I trust is for Eternity—for that it shall be enjoyed in that Heavenly City where pain and parting shall be no more—with these hopes I comfort myself—O may we “watch and tremble and prepare”—Join with me my Harriett in supplications that we mutually may be the subjects of that continued grace which shall fit and prepare us for that Heavenly Kingdom where we shall also enjoy communion with our Lord.

My Mama and myself have frequently talked of you since my arrival, she mentions you with the sincerest affections and desires her particular regard to be mentioned to you. She enjoys a very comfortable state of health for her time of life—also my Dear Papa is very much favored in that respect. Do you ever talk of visiting your Friends in Philadelphia?. I wish it could be made convenient for us to meet at Capt. Murrays*—

Has Cousin William ever taken the plan (I formed and mentioned to you in my last letter) in contemplation—if he has let me know what has been the result of his deliberations. Does he not think Georgia worth a visit at Least. I wish him to be acquainted with the advantages and disadvantages also which a settlement [?] afford.

Remember to him with sincere (. . .?). Kiss your little folks for me, Frances & Mary send there love to their Cousins. Mr. Few desires his respects of yourself and the Doctor.

Believe me my Dear Harriett, yours very affectionately,

Cathae Few

Direct for at my Fathers No. 86 William Street, New York—and write by the post.

*Capt Murray is Alexander Murray, younger brother of William Murray.

ms3245b02f05 42-43-44-45

[ms3245b02f05 42 is an envelope to Harriet postmarked New York, 31]

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River
 Near Annapolis Maryland
 Southern Mail

New York December 25th, 1799

You have too much cause my Dearest Harriett to think me a very inconstant correspondent, and yet I believe I write more frequently to you than to any other person. I received your letter just before the commencement of the Yellow Fever in this city. We were among the earliest inhabitants that quitted their homes. I felt a very great desire to comply with your very affectionate request and make you a visit, where I should also have had pleasure of seeing your Dear Sister Rogers, but as I had no other conveyance than the stages and they passed thro Philadelphia, which was at that time affected with the awful sickness. Maria (who proposed to accompany me) and myself, thought it most prudent to decline.

When we left home we thought of returning at the end of a twelve months absence at present we think of purchasing a place in the vicinity of the City and gratifying ourselves and our friends by continuing here a few years longer. My dear Harriett, were you here now many complaints could I pour into your bosom respecting the difficulties that occur on this subject. My inclination leads me powerfully to reside in New York, and yet many important duties remain to be fulfilled in Georgia --- I know not how I shall ever part from my dear friends and yet so short, so transient is our passage thro the World, so satisfied am I that all things shall work together for good; that I humbly, and I trust sincerely desire to leave it all into the hands of my Heavenly Father. His will be done. There are many privileges which a Christian can enjoy here, above any place I ever was in. If I am obliged to leave them, it will be with the deepest regret. With respect to other things, we live very retired it is best for me. I dare not much indulge even in that society which may be called lawful but which is to me unprofitable. I find the spirit of the World contagious in the greatest degree, and I have deliberately chosen for myself and my little ones (his grace enabling us) that we will serve the Lord.

My Sister Gallatin is now in Philadelphia. Maria, my third sister, stays with her this winter. I had a letter from her a few days ago. She informs me she saw a Brother.* of yours in Philadelphia who she said seemed to be in bad health. I am sorry to hear it. I hope his journey will prove advantageous. Nothing seems to admonish us more (??) of the lapse of time than the changes among our Young Folk, those who were indeed but children when we last met, young ones too, are now heads of families. O my Harriett Nature & Time is hurrying us along, Eternity will soon open to (??) This is a season of general (??conv.??) and rejoicing but it is always a period of (??) to the thoughtful. Happy should I be if (??) our lot had been cast, where we and our little ones could have surrounded one board and rejoiced in that friendship which we would willingly transmit to our children. That is denied, but we can (??) with one heart, unite in the

praises of him who does all things well, and who I humbly hope will(??) will be the God and Father of us and ours. Kiss your dear little ones for me. Remember me affectionately to Cousin William & the individuals of your own family to whom I feel myself sincerely attached. Mention me also very affectionately to Doctor J.* Murray's family. I have asked Mr. Few (who is the person you mentioned. He is acquainted with a family of that name but does not recollect the person. I am my ever dearest Friend. Yours with the tenderest of affection,

Cathae Few

*Brother: possibly John Hesselius,(b. 4/5/1777- d.11/9/1804) half-brother to Harriet

*Dr. J. Murray is Dr. James Murray of Annapolis, older brother of William Murray

MSA SC 2301-2-5

Mrs. Catharine Few, at James Nicholson's Esq.
86 William Street, New York
to the care of The Hon'ble J. H. Nicholson

Feb. 9, 1800

Yours of the 25th of Dec. reached my hand about two weeks since my Dearest Friend, and I am much pleased that so early and direct an opportunity offers of answering it. I am grieved my dear when I reflect that you have been so many months situated where I might have heard from you every week, and I have recd but two letters from you. Your long silence made me conclude you had returned to Georgia, but I heartily rejoice that it is not the case, a hope again revives that I may be permitted once more to embrace the friend of my heart and have that interchange of thought which the medium of pen and ink is inadequate to— I can't help feeling delighted at the plan you mention of purchasing a place to the Northward and residing there for some years. It will certainly be a great gratification to yourself and friends. I trust if it is for the best that a kind Providence will so order it; but as you justly observe, my dear Kitty, we see so little into futurity, and from our present imperfect view of things are so entirely incapable of judging what is right; that it is the highest wisdom to commit all our ways and concerns into the hands of God. His goodness to us justifies what we wish. I feel very happy in finding your mind has that strong consolation derived from a source that can never fail. I can say for myself that every other comfort has been like a spiders web in comparison of that blessed assurance that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God. And that no good thing shall be withheld from those who walk uprightly." Surely we may trust. his wisdom and his faithfulness also. I have learnt I am sure more in the school of Adversity than I ever knew before. And I have such a full persuasion that it was necessary for me, that I kiss the rod. We have still (with respect to temporal concerns) many difficulties to contend with, and my prayer is that I may bear them as a Christian should rather than for a removal of them, from a full conviction that if God sees best that I should have trials of this nature, it may turn to my spiritual advantage, and if not, his wise Providence will order it otherwise. I know the world laughs at sentiments like these, and calls it enthusiasm, but not anyone that has ever experienced how good it is to trust in God.

Docr. Murray and myself are now at my Brothers,* on our way to our little cottage which has never been finished enough to be habitable till now; and unfortunately just at this time the weather has set in so severe that we find a great difficulty in getting there tho' the distance is only twelve miles. I feel anxious, you must think, to get settled after drifting about for these three years past with my three children. My friends and relations have been unwearied in their kind attentions; but there is nothing like a home, particularly where there are children, who, if they are the best in the world, cannot fail of being troublesome, dear creatures. I am very desirous of getting them settled that we may be able to attend to their education. They seem docile and well disposed. I pray they may be the subject of divine grace and if they have that distinguished blessing others will be but secondary.

It w'd be a great gratification to me could our little ones be brought up in the habits of intimacy & friendship with each other; but their lot is cast so far apart I fear there is but little prospect of that. Yet I cannot give up the idea of embracing each of them and loving them for their dear Mother's sake. Do my dear, tell them you have such a friend. and strive to make them love me. I cannot bear to be indifferent to anything that is near to you.

I hardly expected to see you last summer after hearing the fever was in New York, but you may be sure it would have given my sister and self heartfelt pleasure to have seen you and Maria. I hope you have not given up the visit altogether. If you do not go to Georgia, what will prevent your coming this spring? Do appoint a time and if I am able to move I will meet you in Baltimore. I can't describe the sensation I feel when I realize to my mind an interview with you. Let me hear from you a. as you get this, your cousin Nicholson in. . . has constant intercourse with our. as his wife is there, and I am sure would forward any letter you would send him and I shall get them directly. . . have any aversion to writing I beg you'll get over it. You would if you knew how much pleasure your letters afford me.

My Mother desires me to present her affectionate. . . . as does my husband. It will make them both happy to see you. My Brother whom you mention, I thank God is in a good. . . . recovered. He is married to a charming amiable girl,* whom I am sure you would love if you knew her. It makes me feel like an old woman to see him a married man. Alas how fleet is time. In the retrospect of my life is as a hands breadth indeed, O for a wise improvement of what yet remains. Please to present my best love in the most acceptable terms to your Dear Mother. I am happy to hear she enjoys such good health. And present my respects also to Mr. Few if you please in which my Husband joins.

And Believe Me to be My beloved Friend with unalterable affection,

H. Murray

*Brother—John Hesselius, who married Mary Wharton Williams 2/25/1799

ms3245b02f05 46-47-48

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Near Annapolis

Recommended to the care of The Hon'ble Jos H. Nicholson, Esq.

April 17th. 1800

My dear Harriett,

The plan that I mentioned to you is now completed, we are settled about two miles from the City of New York, at a very agreeable country residence. The house is large and spacious and therefore admits of the residence of Papa and Mama in the same house, altho at the return of Mr. Few our families will be distinct. My Papa has very bad health. We sometimes fear lest the Lord should be about to remove him from us.

Has my dear friend arrived at her own home and at last got comfortably fixed? May she find that and every place where the Lord shall lead her a Bethel to her soul. There is nothing that seems more deeply impressed on my mind than the vanity of what the world calls good and its insufficiency to satisfy the immortal mind. What a blessing is it my dear to have our views directed to the supreme source of all beauty and excellence and tho we hold him with a trembling hand, yet to believe that we shall yet drink at those Rivers of pleasure where there is fullness of joy. Never never may we be so unhappy as to turn aside even for a moment and look with a longing eye for the poor empty childish vanities or honors of the delusive scene of things, but O my Harriett let us press forward with one mind for the mark of the prize that when we have done and suffered all our master's will here, we may meet in glory when our friendship which even the changing scenes of time could not efface may be refined and heightened in a purer clime and our souls unite with all their powers in the Supreme love uninterrupted service of the great I AM.

I should be very glad to meet you at the house of my dear friend, your sister Rogers's, on an approaching occasion. The Rev pastor of the Methodist Church in this city is about setting off for Baltimore to meet at the general conference, he is an acquaintance of mine, and I should (were all things in providence admitting) be glad to accompany him—but my husbands absence and my Father's ill health render it quite inadmissible, Should you see Mr. McClasky he will be able to answer most enquiries you may wish to make respecting this family. It is in some such way as the above mentioned that I yet hope, if the Lord prolongs our lives) that we may meet even in this world. His will be done, will be the language of the renewed soul, may he grant that it may be ours under every dispensation— I will just mention to my Harriett and Cousin William that I do expect Mr. Few next month, after his arrival, we shall if it please God go to House keeping, when if they can resign their domestic concerns and will afford us the pleasure of seeing them we shall delight in embracing them and theirs.

Remember me very affectionately to your Dear Mama,* I still remember with much delight the pleasure I have experienced under her roof and neither time nor distance has lessened my veneration for her Character and Person— Well does my friend observe "how fleet is time" nothing does seem so forcibly

to remind us of its lapse as to see those who were children since our remembrance, now become heads of families. May the Lord hear our prayer for a wise improvement of what remains of time to us—I can hardly realize the marriage of your sisters and brother.

I hope my dear with your usual attention for which I am sincerely grateful, you will not fail of writing to me soon. My love to Cousin William and kiss dear little Mary Ann & William. I have forgotten the name of the other but you [. . .?] tell it me again.

May God bless you and yours my Dear Harriett with sincerest affection I remain. Ever yours,

Cathae Few

*Mama—Mary Young (Woodward) Hesselius

ms3245b02f05 49-50-51

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland

1802

The only unpleasant part of writing to you my Dearest Harriett, is apologizing for a silence for which I consider myself inexcusable; attribute my unpardonable neglect to any thing but want of affection, and insensibility to the unmerited friendship you still honor me with. Yet believe me that our early attachment and may I venture to say is similarity of disposition, causes me towards you to feel the most sisterly affection, in addition to that common bond, which unites to each other all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

There is no one my dear friend who is more tied to one spot than myself, long ere' this had it been in my power, would I have made you a visit. My children call for my constant attention and the more so as their father spends much of his time away, he is now in Albany, the seat of government, attending as member of the legislature. I do not expect to see him till the middle of April and in the autumn following, if he is spared, he expects to go on business to Georgia. This has been the case more or less ever since we have been married. My Father is in a poor State of Health and has declined very much for two years past. My dear Mother enjoys herself more than is usual at her time of life, they reside about two miles from the City and my Sister Seney with her little ones live with them. Mama was much pleased at your kind remembrance of her.

It rejoiced me to hear an additional account to the many tidings we have of the revival of Religion in different parts of our Country. They do not altogether seem to be without light in the Episcopal Church in this place. Mr. Hubbard a stated minister here preaches I am told with life and power—but Christians of all denominations long and wait and pray for the out pouring of the [. . .?—for alas our fleece as yet remains dry—yet there is a goodly number who rejoice that there is no suspension with respect to themselves and are witnesses for our God that he is a faithful covenant [?] to there souls. Both of us my friend I trust are of that number, for what ever discouragements I feel in myself I trust my

soul rests with firm confidence on the rock Christ Jesus who I doubt not will perfect what concerns us and Keep that which we have committed to his care.

How pleased should I be to see your Dear Children. You speak of your Mary Ann being almost a Woman, you describe her in size very much like my Frances "as tall as her Mother, tho only thirteen." My girl is the same age and equally grown I dare say—I should like to know your method of Education. I find a difficulty—their passions, their propensities are the same as others—they see not as we do—reason alone will not convince them, and yet can a Christian Parent [suffer?] them to [?] the same excess of not as others?—I cannot say I have found the restraint painful as yet—but as they advance in life I look forward to a period of trial—May the Lord give light and wisdom to direct our path. I often think of your excellent Mother—what was her method? Were her children early taught by the Holy Spirit the danger of conformity to the world? or had she the desirable method of fitting them to live in the upper class of Society without permitting them to share in the vanities of all Fashionable life: that they were so fitted was eminently the case—but I have often wished to know whether the implicit acquiescence on their part was the effect of an early conviction of sin or a peculiar method leading them to a contented submission to her judgment—How difficult is it to live in the World without being of the World.

I can readily believe [. . .?] that she retains no traces of former self. We should [?] be affected in meeting each other. Oh when ages in ourselves in families and individuals since we last embraced—painful reflection but notwithstanding, let us still rejoice that the Lord of his distinguishing mercy as we humbly hope is preparing us for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness in his presence where changes shall be done away where an interview with each other now so ardently desired shall be completed—is it not your belief that [?] united here below and united to our Lord & Redeemer shall together see his face and sing his praises and enjoy friendship resigned from all the imperfections of Mortality. I should enjoy very much to see our young folk together. We must teach them to think of each other as absent Relations and if it was not a very awkward thing to correspond with one you never saw, I should recommend it to Mary-Ann and Frances to correspond. Remember me most tenderly to all your Dear Children. Tell my young friend Edmund that if business should lead him to New York he will ever be welcomed by me with the affection of a Parent. Since I began this letter I have had incessant interruptions. Therefore my dear friend you must excuse the incorrectness of this Epistle. I have undertaken to make one of a board of direction to an excellent charitable institution—what with the attention necessary there and particularly the intrusion of applicants I cannot say that I have one hour in the day wholly to myself. but I think if you will again trust me by writing soon I shall answer your dear letters without delay believe me my dear friend yours with sincere affection.

Cathae Few

ms3245b02f05 52-53-54

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River, Maryland
recommended to the particular care of
Miss Nicholson, City of Washington

New York, May 28th 1803

My Dear Friend

I am suspicious that by some means or other my letter in answer to one I received from you has never reached your hand—or perhaps your silence may be owing to some more affecting cause. I trust your Health and life is still spared and that I shall soon have the pleasure of being informed of it by yourself—My Sisters are still in Washington a ready conveyance offers to you for your letters in that direction.

There are not many my dear friend even in this great City whose similarity of [. . . ?]and pursuits afford me much confidential intercourse. I confessed with regret—that I have hitherto neglected the only medium by which our friendship could be cultivated, with interest (may I say) to both of us—Your correspondence always gave me great delight. I never designedly omitted to answer your letters, far from it, believe me,—but a good deal engaged in domestic pursuits often neglect what does not call for immediate attention till the time has lapsed for doing it at all. And alas—my dear how much guilt, which I trust the precious blood of Jesus has atoned for does recollection bring to my mind, of the same kind, neglect of known duty, to him “in whom I live and move and have my being” “ and of whose compassion it is that I am not consumed. ”

As you live in the midst of rural scenes you feel sensibly the check which vegetation has received from the unusual coolness of the season—here we frequently sit round the fire as in Winter—and even now I am uncomfortably cold—the coming summer will be very short lived indeed, in these northern regions. We still live in the City—but often partake of the stillness and beauty of the Country in my visits to Mama who is settled about 2 miles out. She often talks of you and your dear Sister Rogers—and tho it appears like a vision recollects the many social hours passed in the intimacy of dear friends in Baltimore,—How changing all things here below—Humbly hoping that we are united in one common Lord—what transporting prospects open to my view—when faith is in lively exercise. I contemplate those scenes of permanent delight—“when we shall meet where our friendship formed in this vale of tears (and partaking of the broken state of every thing around us) shall rise to perfection where God our Redeemer shall be all in all “ and sorrow and sighing shall flee away”—according to advice of a Blessed Apostle let us encourage one another with these things—and let me as often as convenient hear from my Dear Friend—with tender affection to your Dear Partner and children with love also to your Mama and Sisters.

I am my dear Harriett your very affectionate,

Cathae Few

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River, near Annapolis
[by] Mrs Gallatin

Greenwich, Sep 21st: 1803

My Dear Friend,

The desolate situation of our City and the confusion which naturally succeeds to the dispersed inhabitants will I hope apologize to you for not having answered your last letter before this. I at first thought of going up the North River and spending my exile among some Christian friends who reside there, however I am at last settled down with my Mother 2 miles from New York. These are calamitous times indeed, War in Europe and Pestilence in America—one would suppose it sufficient to make the most inconsiderate serious—but experience teaches us other wise. It is the grace of God only that can sanctify afflictions. we are earnestly looking here for the frost and it is much to be feared that when that blessing takes place the sons of business and sons and daughters of pleasure will soon forget this season of sorrow. It is remarkable, I don't know my dear whether you have observed it or whether it is so with you. Even the People of God do not seem rightly exercised under this visitation of divine providence—a degree of Horror at being exposed to it and a desire to escape from it seems to be the general principle that pervades—but I may be mistaken—God and there own Closets may witness their Humiliation and Aspirations—no doubt it is so— we will pray for each other that deadness and insensibility may be removed from our own souls— and the dealing of the Lord in his Providence be sanctified to us and to our afflicted friends and Country. We may sing of Judgment and Mercy we are a highly favored People notwithstanding. I have lately had a letter from my Husband who has been in Georgia for three months past— he tells me has been to a Camp Meeting in the Western part of that state 5000 persons assembled together at one time for the worship of God—of different denominations The utmost harmony prevailed: They continued in devout exercises for 3 or 4 Days— their prayers and praises were solemn and devout. Preaching had a most incomprehensible effect— many fell to the ground— he had the curiosity to examine some of those. The powers of body and mind seemed to be suspended but without convulsive emotions—a placid serenity on the countenance of the subject—after continuing in this way one, two or three hours they would arise bemoaning their undone situation or rejoice at their deliverance into marvelous light—This seems to be out of the usual method the Lord effects are to renew the soul to Holiness of Life. Mr. Few says, the change in the Morals of the people are very evident and as usual have the best effect on society in general.

I sometimes think we may meet together in this life. My Sister Gallatin has been persuading me that it would be no difficult matter for me to make you and her both a visit next spring. I do not flatter myself (however pleasing it would be) that I have much prospect of enjoying that happiness consistent with the discharge of other duties Mr. Few is so much away from Home that it makes it more difficult for me to accomplish any project of that kind— I

do not now look for him till November and [. . .?] following he will leave me to attend the legislature in Albany which is near three months generally in session. "Deny yourselves" must be our motto, I trust my dear Harriett—we shall meet above—Eternity will compensate for all— May the Lord increase our faith—what strong consolation do we need—My Dear friend I go halting along—sometimes fears & doubts prevail—almost overwhelm me, at other times I can rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation—when will the conflict end? I suppose on Doctrinal points we should differ—perhaps not—but how should I love to tell my Harriett the experiences of seventeen years past. Yet it is but the experiences of a treacherous and deceitful heart whose only prospect of victory is through the Blood of Atonement.

Adieu my dear Friend kindest remembrance await your dear Husband and children I am most affectionally your sincerely,

Cathae Few

ms3245b02f05 58-59-60

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River. near Annapolis
Mr. John B. Nicholson. . 032

New York, Feb 17th, 1804

My Dear Harriett

You have not wrote to me for some time past. Have you not received two letters from me written since the date your last? or have they never reached your hand? you have often borne with my negligence and therefore I ought the more readily to excuse you, but as you are not in the habit of omissions I fear lest your silence is occasioned by some other cause. It is a season of affliction with your poor Catharine and therefore my spirit seems desirous of some intercourse with you. O that you were here—Then could we rejoice and weep together—then would you sympathize with your friend. My Dear Father is very ill, to all human appearance, the dissolution of soul and body is near at hand—Every principle of poor nature revolts at the separation, and earnestly do I desire to detain him yet a little longer but I trust it is with humble submission to the Will of our Heavenly Father— Consolations in Jesus my Lord in this time of sorrow abounds, and I thank him for it—Through abundant grace My Dear Parent is well prepared for his change, and enjoys sweet foretastes of Eternal happiness. "The Chamber where the good man meets his fate is privileged beyond the common walk of life." The countenance of my beloved Father is sweetly placid and composed his mouth is filled with blessings on all around him and the love of Jesus passes his whole soul. Why then should I weep? Thou knowest— yes my Harriett thou knowest— thy heart has been often torn with the same pangs; Nature pleads hard even while we rejoice in him who hath taken away the sting of Death.

What a broken state of things does the present scene exhibit. Oh when shall we arrive at the blissful —when shall we see Jesus and be fully transformed to his blessed image, when shall we join the blissful throng of angels and spirits of

just men made perfect— Then my Harriett it may be that you and I in strains divine together may shout Redeeming love together retrace the way by which He had led us to the consummation of eternal happiness together cast our crowns at his feet, triumphantly acknowledge he has done all things well. O what a blessed hope is ours.

I hope this letter will reach you, if it does will you not soon favor me with a few lines— nay more, with a long letter.

With love to my Cousin and your dear children I am my Harriett most affectionately thine,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-6

Mrs. Catharine Few
New York.

Recommended to the care of Mrs. Gallatin

West River, March 25th 1804

Yours dated the 17th of the last month my very dear Friend reached my hand a few days ago, and though I know of no opportunity of forwarding a letter to you, yet I feel an impatience to write. Yes my Dear I do indeed most heartily sympathize with you in the affliction you describe. I have been in the school of sorrow too long not to be acquainted with the anxieties and heart rendings your mind must undergo upon the occasion, and sincerely do I wish I could have every consolation in your own mind, the trust in God and reliance on his promises which I know you have, and which alone can support the mind under such awful extremities, will (after Nature has suffered the pangs she necessarily must feel) assist you to submit and acquiesce in the Divine Will as a Christian should. There could be many arguments used (with much propriety) to reconcile you to the stroke, but I know by sad experience, that a soul bowed down under the immediate pressure of affliction, can listen to nothing of that kind, the healing hand of time together with divine grace I trust will give that relief to your wounded spirit which it needs. It appears to me criminal to mourn for one whose soul seemed so truly prepared for eternal bliss as that of your dear Father's* when once the sting of death is thoroughly extracted, it renders the passage to another world so easy, that it is but half a separation. They are gone only a little while before us, and we shall meet them ere long where pain and parting shall be done away forever. Do my Dear Friend exercise your mind with reflections of this nature and strive as much as possible to resign yourself to the will of God be it ever so contrary to that of your own. Your Dear Mother calls for every exertion you can make towards comforting her, should it be the Lord's will to take your much loved Father from her, Therefore it becomes you to use every endeavour to suppress every feeling that would render you incapable to supporting her at so trying a time. My heart is much with you, and I feel much more than I can express. Of this I am fully persuaded, that in whatever light we may view the dispensations of divine Providence, they are brought with love, and there is none however afflictive (for the present) but what may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to us,

if we make a proper use of them. For myself I can say affliction has done more for me than any other means could have done, and I sincerely pray if it is the good pleasure of the Almighty that you should taste of that bitter cup, my dear, it may be sanctified to your Eternal welfare.

It has been a long time since I had a letter from you before, never since some time in September. If you have written since, it has never come to hand. I beg my Dear Kitty you will let me hear from you as soon after you receive this as you conveniently can. I am tenderly interested in whatever concerns you and shall wish much to know how you are and also your dear Mother* to whom I beg you to remember me in the most affectionate terms. My dear Mother has spent this winter with me. She has been a treasure to me in the dreary season, but her health I am sorry to say is very imperfect. She labours under a complaint in her stomach, owing I believe to indigestion, which I fear she will never entirely get the better of. It deranges her nerves and makes a great part of her time melancholy and uncomfortable. She is a woman of great piety and I am happy in thinking there are few better prepared to die.

I want to know of what sect of Christians you are; what church you attend. You said in one of your letters that you "supposed we should differ a little in opinions"—but I do not think we should. I believe if all Christians understood each other properly, they would not differ at all. Genuine piety I think is the same in all sects, they only differ in words. My dear Mother and self have read a great deal this Winter which has been both edifying and entertaining. Our books have been entirely religious and of almost every different Sect, which confirms me in the above assertion. The last we read was a publication, Massillon's Sermons, translated from the French, which if you have not read, you have a great pleasure to come. I recommend them to you as a truly excellent work calculated to stir up the mind of all professing Christians to a closer walk with God.

I thank God I can inform you my Husband and children are well. Dr. Murray had a very long and severe attack of the gout this last autumn, which he has but very lately got quite rid of. It has been a very considerable hurt to his business, which to a man whose family entirely depends upon him, is a serious matter, but "afflictions rise not out of the dust," we must submit. Dr. M. and my Mother and Mary Ann send much love to you and yours,

I am My Dear Friend with sincere and unalterable affection Ever Yours,

H. Murray

*Mother—Frances Witter Nicholson, daughter of Thomas & Mary Lewis Witter.

*Father—Commodore-in-Chief, James Nicholson (1736–1804), married 4/30/1763 to Frances Witter. (See Gardner W. Allen, *Naval History of the American Revolution* [1962]).

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland

New York, 10 October, 1804

My Dear Friend,

I have a letter before me which I wrote to you two months since. I was prevented by affliction, sickness and many cares from concluding it, that it was not want of affection you will I hope readily conclude. Your letter which came to hand in due time was most welcome for me. Since the receipt of it I have been laid on a bed of sickness with a bilious fever and it has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this world my Dear Parent, I can only say that after I wrote to you he languished several months and I trust that peace in the Lord attended the closing scene. In some measure my beloved Harriett, I have learned by experience that afflictions are not joyous but grievous, O how grievous thou well know, but I hope I also have experienced that they yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. In humbling the soul before God, by viewing the exceeding sinfulness of sin as bringing death into the world with all our train of woes, and being made to adore that grace of God which has restored us to the hope of a blessed immortality thro Jesus Christ able to save to the uttermost—more realizing views of these great truths are the consequences of afflictions to the believing soul— And thru the Lord weans his children from the world, gives to them a more just estimate of human life and teaches them to fit their views and desires more permanently on eternal things. Our Dear Friends are gone beyond recall— But if they are now surrounding the Throne of God with the spirits of the just made perfect, now will they adore that wisdom and love which thus crucifies us to the World, and parting is forever done away.

My dear friend wishes to know what sect of Christians I have joined—They are Calvinists, distinguished by the name of the Dutch Reformed Church. That language is entirely lost in this City. Therefore we have none but English Preachers, one of them I call my Father in Christ—from his life divine the truth was first conveyed to my soul 18 years ago. (O what cause for humiliation to have made no greater progress) He is still continued to us— A learned, zealous and faithful servant of the Redeemer, has years ago had many seals to his ministry, but alas weeps and has cause to weep over the languishing state of our Zion. When a private conveyance offers I intend sending you a sermon preached by him before the Missionary Society at their Annual meeting in this City. You will be gratified by the perusal I know. I have read Massillon's Sermons or at least some of them and upon your commendation I took them up a second time. They are certainly very excellent and I liked them the more because my dear Harriett found food in them. The volumes which have been most blessed to me of any of the late authors writing are three wrote by Romaine: "The Life," "The Walk" and "The Triumph of Faith." Have you them? They are much calculated to establish the Christian, to lead the soul [?] out of it self to rest in the [?] and righteousness of our Divine [Healer?].

My Dear Mother often mentions you with the greatest affection, she is well and I trust living in the habitual exercise of Resignation to the will of the Lord.

My sisters have returned to Washington and will with pleasure forward your letters to me.

Do my Dear Harriett remember me very affectionately to your excellent Mother, whose Piety I greatly venerate, also to your Husband, who I hope enjoys better health than when you last wrote. I wish also to be mentioned with love to my younger Cousins. I am their Dear Mothers sincere and affectionate,

Cathae Few

MSA SC 2301-2-7

Mrs. Catharine Few
To the care of Mrs. Gallatin

Mar 31, 1805

A few days after the rec't of your last favour my beloved friend I got the melancholy intelligence of the death of my dear and only brother, * or I should have immediately answered it. The stroke I found a heavy one, tho' his health for a long time had been delicate, his death to me was unexpected. He was young and his removal to the back country (where his Physicians had great hopes his health would be restored) made me flatter myself it might be the lord's good pleasure to spare him to us. But his Infinite Wisdom has directed otherwise. We have all the consolation that He has taken him to himself. I need not tell you my Dear, who have experienced bereavements of this kind; what a struggle nature has at the breaking of such ties. I can truly say my dear friend I sympathize with you and your dear Mother in your late affliction. Alas! the calls for sympathy for one another abounds. I have lately been a witness to one of the most distressing scenes I ever knew in the illness and death of our mutual Friend, Mr. John Thomas* (which no doubt you have heard of ere this). I was with him through his illness, which was of a most distressing kind, a nervous fever attended by delirium, which would yield to nothing that was tried. His understanding was so affected from the first of the attack that he was not capable of expressing a sentiment, or connecting an idea. I was never more impressed with the necessity of living in a state of preparation. Tho' his illness was long, there was not an hour in which his mind was capable of thinking rationally of the thing of Eternity. He told me so himself and lamented it. West River in general (and his own family in particular) has met with an irreparable loss. I can say for myself I feel it most sincerely. I had a true friendship and affection for him.

I cannot express to you my dear Kitty the pleasure I experienced in seeing your Sister, but it was such a transient glimpse that I was but half gratified. I felt as if I had a claim on her, superior to anyone at West River, being your sister, and would fain have monopolized her what little time she had to stay, but she had made such a prepossession in her favour with all the family, (and particularly with poor Dear Mrs. Thomas), that I found it was in vain to say anything about it. They looked upon her visit as to them and I had no right to dispute the point. She has promised however that whenever it is in her power she will visit us again and I am not. . . . all have the pleasure of her Society in my cottage. . . . when she comes this way again. I felt a strong. . . . seem'd quite well acquainted with her, tho' I have. . . . she was six years old. I should

have known her anywhere in the world from her likeness to you. Maria will I hope persuade you, that when you visit your Sister Gallatin it is a very practicable thing to come to see me. If ever I should live to see that day it will give me as much pleasure as I am capable of receiving from any interview in this world.

My dear Mother has passed this Winter in Baltimore, tho' she is so good as to say she has no child with whom she had rather live with than myself, yet I found that on some accounts Baltimore was a more eligible situation, and although her society was an inestimable treasure to me, I could not be selfish enough to wish to detain her with me. A City, is certainly, both on account of public worship and Society, a preferable situation to the country in the winter; and as I knew they would both add greatly to her comfort, I gave her up, but I have felt her loss very sensibly. A person of her information and deep experience in divine things, could not but be a valuable companion, and particularly so to me, who am cut off from almost all the world. I can truly say I never felt lonesome when she was with me.

I wish I could see the Sermons of Romaine's you mention. I have lately read a Vol. of his, Twelve Discourses upon the Law and the Gospel, with which I have been much pleased and I hope edified. I find religious books a great treasure to me, indeed I do not know what I should do without them, exiled as I am from the House of God. I have been also much delighted with a Vol. of Fothergills Sermons. He belonged to the Society of Friends, but was a true follower of Christ I have no doubt. My reading is not at all confined to any particular sect; and the more I read the more I am confirmed in the belief that true Religion is to be found in all and that the essentials are the same in every sect. I understand Religion is in a very flourishing state in Baltimore; and a very considerable revival in the Episcopal Church. May the Lord increase the number daily.

As I know you are interested in the concerns of my family I can't conclude without telling you that Sister Roger's eldest daughter was married a few weeks ago to a match very agreeable to all parties and (as far as Human foresight can determine) a very eligible one, a young man of character and fortune.

I am seriously afraid my Dear Kitty that I tire you with my long letters; for the truth is I hardly know how to leave off when once I begin chatting with you. Now my dear I do not mean to put you to the disagreeable task of telling me plainly that my letters are too long, but I mean to take notice and if your next does not. . . . to length, I shall take it as a hint, and not be so. . . . I have one request to make, and that is that. . . . mortal eye but your own, look on my letters, I. . . . freedom or pleasure to you again if I was to think they. . . . to any but the eye of friendship.

Do my dear remember me in the tenderest terms to your dear Mama. Doctor Murray is not at home or I know would join me, as also in love to yourself, mine to your dear children.

I remain with true & unalterable Affection as every your sincere Friend,

H. Murray

*brother-Harriet's half-brother, John Hesselius, born 4/5/1777-died 11/9/1804.

*John Thomas(I) of Lebanon (1743–1805) m. 1777 to Dr. Murray's sister, Sarah (1747–1824). Sarah was also known as Sally. When John Thomas died on Feb 3, 1805, he left four children.

*Sister Rogers—Mrs. Philip Rogers (Rebecca Woodward)'s oldest daughter, Sophia, married a Mr. DeButts

ms3245b02f05 64-65-66

Mrs Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland

[June 20th 1805]

My Dearest Harriett,

How true is the reflection of a Dear Child of God that we are in the land of the dying not of the living "again has it pleased him who sits as a refiner and purifier of his Children, by summoning your Dear Brother to remind you that this is not your [?] but "He has taken him to himself" says your letter then the nature pleads hard it is comparatively easy to say Thy will be done and happy am I that such a consolation is afforded to the friends of your deceased Brother. My Dear Harriett. I comprehend all since death is the inevitable portion, the gloomy entrance to endless day. Also our poor friend Mr. Thomas is gathered to his Father—it is some years since I had the pleasure of seeing him, This I remember, that he was a most agreeable and amiable companion "How loved how valued once avails thee more—Yes we have instances enough— Mournful mementos to convince us of the necessity of living for eternity— sweet also is the life of Faith even here where we only see thro a glass darkly, I find nothing so bitter as wandering thro forbidden paths, the nearer we keep to the fountain the more we enjoy of His gracious presence which sanctifies all and we experience the truth of his promise that all things shall work together for good.

Maria has returned to us, she seems to have been much delighted with her visit to West River & only regrets that her stay there was so short. I had many questions to ask her respecting my beloved friend, she says she thinks you look very well and your dear children are very promising. If I ever should travel southerly to visit Mrs. Gallatin and yourself would be as it were but one object with me, the tie is different, but you are both my sisters and the sister of my affections would not be the last remembered; but I am so riveted to one spot that it seems as if I could not break the chain. I have a very precious friend who lives about sixty miles up the Hudson and to whom I have made many half promises of visiting her and yet I cannot accomplish my intention. I have so long been used to home that there a thousand difficulties— most of them imaginary yet effectual to detain me.

It is indeed my Dear Harriett a very great blessing to enjoy the society of a sensible and experienced Christian, but that privilege is enjoyed in a most endearing form, when the happy subject is the guide of our youth, a respected and beloved parents— It was not my lot to see a great deal of your Mother when I lived in Maryland nor had I have been so favored could I have properly appreciated her worth at that time—but I have ever venerated her character and ranked her as among the most excellent of women. I am glad to hear that Miss

Rogers has connected herself so eligibly. You do not say to whom. I should like to be informed. Mrs. Rogers had no daughter I think when I lived in Maryland.

This letter will be conveyed to Washington by a private opportunity—if possible I wish to send you *Romans Walk* and *Life of Faith*, if it will not be encumbering the friend who has promised to deliver my letter to Mrs. Gallatin. I am much delighted with R __ writings. There seems to be thro' the whole of them such a sense of our own nothingness and a view of the fullness treasured up in our divine head that I do prize them very much. I think they have been very useful to myself and I [?] recommend them to my dear friend. The [?] a lady are for my Dear little Cousins if any of them are small enough to be amused with them it not, some of their young friends will be benefited by them for they are very sweet.

Well my dear friend I think I have sent you mistakes enough in this letter—if I may judge by your own you will hardly know how to excuse them—but I think my intellects are rather more dull than usual this day and I may with much propriety make the same request to you “that no eye may peruse this but your own.” We write for each other only. I will remember it.

Remember me most affectionately and sympathizingly to Dear Mrs. Thomas and all the Murray family who may be in your neighborhood to whom I am known: not forgetting my esteemed friend Cousin William. Kiss your children for me. Mr. Few joins me in affectionate remembrance to you both or rather to you all.

I remain yours my Dear Friend most truly,

Cathae. Few

ms3245b02f05 68-70-71

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Care of Philip Rogers
Mrs. Gallatin, Baltimore
Postmark—Oct. 4

Greenwich, Sept. 19th 1805

Not from the seat of business and gaiety do I now address my dear friend, but from a little village in the neighborhood of New York where some of its inhabitants have fled from “the arrow that flieth at noon day and the pestilence that walketh in darkness”—solemn season of affliction and death. God has preserved thus far me and mine, I daily pray for a more lively impression of his distinguishing goodness. One dear family with whom I am intimately acquainted (and O how many more in whom I am not so nearly interested) has called forth my tenderest sympathy—Dedicated to God before his birth, the son of a most pious Mother, who died in giving him birth, and tenderly beloved by the most affectionate of Fathers a week this day has closed his eyes in death. Many sweet and precious ties made his life most valuable and could I tell you all exclaiming with me you would say Mysterious Providence—“Clouds and darkness around about His throne but judgment and justice are the habitations thereof”—Is there any thing my dear friend that affects you more than youth giving strong indications of future usefulness possessing a thousand amiable

qualities, the child of many prayers, snatched off and no consolatory hope on rational or rather Christian grounds to the bereaved parents?

I hear my dear Harriett reply—Have confidence in God. O for an entire submission!

I wrote to you about two months since—My sister Gallatin gave the letter to Mrs. Mason, I hope you have received it. My poor Sister is just returning to Washington. She looks very melancholy, about a fortnight since (just the day twelve month that we lost our dear parent) was deposited by his side, a sweet infant of hers of ten months old. The dear creature languished five weeks when the sweet spirit took its blissful flight. Happy infant _____

I don't know when I shall send you the Books promised. I have left them in Town, and therefore cannot embrace this opportunity—perhaps they may not please when they arrive, it is presuming much on your catholic spirit to propose them to you—Romaine is a Calvinist—they have been precious to me—he was a sincere Christian and therefore I am sure my Harriett will find food in them, if they are ever so fortunate as to find their way to her.

You have now two letters to answer I hope it will not be long before you write to me—Has your dear Mama returned to you. I think you cannot regret the loss of other company when you are favored with hers—where the nervous system is delicate I think much retirement is injurious—My Dear Harriett has suffered so much in past days that memory with many a pang must be awakened by solitude—yet my dear it is favorable to growth in the divine life—a retired home is most rational. O how irksome is the perpetual intrusion of uninteresting visitors to which in a City you must be perpetually exposed.

My dear friend with tender love I am ever thine,

Cathe Few

I beg my dear friend to be remembered to my Cousin William and your dear Children—Also will thank you to present my sympathizing love to dear Mrs. Thomas—her trial is great. I hope she has taken shelter in the rock Christ Jesus—the only sure refuge. I did love and respect her excellent husband.

ms3245b02f05 72-73-74

[Catharine Few to Harriet Murray]

New York, Sept 26 1806

Altho my Beloved Harriett waits long for an answer to her most precious letters, there is no want of welcome to them nor affection to herself, on the contrary, in my reflecting moments I long to have a more free and unembarrassed intercourse with my dear friend than this mode (however delightful) can possibly convey. Our education and situation in life and above all our union to the living Head Christ Jesus formed us for mortal friendship and mutual endearment, we early selected each other and had divine providence permitted that we should have continued together “we would have borne each others burdens” and the sister of my heart would have animated me by her example to run with greater diligence [?] set before me and together have been followers of them who thro' faith and patience inherit the promises. Infinite wisdom has determined otherwise. You mention the ease with which you judge I could

visit my friends in Maryland. My Husband whom alone I could expect to accompany me is engaged in the superintendence of an office that does not admit of an absence more than a day or two at a time (Commissioner of Loans) indeed that is almost the only obstacle, except a natural anxiety which always attend me in my absence from my Children and which has so far overcome my inclination that I have seldom or ever left home without some indispensable duty making it requisite: my dear friend knows how to estimate these difficulties which tho of no great magnitude a parent can fully comprehend. Indeed I have often wished that something or other would make it necessary that I should again visit Maryland and it is almost exclusively with a view to embracing you once more for as it respects others I must suppose I am almost forgotten. I hope your dear son has returned from sea— I should like much to see him and introduce him to my children. I would have proposed that Maryann and Frances (who I think are much of an age) should have corresponded but I knew the embarrassment that would have attended young persons who have never had the happiness of seeing each other and therefore did not mention it. We must be content that they shall be strangers. O that they may be heirs together of Eternal Life.

The publication which I promised to send you (but which has not been practicable) was written by the Rev. Dr. Livingston, pastor of a church called the Dutch Church (but from which the Dutch language has been long excluded) and is a very extensive Congregation of Calvinists in this City nearly similar to the Presbyterians differing only in church government—Mr. Willison once belonging to the Methodist Society and to whom you refer in your last letter is minister to a Lutheran Church I think under the direction of the Episcopalians.

What does my Dear Harriett think of the that mode of public Worship which is called The Camp Meetings. I have a friend perhaps you know her, Mrs. Garetson (She married a Marylander), who attends all those assemblies that she possibly can and says they have been much blessed to her soul, and with others of the Methodist Society recommends them as a means of Gods own appointment for the revival of his work. Others again whom I esteem truly pious think it altogether improper and represent it as a scene of confusion. I should fear to oppose, but it seems to have given much occasion to the Enemy to blaspheme—What is the view that Christians in general have of it in your part of the world? In whatever way it may be consistent in Gods infinite wisdom O that he would be pleased to grant us a time of refreshing from his presence. Christians here are often led to exclaim, by whom shall Jacob rise? The flock are fed, blessed be God we have faithful shepherds but find very few acceptions to the number of believers seem to be looking out for a Gospel day a Pentecost season. O that it my come quickly.

My soul in general my Beloved friend [?] heavily along I fear its characteristic is not like that of Joshua of old it does not fully follow the Lord and therefore does not possess that light and comfort which is my privilege. O that I could tell you all—great are the sacrifices that are required of every Christian and those words of our blessed Lord have equal weight as when they were delivered. "The Disciple is not above his Lord" whoever will come after me must take up his Cross and follow me" —My burden has increased much since my

Children have grown up— They are dutiful and affectionate and my worldly mind has many conflicts while I deny my sinful self the gratification of seeing them in those Circles which are called fashionable. The question then arises are you satisfied that they shall sink in Society and fill a humbler sphere?— My conscience replies certainly if that is the result of duty —for this my Dear I seek daily grace— And I know it will not be denied—but an occurrence which if you were here I should relate to you—has stirred up my corruptions and I find I am not that person that I sincerely desire to be. I may explain myself more fully hereafter.

I have much desired to see the selection of poems you mention in your last letter to . . .

ms3245b02f05 75-76-77

Mrs. Harriett Murray

New York, June 15, 1807

My Dearest Harriett

When I received your last letter I determined to answer it immediately and indeed when I had wrote I thought it necessary shortly after to detail some circumstances explanatory which then it was not altogether in my power. I have however unaccountably delayed writing till the present moment. My Sister* is now married and as those things speed their way very quickly I take it for granted you have been informed of it before now. The young man is the son of a friend of mine, a most excellent woman and a sincere Christian. The acquaintance between the young folks originated entirely from my intimacy with his mother, and my dear mother thought the connection not altogether eligible merely on the score of his rank in Society, which is respectable but not by any means splendid—I was far from using my influence in favor of the union— on the contrary, as I found it occasioned some unpleasant reflections on the part of those interested—I rather wished it not to take place. It was when embarrassed by these agitations that I wrote to my beloved friend, believing the interest you take in what concerns one. I trust still dear tho long absent and indeed my dear it is very difficult to cultivate an intimate acquaintance with a friend whose children are of the same age as your own without subjecting those children to forming friendships and connections which in some points may not be altogether such as you could desire, and yet in what rank are the most precious of the Earth found—surely not generally among the gay and the great. My Sisters prospects for happiness is I think very good. The young man has been well educated—genteel in his manners and handsome in his person and is a merchant of rising character. This my dear Friend will make you understand some of my letters, for to you my feelings will be ever uppermost.

I saw Miss Murray, (whose brother has lately married a daughter of Col. Rogers*) after her return from Baltimore. I eagerly enquired whether my Harriett was among the wedding guests. She tells me not but She saw Miss Maryann Murray who I supposed was daughter to my friend. The young lady is I fancy well married. They are a family remarked for their affection to each other.

There is in this City much said respecting a very great revival of religion among the Methodist Society [?] and a variety of opinions prevail— their meetings are very much crowded— and somethings are considered extraordinary and unusual. In other churches it is extremely dull altho we are in point of privilege exalted as it were to Heaven, yet few, very few are added to our Churches—I have that in Philadelphia there is something of a revival in the Presbyterian Churches, and among others who have made profession is your sister, Mrs. Alexander Murray— I have thought much of her ever since—how different is the tie that unites Christian friends, how essentially different from the union which find us to the world—It is this my dearest Harriett which amid all the changes incident to a separation of so many years tells me that you are still the same, nay that we are more assimilated to each other in as much as we bear the same example constantly in view and aspire more and more to be changed into the Image of our glorious Head—Does my dear friend complain of languor in the spiritual life—O could I tell you all— we should weep together. How disproportionate is my love to the love of him who I humbly [?] loved us and given himself for us—This evidence of grace I trust I have made some advances that without Him I can do nothing—Lord enable us both to add from our own precious experience that in thy strength we can do all things.

I have somehow mislaid your last letter and am sure there is much in it that I desired to answer. It is my intention to write to you again shortly should I find it. In the mean time my Dear Harriett be not discouraged at the barrenness of my letters but continue to write to me as often as you can and ever believe me with sincerest love yours truly,

Cathae Few

*The sister referred to is Maria who married John Montgomery. Harriet referred to Maria's prospects of marriage in her letter of Dec. 10, 1807.

*Col. Rogers was married to Harriet's sister, Rebecca Woodward, their daughter Harriet married John Murray of New York.

MSA SC 2301-2-8

Mrs. Catharine Few,
New York

West River, Oct 20th 1807

Our correspondence is kept up but slowly My beloved Friend; yet neither of our hearts are to blame I believe. I can safely say for myself, it is not for want of frequent and affectionate thoughts of you that you do not often hear from me. The distance between us is I believe one of the principle reason for my silence. There are many many times when circumstances either of pleasure or pain occur that my heart flies to you and wishes to participate with you as the long tried and assured friend, but alas, before it could reach you my suffering or enjoyment is over. How imperfect is everything in this world. Even friendship, which is one of the greatest cordials of life and the best feelings of the heart, is not half enjoyed. It is as Dr. Young very emphatically terms it "a poor broken embrace," if duration is not annexed to it; if we cannot look through the present disordered state of existence to that world where the tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and pain and parting shall be known no more.

My feelings of late have been much called forth on a very melancholy event which has happened in our family, and which has interested all who has any knowledge of it. The death of a much loved nephew, the eldest son of my Sister Govane,* a young man of rising character, eminent in every social virtue, the best of sons and fondest of Brothers, just in his 27th year, was taken from us after a few days illness, seized when it was little expected, the picture of health and long life in the hey day and vigour of youth with everything to make his life desirable to himself and his friends. Such a stroke interests all humanity. Who can be safe when such subjects fall under the hand of death. My heart trembled for my poor dear Sister upon this mournful occasion. For besides being one of the most tenderly solicitous Mothers in the world, she is remarkably nervous and delicate in her health. I was afraid it would be too much for her, but the Lord has supported her in an uncommon manner. She bowed with the most resigned submission to his hand, and yielded up her son without a murmur. Such power has divine grace. The instructive lesson this subject affords I hope will be sealed on my mind.

I suppose before this you have heard of the death of Doctor Murray's Mother.* The dear old lady died about two months ago. She went off like a lamp that had exhausted its oil. Nature was worn out. She had seen the vicissitudes of almost 88 years, and though she had been uncommonly blessed in retaining her faculties and a very good state of health, until about a year before her death. Yet at the close I believe she could look back upon life as little better than labour and sorrow. From the accounts I had of her death, it was an enviable one, all peace, and waiting for change with perfect resignation.

The report you have heard respecting the change in Mrs. Murray (of Phila)* I dare say is not without foundation, her son and daughter* have been lately on a visit to West River, but unfortunately I was from home, but from some hints given me by Capt. Murray,* I suspect there is considerable alteration in her outward conduct at least. I feel a drawing towards her and a tenderness I never felt for her before.

I wrote you some time ago that it was probable there would be a publication of some of my Extracts, but I believe I did not give you a proper impression of what kind they are. They do not consist altogether of Poetry, but extracts also from Prose, the different Authors I have read, chiefly religious. Some of my friends are sanguine enough to think that I shall receive considerable pecuniary advantage from them and they are now actually getting arranged for the press. My collection is so large that I am advised to publish only a part which will fill 2 vol. about the size of the Spectator. The whole of them would be too expensive an undertaking and as it must be done by subscription I must be cautious not to ask too much. The gentleman who is so good as to superintend the business says he thinks each subscriber must pay 2 dollars, but I have not yet seen the proposals. To you my dear Friend (to whom I tell my whole heart) I must acknowledge I was more interested in the success of this publication than I ever had an idea I should have been about any pecuniary matter. The truth is our circumstance in life are not what we had a right to expect from the prospects we set out with; and through unavoidable events we are behind hand with the world. Honest poverty I think I should not be ashamed of. It was

a state sanctified and made honourable by the Saviour of the world, and many I know who are dear to God are found in the humble walks of life. If his wise providence places me in it, I desire to acquiesce, but my grief is that we should owe any man anything save good will. Should the books I mention succeed, so as to enable me to discharge what we owe, I shall look upon it as a singular interposition of divine Providence towards me. Do you think, if I was to enclose you the proposals, you could help your friend in that way? Be as free to refuse, my dear Kitty, as I am to ask, should you think it inconvenient or any way inconsistent with your feelings. I have said more to you than I ever did to anyone else upon this subject; and I charge you by all your friendship for me that you will not mention it on account of my friends who perhaps might feel hurt that I should apply to any out of my own family. Write to me by post and tell me what you think of the matter.

I beg you to mention me to your dear Mother in the most affectionate terms. Everyone of my children are from me at present; or I know would join me in love. Be pleased to give mine to your sister and children and best respects to Mr. Few.

I am my dear Friend with Unalterable Attachment, affectionately yrs.

H. Murray

*Sister Govane is Mary Woodward, 3rd daughter of Henry & Mary (Young) Woodward. Although Harriet refers to her as Sister Govane, she was Mary Woodward (Govane) Owings at this date. Mary Woodward's first husband died, and she married Samuel Owings in 1797.

*Dr. Murray's mother was Anne Smith Murray (Mrs. William Murray of Chestertown).

*Mrs. Murray (of Phila)–Mary Miller Murray, wife of Commodore Alexander Murray.

*Son & daughter, The son was Magnus Murray (1787–1838). The only other son living at that time was Alexander, age 6. There were 4 daughters then living: Mary Anne, 15, Juliana, 12, Elizabeth, 9, and Catherine, 3.

*Capt. Murray–Alexander Murray (Dr. Murray's brother), later Commodore Murray. His career was at this point at a low ebb. He had had a disastrous cruise to the Mediterranean with near mutiny aboard ship Constellation. The Navy had been cut way back to only two frigates and four small cruising vessels by the Jefferson Administration. Capt. Murray was relieved of his command and transferred to a desk job as head of an investigation into the "Chesapeake Affair." He was later promoted to Commodore and retired.

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Mrs. Harriett. Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark–New York, Nov. 3rd

New York, Nov 1st 1807

I hasten to answer your letter my dear Harriett, I perused it with a mixture of sensations which I cannot attempt to express. Happy my beloved friend to have an opportunity of serving you and grieved that the success of services rendered in that way should be essential to your peace. You were early taught the insufficiency of earth, but blessed amid all your trials to be led to the overflowing fountain, there my dear you have a rich inheritance, incorruptible,

undefiled, fading not away. I will expect the proposals you now mention by an early opportunity, send it by the post. I should like to have two or three papers, I have a friend in the country that I think will be pleased to add her name to some others in the same neighborhood. Be not afraid my dear that I shall in any way wound the delicacy of your own feelings or the feelings of those with whom you are connected. I respect theirs and those of my Harriett are by me tenderly cherished. I flatter myself I shall be able to obtain some subscribers, at any rate it will afford me pleasure to make the effort.

I am grieved to hear of the late affliction in your family. It is indeed an affecting stroke, what piety, what devotedness to God must be the enviable portion of your excellent Sister and how encouraging to her fellow travelers, to her a covenant God hath consigned his word "Call upon me in the day of trouble I will answer thee and thou shall glorify me."

Dear old Aunt* has finished her course. Happy am I to hear that her prospect beyond was a glorious immortality. May we, animated by the blessed end of those who die in the faith and hope of the gospel, press with greater zeal forward to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

You do not mention receiving a letter from me of a late date, as there was contained in it some family concerns I hope it has arrived in safety. I have been intending to write to you by my Sister Gallatin, but poor thing she is detained here by the illness of her infant, it has had the influenza ever since its birth and is afflicted with a violent cough which I think renders recovery doubtful. Her situation is very disagreeable. Separated from her husband and children and the winter rapidly approaching, it is probable unless it should please the Lord to take the Babe to himself, that she will not see Washington till spring. O how necessary even for the comfort of the present life to be enabled to submit all to the disposal of infinite wisdom. Happy will it be for her if this dispensation leads her to seek a heavenly rest.

I shall hope my Dear Harriett soon to hear from you again, you certainly judge right when you do not impute to want of affection the long silence that so often intervenes to interrupt our correspondence. I am almost out of the habit of letter writing it is only to yourself and one or two dear friends that I ever for that purpose take up my pen.

I am my Dear Friend Yours with sincere affection,

Cathae Few

*Old Aunt—Anne Smith, wife of Dr. William Murray of Chestertown, Md. was sister to Hannah Smith, Catherine Few's grandmother. See letter dated Oct. 20th, 1807 from Harriett to Catherine.

MSA SC 2301-2-9

To: Mrs. Catharine Few, New York

Dec. 10, 1807

I rec'd your affectionate favor my beloved Friend several weeks ago, and should have answered it long since, but that I have been disappointed in procuring the subscription papers which your were kind enough to request. The zeal you express to serve me my dear Kitty filled my heart with the warmest

gratitude, and whilst I read your dear letter my lips involuntarily pronounce, God bless her! whether you succeed or not, I am sure of your best wishes on the occasion, and. . . a great deal with me. I did not express my meaning to you in my letter if I conveyed an idea of a fear of your wounding the delicacy of my feeling upon this occasion; far from it. I know my dear you are not capable of any such thing. What I meant was, that even to my own family I never had spoken so free upon the subject as to yourself. I never to one of them expressed an anxiety for the success of these books, or said anything to them respecting our pecuniary affairs. Those who have estates, let them be ever so large, generally have plans that call for all they have; and although I am confident were I to express the want of anything to those of my relations who are in affluence, I should not apply in vain. Yet there is a very unpleasant feeling attached to it; and there is something in being able to help one's self, better than being troublesome to those even who are willing to do it. I confess I feel hurt at being obliged to call upon you and some others of my friends for your exertions upon this occasion; but at the same time I have such a firm confidence in your affection that I am persuaded you will do it cheerfully. The printer has disappointed me, and at last I have but one paper to send you. However should it be necessary, and you will let me know, I will send on another in a short time.

I have just returned from paying a visit to my Dear Mother, who spends this winter with my Sister Addison* who lives with a few miles of the City of Washington.* I believe I told you that in some of my former letters that Betsy (my youngest Sister) had married a clergyman, Mr. Walter Addison, a pious excellent man. They have (as the world would say) everything to make them happy; but there is a worm at the root of the gourd. She has for these two years past been in a declining state of health, and still continues in a precarious state. She traveled last summer, attended by my Mother, as far to the Northward as Long branch, but found the sea air did not agree with her. Indeed it had so bad an effect, that they were obliged to remove her as quick as possible. She first intended going to the Balls Town Springs; But as her complaint was on the breast, her Physicians thought it an improper place. My dear mother was pleasing herself with the anticipation of seeing you, that jaunt been deemed advisable. She is now watching over her child and suffering all the attendant anxieties which for a person at her time of life is I think more than she ought to do; but a parent's heart always cleaves to the child that is afflicted; and I do not think she could be happy away from her.

I was very remiss my dear Kitty in not before acknowledging the rec't of the letter you mention having wrote me some time ago. It got safe to hand and I thank you sincerely for it. You could not give me a stronger proof of your affection than those confidential communications which I participate in with you and highly appreciate. I am truly gratified to hear your sister's prospect of happiness stands so fair; and though I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, I shall always have an interest in what concerns one so near to you. Where is your sister Maria? Does she not intend to make some worthy man happy; or is she determined to avoid the many cares and troubles inseparable from a married state: It is a matter of great importance, and more depends upon the decision than most young folks are aware.

Poor dear Mrs. Gallatin* experiences in the illness of her Infant pangs that none but a mother can feel. I hope ere this her mind is relieved. I have so often experience affliction of that kind that I know how to sympathize with her.

I have this day had the joyful news of my dear son's safe arrival from sea, the third voyage he has made. I must tell you because I know it will give you pleasure, that I am, in him, blessed with one of the most dutiful and affectionate children in the world. I have great reason to thank my God that many inconveniences and trials are more than made up to me in my children, who are promising and affectionately attentive to me (and to do him justice) one of the tenderest, fondest Husbands that ever lived— don't think me the weakest woman in the world to write this kind of letter. There are few in the world to whom I would do it; but you have taught me to believe you have an interest in all my concerns.

Let me beg you to burn this when you have got through it. I am writing by candle light with a bad pen and very bad paper. I am ashamed to send it; but should be more so to let your letter lay any longer unanswered. My dearest love attend your dear Mother and sisters. Remember me in the most acceptable terms to Mr. Few and your dear children. My Mary Ann is with her Grand Mamma at present or would join I am sure her love with mine.

I am my Dear Friend With Unalterable Affection Ever Your,

H. Murray

*Sister Addison—Betsy, half sister to Harriet, (b. 2/2/1775—d. 7/31/1808).

*Washington. Oxon Hill. There is a sketch of the house in Elizabeth H. Murray's book *One Hundred Years Ago, or The Life and Times of the Rev. Walter Dulany Addison 1769–1848* (1895).

*Mrs. Gallatin—Hannah Nicholson Gallatin, sister to Catharine Few, wife of Albert Gallatin (1761–1849), member of Congress 1795–1801, Secretary of the Treasury 1801–1814. He conceived the "great highway to the West," the first federally funded road from Baltimore to Wheeling, called the National Road. (Quoted in Joshua Dorsey Warfield, *The Founders of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties, Maryland* [1905], p. 498.)

MSA SC 2301-2-10

Mrs. Catharine Few

Robinson St. New York

favor'd by Mr. Verplanch [?]

Recommended to the care of Mrs. Gallatin

Woodstock, West River, Jan. 11, 1808[?]

I rec'd your thrice welcome letter my beloved Friend with sincere pleasure, and am sorry that I could not answer it sooner; but for several reasons it has been delayed till now. I never felt more than at present, how unequal my pen is expressing half what I wish to communicate to you. It is but a poor medium with me at the best of times; but just now I find myself particularly indisposed for writing, however, as I have no reason to think I shall be better qualified for deferring it I have obliged myself to attempt making you some acknowledgment for your letter which acted like a cordial to my spirits. Had it pleased the Wise Disposer of all events that our lots in life had been cast nearer to each other it would have been a comfort to me greater than I can express. For I feel

an attachment for you, and a hold on my affections that few besides yourself possess, but it is ordered otherwise and I must submit. You have too good an opinion of me my dear Kitty when you think my society would be of such an advantage to you. Alas! I am one of the weakest and most unprofitable, I fear, of all who makes a profession of religion. The slowness of my natural disposition and the melancholy complexion of my mind are very unfavourable to a growth in grace of the comfortable confidence that constitutes a happy Christian. But I have this consolation, that my supreme pleasure is derived from God; and that my soul leans upon him as her only support. It would be ungrateful in me to say I do not experience happiness in the service of God. I do, and such as I would not exchange for all the treasures of this world, but when I think how many years I have felt the importance of religion and the necessity of holiness of heart and compare myself with what I might be, I feel that I am a dwarf in grace and I have scarcely a title to the name of Christian. I entirely excluded from any publick means of grace which is a great loss to me. There is few miles from us a Methodist meeting in a private home* but of late their meetings have been so tumultuous and noisy and their congregations consisting on the sabbath chiefly of black people who are (poor creatures) particularly fond of what they call shouting. This kind of worship being so inconsistent with my feelings and ideas of true worship that I have thought I could spend my Sabbaths more profitably in my own room and have therefore staid at home; where I think I have been greatly blessed in reading good books. Of late I have read the sermons of the Rev'd Ial. Laurin translated from the French, which are truly spiritual. I have been much edified by Laws Works, particularly his treatis on regeneration, his serious call to a Holy life and his answer to Dr. Trappe; all which I have read with great pleasure. I thank you my dear for the pamphlet you sent me, which is most excellent. My heart rejoices in the prospect of the tryumph of the blessed gospel and I am delighted at the success it has met with.

You ask me my Dear Kitty what I think of the camp meetings. Indeed I can hardly form an opinion. I have never been at one and can only judge from what I have heard from others. Some think there is great good done at them; and others are of a different opinion. I love the Methodists and believe they are the people of God, but yet I think they were a more self denying devoted people and full as zealous in the good cause of God before they had those meetings. Nevertheless, I would not say anything against them. If the Lord blesses those meetings by making them a means of bringing people to the knowledge of the truth, I would not for the world oppose them but I must think Satan sows tares in that as in many other fields, and the worship of God is thrown into dreadful confusion very often; but I leave it where I find it, and strive to attend to my own heart where I always find evil enough. Christians here, as with you, differ in opinion with respect to the propriety of those meetings. If they are not from God, they will come to nothing.

The trial you speak of, with respect to your children, I have never experienced much of; but I know some parents who have. My retired situation keeps me out of the way of many temptations which I should have to struggle with; and makes me less capable to judging; but I have always thought as far as strict moral rectitude required, it was every parents duty to restrain their children;

but we ought to be careful not to lay too strong a restraint, lest we tempt them to rebel. If we knew that humbling our children to lower grade in society than their. entitled them to would make them more susceptible of divine grace, I would not hesitate to say it would be your absolute duty to do it; but as we know it does not, and that nothing can effect it but the spirit of God, we must leave the work in his hands and pray for them. Young people are very apt to think there is much more pleasure in the gaities of the world when they are abridged of them, than there really is; but to a parent who is a Christian and of course fearful of the world and all its allurements, it is a difficult matter to judge how far it would be proper to go and when to draw the line. May you have this wisdom given you my dear friend. I wish I knew how to advise you. The experience I have had from my own family, perhaps, would not hold good in every instance. But my Mother's first children were taught to dance, and allowed to partake of the fashionable amusements as young ladies in general did. And everyone of these became religious characters. The younger daughters were educated differently. They were not taught to dance, and were kept much stricter. Every one of them were fond of gay life. They would go to assemblies and dance (untaught) and enjoyed it much more than the others. This may not prove that Education of the first were right, but it at least proves that those of the last had not the desired effect. It is a hard task to know how to bring children up. The responsibility makes me feel dreadful at times. My paper will not admit of my saying more. Let me hear from you soon. Give my best love to your dear Mother and respect to Mr. Few—burn this—And believe me to be with unalterable affection.

As ever yours,\

H. Murray

*Methodist Meeting—probably at Mt. Zion; later divided into two: one black and one white. Margaret Mercer took considerable interest in this meeting

MSA SC 2301-2-11

Mrs. Catharine Few,
New York

Feb. 25, 1808

My Beloved Friend,

I wrote you some time since, enclosing, according your request, a subscription paper, which at that time, was the only one I could get, and beg'd to hear from you, whether it would be necessary to forward another, but I have recd no letter from you since. It is now, I am informed time to collect the subscriptions, as printing the work (should there be a sufficient number) will commence in April. I have therefore to request you my dear Friend to forward your paper, as soon as convenient, after the rect of this. I am not able to give you any accurate account of the success I have met with, nor shall I, until all the papers are call'd in. Those who wish well to the Publication flatter me, and some who are very anxious seem afraid it will not meet with the encouragement it deserves. Be it at will, I think I am prepared, thankful in one case, and resigned in the other. My commerce with the world has taught me that everything in

it is very precarious. I therefore shall not build so high, as to meet with a very great disappointment.

I think it a long time since I heard from you, and wish to know how you are. This has been rather a gloomy Winter to me, my health delicate, my nerves weak, and spirits very low; and my mind at times so clouded, that all spiritual comfort has been taken from me. Still I have a hope, that altho' it is an affliction which for the present is grievous, yet in the end, it may work the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It is a great disadvantage for a person in my state of mind to be entirely secluded from all the benefit of religious society of a gospel ministry, and tho in general good books have been much blest to me, yet when the mind is bowed down, the sweet council of a pious friend or a godly Minister would be a great consolation. I have found the reading of *Laws Serious Call to a Devout Life*, a great comfort to me of late. Have you ever read it? If you have not, let me intreat you to get it and let me know what you think of it. I think it one of the best human compositions that was ever written.

I have lately had a visit from my beloved Son, James Edmund* whose duty and affection makes up for many of the ills of this life to me. Were I to tell half his excellencies, it would be attributed to the doting partiality of a fond Mother, but you I know my dear, will be pleased to hear that he is one of the best of Sons. This Embargo, which displeases so many, has given me the comfort of keeping him on shore this winter, but directly it is removed, I shall be in dread of his going again. He wishes very much to visit your City. When he has spare time he says he certainly shall; when I shall most assuredly introduce him to the friend of my heart, who he has so often heard me talk of. His exterior is a very good one but indeed it is the least of his perfections.

I was glad to hear that your Sister Gallatin had got safe back to her family and that her infant was spared to her. Miss Maria too, I hear, accompanied her. West River I fear has not sufficient attractions to induce her to visit it again; but her friends here would be much gratified in seeing her.

Your Cousin Betsy Nicholson (your Uncle Ben's daughter) was married last Tuesday, to a Mr. Durden of the Eastern Shore. It is thought an eligible and prudent match. I hope it will prove so. Her friends and relations in Baltimore will regret her leaving the Western Shore.

I have written until it is so dark I can scarcely see. I must conclude as this letter must be closed to send to the post office. Doctor Murray has a nephew* who writes in Mr. Gallatin's office, who will be careful to forward your letters to me. The best way is to send them thro' that channel.

My kindest love attend your dear Mother, also your dear children, all of whom feel.to me though unknown.

My best respects to Col. Few.

And believe me My dear Kitty to be with unalterable affection,

Ever Yr,

H. Murray

*James Edmund—James Edmund Brice,(1784-1827) son by a previous marriage.

*This Embargo—Jefferson's embargo on English shipping and against American shipping in trade with England, put many out of work in Baltimore and later caused riots, one of which nearly caused the death of Dr. William Murray's

nephew, Daniel Murray, and caused him to move his family from Baltimore to West River in 1811 or 1812.

*Actual title: *Laws Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. Still in print.

*Nephew -Daniel Murray.

ms3245b02f05 81-82-83

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, near Queen Ann
Maryland
Care of [F J. ?] Thomas, Esq.
Postmark—Mar 25

New York, March 13, 1808

My dear Friend

I hasten to answer your enquiries respecting the little commission which I undertook with the greatest pleasure but which has not answered the sanguine expectations I had formed. I have collected about 28 subscribers and have the prospect of some few more if I keep the proposals. A book seller has sent me word he will become a subscriber for one copy and take 12 more, if the usual allowance will be made to him and if I can get another paper, will expose it in his shop for me. I do not doubt in the course of the summer I shall be able to do more than I have done in the Winter. I have been very little out. Times are very embarrassing, and its being proposals for a work printed in Maryland makes persons more indifferent. My husband is fearful that the price has been set too low. We cannot get an Octavo Vol. (in boards) of any description for 1 dollar in this City. I think I could have done better with another or more subscription papers as I could only offer it myself and I might have employed friends had I more than one. If it is not too late you may send me some on by Maria Nicholson who is now in Washington but will be on in two or 3 weeks.

I am sorry my beloved friend to hear you say you have passed a gloomy winter and have had but poor health. Well my dear an eternal day will succeed to all these shades and conflicts our hope is as the anchor of the soul sure and steadfast. The spiritual life is a warfare, were we exempt from the trial of our faith we would have cause (from the word of God) to doubt of its reality— but great humblings are needful for great sinners and to be emptied of self is a precious attainment commiserated only by the Spirit of God. So much do I see of the corruptions of my depraved heart that my daily prayer is O show me more of a Saviors fullness— without such a view I must despair and die.

To my view my Dearest Harriett it seems a singular providence, that you who are so filled to enjoy Society who might have been blessed and more extensively the means of blessings to others, to whose natural disposition or rather by whose early and great sorrows a softness of mind occasioning dejection of spirits has been communicated, that your lot should have been cast in so retired a spot which from all these circumstances seems to render it so unfit for your enjoyment seems remarkable, but your Heavenly Father knows best, he hath fixed the bounds of your habitation. He careth for you. Crooked things will be made straight and rough places smooth. He leads you by ways that you

know not, and when his work is accomplished an abundance entrance I trust will be administered to you into that eternal peace of rest where every tear shall be wiped from every eye.

I am delighted my dear to hear you speak so favorably of your eldest son, I do not make any abatement for the partiality of a parent, for judging of myself, I do think they are indeed eagle eyed and more readily discover the faults and imperfections of their children than any other less interested —unless it is where the natural affection is joined to very great weakness of understanding. You will please to tell Mr. Brice from me that the son of my friend be a most welcome visitor to me.

I do not send you the names of the persons who have become subscribers now. I suppose the number at present is sufficient, if not you can write me and I will make an early return of them.

How is your dear and respectable Mother. I often think with regret her having been so near to N. Y. as Long Branch without my having the pleasure of seeing her. Has Mrs. Addison recovered. You did not mention her in your last letter.

My dear Harriett will give my love to my Cousin Wm. and accept of the sincerest affection of hers most truly,

Cathae Few

MSA SC 2301-2-12

Mrs. Catharine Few
New York

West River, May 24, 1808

My Dear Friend,

I rec'd your favor containing a list of the subscribers you had obtained, some time since, and am ashamed that I have not sooner answered it and returned my thanks for the kind interest you have shown me. I cannot offer any sufficient reason why I have not done it, but that there was not an urgent necessity for my writing immediately, and my dislike to my pen is so great that I put it off thinking another time would do as well. (It is by this kind of fatal procrastination that matters of eternal moment are neglected till it is too late). I feel that I have done wrong, and I will strive to do better in the future.

You are very kind my dear in offering to be troubled still farther with this business. If you think in the course of the summer you would probably add any to your list of subscribers, it is not too late. The first Vol. of the work is just now. beginning to be printed and as the names are to be put at the close of the second Vol., they will not be immediately. wanted. There are. already a sufficient number sent in to encourage the printing, (I believe between four to five hundred) but not very profitable however, as all who have been kind enough to take papers, have not returned them. I hope still it may be advantageous. As you observe, the times are difficult, and such a total stagnation to all business, that I some times think it is a most unfavourable juncture for my book. However, as I have said before, I have never been sanguine enough on the

subject to be much mortified at not succeeding. On applying to My friend (the Editor) for another subscription paper, I find there are none printed. He gave me a wafer or two, attach to a paper of what length you please. Before I close the subject, I must intreat you my dear Kitty to put yourself to no inconvenience in this business. I would by no means wish any exertion on your part that will be attended with trouble. With respect to the proposal made by the Book seller, I can give no direct answer, but if you will be so good as to let me know what the usual allowance is in these cases, I will inform you what the Editor says, tho' I have no doubt but he may have them.

My mind has lately suffered a painful sympathy in the distress of my much loved friends, Mrs. Gough* and her amiable daughter, whose afflictions have been poignant indeed. Mrs. Carroll* lost a lovely little girl between 5 and 6 years old of a disorder which rendered her death peculiarly distressing and almost too much for the delicate state of her dear Mother, not many weeks after Mr. Gough* was taken with an indisposition which the Doctors and family thought was nothing but the effects of a bad cold which would soon subside; but after some time, it proved an abscess on the lungs, which after nine weeks painful illness terminated his life. Such bereavement can be better imagined than described, a union of so many happy years could not be broken without the severest pangs. Mrs. Gough* has however the blessed consolation, that her Husband departed in the full assurance of faith, not a doubt, nor the shadow of a doubt clouded his mind during all his sufferings, and he long'd to be dissolved that he might be with his Saviour. O my Friend what encouragement for those who are left behind, even the weakest believer, such a state is attainable, and God will disarm Death of his sting, and thro' the like precious faith we may meet that King of terrors with boldness. There shines the power of Religion.

*Whatever Boastful farce the Hero plays
Virtue alone has majesty in death!*

With respect to your kind inquiries after my sister Addison's health, I am very sorry to inform you, she is still in a very alarming situation. She has been through the winter but poorly. Sometimes for a few days she would give us hopes that she was better, and again would be worse. The Doctors flattered this spring that she was certainly in a more hopeful way and that her lungs were not affected more than from the general debility of her whole frame and that she might still be restored; but within these few weeks she has broke a blood vessel which has weakened her very much and the last accounts I had of her was, that she was very ill. It is indeed a "sad post of Observation" for my dear Mother to be continually with her watching progress of a disease which her fears paints in all its terrors. It is bad for those who have youth and health; but to our dear parent who is very delicate; and now in her 69th year, I wonder how she can support it; but Betsy cannot be happy without her, nor could Mamma be easy if she was not with her. There seems no remedy, for that evil, but patient resignation to the divine will.

I thank the Lord it is in my power to tell you my little family are as well as usual, and I hope to have the same agreeable information respecting yours. When you see your dear Mamma and sister Maria, be pleased to remember me affectionately to them. Report says that a Gentleman from our State is about

taking Maria from you. As he is not an acquaintance of mine, I cannot say how I shall like it; but if it is the case, she has my best wishes for her happiness. A bargain for life is no trifling matter, and with the best prospects it is a great adventure for a Girl to make.

You will conclude I have overcome my dislike to my pen from the length of this letter. The truth is when I begin scribbling to you I hardly know when to have done, seeing I now almost despair of ever conversing with you in any other way.

Adieu my beloved friend. My Husband and daughter join in love and respects to you and yours, I am with true affection as ever,

H. Murray

*Mrs. Gough–Prudence Carnan, sister of Charles Ridgely Carnan, who changed his name to Charles Carnan Ridgely in order to inherit "Hampton." Mrs. Gough lived many years and was a leading light of the Methodist Church.

*Mr. Gough–Harry Dorsey Gough (c.1745–1808), first cousin of Harriet Murray's father, Henry Woodward.

*Mrs. Carroll–Sophia, daughter of Harry Dorsey Gough and Prudence Carnan Gough and wife of James Carroll. James, son of Nicholas Maccubbin, changed his surname to Carroll in order to inherit from his uncle Charles Carroll, Barrister (1723–1783).

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland
to the care of Doctor William Murray

New York, August 21, 1810

My very dear friend

Had you received a letter from me very lately it would have contained the very same interrogation that you have put to me in the first part of yours which came to hand a few days since. Twice have I written to you without knowing whether my letter ever met your eye. The first I think (but am not sure) was sent by post. The last I know was sent to Washington to the care of Mr. Gallatin who took it from my daughter to his office with an intention of giving it to Mr. Murray who writes in that office. I conjectured in vain what had escaped me that could have imposed silence on you, and I was the more certain that all was not right in your view, when Mr. Lyle (minister of an Episcopal Church in this place) called on me and informed me that he had received a trunk of Books committed to his care by Mrs. Rogers of Baltimore to be placed in a Book Store here for the benefit of subscribers, at this I was surprised as I knew had they have been sent to me they would have saved the expense of the commission to be paid to the man who sold them. However I could say nothing on the subject. I sent and got my own and those of my particular friends who had put their names on my list, and the man has since informed me that they are the only ones which he has sold. I advised him to send them round to other subscribers. which he said he would do, since which I have been out of town and can give you no further information respecting them. You have not mentioned to me although I felt much interested in knowing whether the publishing of those

Books were profitable. My friends were very much pleased with them and they forcibly recalled to my memory the many sweet hours we have passed together in our juvenile days, many of the extracts we have together read and enjoyed with double pleasure. Shall I tell you a circumstance that troubled me, I mentioned it in my letter but perhaps it was in one of those that has so strangely been mislaid I forgot to put my own name on the subscription list and sent it to you with that unpardonable omission. I thought possibly my friend was hurt but glad I am that all my conjectures are so agreeably ended (not withstanding the loss of my letters) and I have again had the happiness of hearing from you.

I had heard of the death of your dear Sister,* she has died in the Lord, what more my beloved friend can we ask for, to the believing survivors it comprehends every thing desirable. She is gone to be ever with the Lord, to gaze on the [uncreated?] beauty, to know as she is known, to love as she is loved. Your dear Mother contemplates a blissful re union to her precious child. It is this no doubt that has enabled her to bear so great a loss, to submit without a murmur. . . . O my dear it will soon be over with each of us, what a transient unsatisfying portion is this world, how like a dream is that portion of time that has past, how unsubstantial all but those moments that have passed in a preparation for Eternity. I lost a sweet friend* also a few months ago. She is almost ever present to my mind, in this very room almost in this very spot I have heard her sweetly pour forth her fervent petitions to her heavenly father. I received her dying embrace, and she is now gone to obtain the reward of faith.

I love my dear to hear of your Children and am rejoiced to find they promise to be blessings to their Mother. I have three daughters, the eldest twenty-one, the youngest sixteen— their partial parent, as you say can hardly venture to speak of them lest she should betray her folly, their Education has been carefully attended to, they are fond of literature, very cheerful in their dispositions and Home is their delight. Albert my only son is fourteen and will enter college in October under very promising [. . . ?] Mrs. Wright, a cousin of mine and Miss Carrol [. . . ?] of hers has made a transient visit to New York, passed a little while with me, I made a thousand enquiries about my Maryland friends. They told me they knew you and your oldest son tho I found it was not intimately, if you do not come yourself, I wish you would suffer some of your young folks to pay us a visit. I wish I had an opportunity of introducing your daughter to my Children, they are Cousins and I think they would soon feel the affection of friends (This is flattering myself too since my opinion is that much depends on the mother) a similarity of education which almost inevitably produces an uniformity of habit and opinions.

I have come to the end of my paper. May God bless you and yours— remember me very affectionately to your dear Mama and Doctor Murray. My Mother received your affectionate mention of her very gratefully, she enjoys her health but her eyesight is extremely bad. She reads no more, even the last [?]. She lives 2 miles from Town and knows not I am writing or I should have the pleasure of conveying to you her affection.

*sister—Elizabeth Hesselius, Harriett's half-sister, the daughter of Mary Young and John Hesselius, died July 31, 1808. She was married to Rev. Walter Dulany Addison.

*friend—Mrs. John R. Livingston.

Mrs. Catharine Few
 New York
Postmark—Annapolis, Nov. 2 1810

Oct. 28-1810

I should not have been so long silent my beloved Friend had not my experience in affliction taught me, that sorrows such as yours could admit of no alleviation from the condolence of friends. That you have had my tenderest sympathy in your late severe trial, I know you will believe. But friends Alas! the nearest and dearest feel at such seasons. their impotence. The piety of your own mind will suggest to you where alone there is comfort to be found. The consolations of the Gospel administers the only relief a wounded spirit can find under the pressure of affliction. These consolations (I have a confidence) are yours. How blessed a support it is, and how necessary for poor frail dying mortals as we are, liable to so many evils, and so entirely weak and dependent. O how much to be pitied those are, who have no God to go to in the hour of distress; who cannot realize the hand of love and mercy under his afflictive dispensations. It requires much faith to resign ourselves to the Will of God under bereavements of this kind, and nature will have her struggles. Yet it is a Christian's privilege to look quite through the present world, and tho' the body presses down the spirit so as to obstruct their view very often, still we are so incessantly reminded of the shortness of life and nothingness of it in comparison of that eternal state, to which we are hastening, that it ill becomes us to indulge excessive sorrow for those whom we shall follow so soon. Do not think my dear Friend that I am so presumptuous as to mean instructing you. I feel myself weaker than the weakest, and very incapable of advising you. I am sensible I have profited but too little from my frequent chastisements and I am humbled when I reflect that it is the case.

I have felt a backwardness in addressing you as I could not do it without touching on a subject so painful to you. My Dear Kitty, if I have done wrong in writing now, I hope you will forgive and attribute it to my desire of hearing from you. I sincerely partake in whatever concerns you. Do write to me on the rec't of this, if it is only a line to tell me how you are.

I remain with true and Unalterable affection.

H. Murray

*This is a condolence: Catharine's son, Albert Few, died 9/3/1810.

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Mrs. Harriett Murray, West River, near Annapolis
 State of Maryland

Greenwich, Nov. 28, 1810

My dear Friend

Every situation into which we in this life can be placed has its peculiar temptations. Affliction has made the least exertion, however necessary, a burden to me; or I should have answered your very affectionate letter before this.

Heavy, heavy has the stroke fallen, a shade is cast over all created good and too often I am tempted to say "mine eyes shall never more see good"—would the anguish of my spirit permit I would describe to you in the character of the most lovely and promising of children what we have lost, an only son,* taken from us most unexpectedly, just as he had nearly attained his fourteenth year; but here I must spare my wounded heart—O my Harriett the Lord hath chastened me sore, but he has not forsaken me. I desire to kiss the rod. So many years of prosperity as we have enjoyed, has had but too much tendency to allure our hearts from God our mountain seemed to stand strong—and we were but too much occupied in seeking our rest here below. We have been spoken to in thunder. "The disenchanted Earth has lost its luster" and tho so much of opining has mixed with my exercises, that I tremble lest a righteous God should enter into judgment with his poor worm, yet I humbly trust He will forgive and sanctify the awful visitation to me and to my poor husband and precious children. It has been a furnace, pray for your friend that it may be a refiners fire—yes my dear you have born the yoke in your youth, you know how to weep with those that weep and judging by your other experience say there is no other way to be comforted but with an eye of faith to look quite through this scene to that eternity which will so soon open on us. I trust the lord has taken my beloved child to himself, that he has forgiven the sins of his childish life, he was virtuous, and sensible above his years, but his death was sudden, which through the force of temptation is sometimes exceedingly distressing to me—But the Lord God omnipotent reigns—

O for enlarged views of his character as a God of boundless love enabling me to cry at all time "Thy will be done"—My very dear friend, this tender subject is the only one which I am at present capable of dwelling on. I know the heart of a friend. and therefore ask for no excuse. Mama in whose house I am now writing begs to be most affectionately remembered to you.

May God bless you, may he prepare us to meet in a better world, where there shall be neither sorrow nor crying but all tears shall be passed from our eyes.

Yours with sincere love,

Cathae Few

Did you receive a letter from me written in answer to one from you about 3 months since? I hope I shall hear from you soon. My dear friend I need consolation such as you can give, a friend says Solomon is born for adversity.

*son—Albert Few, b. 9/8/1797—d. 9/13/1810.

MSA SC 2301-2-14

Mrs. Catharine Few.
New York
Postmark—Annapolis, Feb. 4, 1811

West River, Jan. 28th, 1811

I thank you my beloved Friend for your last letter, I esteemed it a more than ordinary proof of your regard, as I well know the state of your mind was most unfavourable to epistolary communications. Were I capable of expressing the continual and tender sympathy I feel for you or could I think it possible I could

render you the least consolation by my letters, I should write often, but alas! I feel my insufficiency and I am afraid of being troublesome. I hope my dear by this time your mind has gained more composure, and that the late severe dispensation appears in its true light to you. We are too apt I think to view afflictions as judgments, whereas, they often (I may say always are) meant in mercy and when this veil is removed that so obscures our spiritual sight, and the wisdom and goodness of God is fully displayed, we shall adore many of the dispensations, which we now see through a very dark medium. "We see through a glass darkly" now we know not the way the Lord deals thus with us. Our part is to submit; and I rejoice that you are enabled to kiss the rod. I doubt not tho' the present affliction is grievous; it will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. I pray that it may and that you may experience the staff to support; as you have felt the rod to chastise. I know well what sorrow is, and know how to commiserate every bitter feeling of the heart and do most sincerely partake with you in your sufferings; but I beseech you my dear Kitty refuse not the consolation, that as a Christian, the word of God entitles you to. Chastisement is not mark of his displeasure, but is a proof of his love; and though when the mind is pressed down we cannot apply those heart cheering promises. Yet they belong to his children and in due time they will feel the comfort of them.

*"Let those who sow in sadness wait
Till the fair harvest come;
They shall confess their sheaves are great
And shout their blessing home."*

The letter you mention having written to me some time ago I rec'd, but those you wrote before and sent to Mrs. Gallatin, I never got. I was silent at that time because I felt it a matter of delicacy to mention the subject of my books to you as I thought you had declined saying anything to me; (and I can't bear to be troublesome) but when they were ready to be delivered to the subscribers, as I had no acquaintance that I could ask the favor of, I got my Sister to write to Mr. Lyle to interest himself in the business. He put them into the hands of a book seller, who has made but a bad hand of it. As N. York was so large a City, I was advised to send more sets than was subscribed for, but instead of disposing of more, he has not collected the money for those that were subscribed for. There was thirty-two names on the list you sent me and he gave account of but forty-two dollars; and said it was all that he believed could be collected. There was seventy sets sent. You know my Dear Friend I told you that my expectations were not sanguine, and therefor my mortification is not very great. Nevertheless, as the expenses of publishing has been very considerable (far beyond my calculation) I think it my duty to make some exertion to get the subscriptions in; and if you can befriend me by making some inquiry respecting them, you will do me a favor.

You can't think how sorry I felt when I heard your dear daughter had been in Maryland, and I could not get a sight of her. She passed through Baltimore a day or two after I left it, but I did not know it for months afterwards. Henry Murray* mentioned it to me. He said he came from French Town to Baltimore with her in the Packet; and was much pleased with her. It would have given me sincere pleasure to have seen her; and I think, was my daughter to be within a

days journey of you, she should have my strict injunctions to go that days journey to see you. The City of Washington is not above 26 miles from our house, and such a ride would be a trifle to one of her age. Should she or any of your daughters visit their Aunt again and I can hear of it, I think I will contrive some way of getting them to my cottage. My Mary is in Baltimore this winter; but I have my dear Mother and three of my nieces with me, so that I am not lonesome. Mamma's health is delicate, but she maintains her faculties and seems to have as much of the enjoyment of life as most people at that advanced age of 72. Her society is very instructing. Her good sense and deep piety makes her a most agreeable as well as edifying companion.

When you see my dear Mrs. Nicholson give my most affectionate love to her. Thirty years has not worn the remembrance of her kindness from my mind; or the recollection of the pleasant days I have passed in her company. My mother sends much love as does my husband.

The Girls are talking so much round me that I am obliged to conclude. With every wish for the happiness of you and yours.

I remain my Dear Friend ,With sincere affection, Ever yrs,

H. Murray

I have just found the Bookseller Acct, which I will transcribe

sold 21 copies at 2 Dollars=\$42.00

Advertising=2.50

Commission=4.20

(the money sent me)=\$35.30

The profits arising from the whole has been very inconsiderable. Many found it easier to subscribe than to pay. There are a hundred names that have not paid a cent; and the publishing has been enormously expensive. I do not believe the whole business will clear more than two hundred Dollars. You'll excuse my saying so much on the subject. I was led to it by your enquiries.

*Henry Murray—b. 1789, son of Dr. James Murray and Sarah Ennalls Maynadier of Annapolis, killed in explosion of steamship Eagle on her maiden voyage from Baltimore to Annapolis on April, 1824. Died unmarried.

ms3245b02f05 90-91-92

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River , near Annapolis
State of Maryland
Postmark—May 7

Greenwich, near New York, May 3, 1811

My Dear Friend.

Had not my mind been so sadly occupied your books had not so long been unattended to. I have written to you my surprise at finding them placed under the direction of Mr. Lyle. I could not account for it except from the supposition that my friend was hurt at not seeing my Mothers or my own names placed on the list of subscribers which I had intended to do, and inattention which can not pardon myself for, my Mother having taken two copies, myself four, and

both of us much gratified at the perusal of the extracts. On the receipt of your last letter, I sent to Sinclair and begged to see the list of subscribers who had been supplied with books. I found on looking them over he had not sold one sett but those which I had sent for and delivered myself, altho he has charged you the commission, he had still 50 setts remaining on hand. I sent for them and have given him my receipt. I have sold to the amount of 50 Dollars which I will send to you the first safe conveyance or in any way which you may direct and will endeavor to sell the others as quick as I can which I am in hopes will be very shortly.

Since I last wrote to you we have made a very important change in our domestic arrangements, we have rented our dwelling in the City and now reside two miles out, our late affliction has made quiet and retirement more congenial to the disposition of our minds and I trust we are under the divine guidance.

My Daughter would have been very glad to have made you a visit, she had received previous instruction so to do if she should have opportunity, tho she as well as myself were ignorant how near your dwelling was to Washington. They have been taught to love you and Mary has always wrote her name with the addition of Harriett in remembrance of her my earliest friend _____. My sister Maria who lives at Belleair has requested me to permit my eldest Daughter to be with her in the months of July and August when she expects to be confined, I think we shall consent to part with her for so short a time and if it is possible for her to spend a few days with you it will be a great gratification to her as well as myself; but I have not attended to the geography of the State and I do not know the distance. Perhaps it will not be in her power to accomplish it. I acknowledge to you my dear that I do feel more and more crucified to the world, but O there is much to do yet. May the Lord perfect that which concerns us. Eternity is at hand, and do we not with his whole creation grow for that better state of things, that land of rest, where the people who shall dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

Remember me very affectionately to your dear Mama, how weary must the aged Christian feel of this afflicting and perplexed state of things, but how blessed the friends who are so happy as to enjoy the Society of the Pilgrim rich with the fruits of the experience of many years. They can testify to us of the goodness of their God. We are thus blessed. May Jesus continue his goodness to our dear parents. Mama lives with my Sister Seney on the place but in another house, she begs to be remembered to you with love.

Adieu my dear Harriet believe me yours with sincere and affectionate regard,

Cathae Few

MSA SC 2301-2-16

Mrs. Catharine Few
Greenwich, near New York
Postmark—Baltimore, Md

Woodstock, West River, Md., May 30th, 1811

My very dear Friend,

Yours of the 3d inst. came safe to hand some days since, and I most sincerely thank you for the kind interest you have taken in the disposal of my books. It was not as you imagined, that I felt myself hurt at not seeing your name on the list of subscribers that prevented my committing them entirely to you in the first instance; but as you did not mention to me that you wished me to do so (or at least I never got a letter from you wherein it was mentioned) I took it for granted it would not be convenient to you, and therefore could not bear the thoughts of giving you any further trouble about them. Mr. Lyle, I suppose was too much occupied with his own affairs to attend to mine; and the bookseller had not interest in the matter. So that had I not had a friend like yourself, they would never have been disposed of. You have indeed my dear Kitty rendered me a very essential service in the active part you have taken; and I hope this labour of love will not go unrewarded by Him who takes cognizance of the intentions of our hearts in the most trivial actions of our lives; and who deigns to accept a cup of cold water when given, with a proper motive, to one of the meanest of his servants.

I am truly glad to hear your dear daughter is to be in Maryland this summer; and should it please God to spare me until that time, I will strive hard to see her. Bellair is a considerable distance from us, I suppose about 60 or 70 miles; but it is not far from Perry Hall, the seat of my dear friend, Mrs. Gough; and she has promised if I will visit her, she will carry me to Bellair; and we will take Frances with us and keep her as long as she will consent to stay. It is a delightful anticipation that I shall embrace one the your children. I cannot tell you how earnestly my heart longs for an interview with you all; but when or where it will be, remains still a doubt. I feel sometimes as if I could sacrifice a great deal to be with you only one day. That the providence of God fixes the bounds of our habitations and governs the events of our lives, is a most comfortable reflection to me and reconciles me to many things that would else be grievous. In his good time we may meet. Should that never be permitted, we know there is a long and happy Eternity, where all our disappointments and griefs will be forever forgotten, and every dispensation of Divine Providence (however dark it may appear to us now) we shall adore him for.

My dear Mother has spent the Winter and Spring with me and tomorrow she leaves me for Baltimore where she intends staying until the month of September when she will again return to our cottage, should it please God to spare us. Her society is of great consequence to her children and we are all anxious to have her. Our country is very charming at present; and I cannot help wishing you were now with us. Our little cottage is surrounded with flowers and trees; and if you are fond of the country, I am sure you would be pleased with it. We have Eglantine and Honeysuckle round the posts of the Piazza which

is both fragrant and beautiful and the boughs of the Weeping Willow are playing in at our windows. My dear mother, who is a great admirer of nature, is much pleased with our situation. I would enlarge but as Mamma is just about packing up, I do not like to leave her. I will if possible write to you again very soon. Please to mention me to your dear children, all of whom I love for their Mother's sake. I am thankful I can say we are all as well as usual. I remain my dear Friend with sincere and unalterable attachment.

Ever yours,

H. Murray

As Mrs. Murray is now on a visit to her Father and Mother, I think you perhaps may have frequent opportunities through that family of writing; as Mr. M. generally leaves her and returns for her. By him you may have a safe conveyance for the money you have been so good as to collect for me.

My Daughter desires me to give her love to you and your daughters with whom she longs to be acquainted.

ms3245b02f05 93-94-95

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, July

Greenwich, July 13, 1811

My dear friend

Mr. Few is not in Town but has been absent about 60 miles from home for some days past, we however concluded that he should give a draught on the Bank in Baltimore for the sum which I am indebted to you. I think I shall part with all the books without much difficulty and when he returns the business shall be adjusted. I will not delay to write to you, because my Frances is now in Maryland and it would give me pleasure that you should see her. Should your affectionate arrangement be accomplished and you should see Mrs. Gough tell her who I am, and she will remember a little girl who once had the pleasure of being an inmate in her family in the absence of my Mother from Baltimore and who from that time retains for her a most respectful remembrance. Mrs. Suckley a friend and neighbor of mine often mentions Mrs. Gough. She has lived in Baltimore since I have, and revives the remembrance in her conversations of many by whom I have entirely forgotten. There is something that affects very agreeably in the recollection of friends with whom [?] scenes where we have passed the days of our youth, every thing that is unpleasant is forgotten and the impression of what was gratifying and amiable in our view remains indelible—reflection certainly does not aid our happiness in this life—unless we are so blessed as to be enabled by the divine teaching to connect present with eternal things—. It is the thoughtlessness of youth that can derive enjoyment from pleasures so transient as those that time and sense afford us. The Christian my dear Harriett (and this I hope we can both say) looks for the consummation of his blessedness beyond. There they will see their best friend, there He will condescend to reveal those dark dispensations, which he has near enabled us

to bear, putting our trust in him who cannot do but what is right. Here after we shall glorify him for all, yea most for the severe—and will it not be some addition to our blessedness even in Heaven that friends of one mind and one soul who have been consecrated shall meet never to be disunited by any more painful changes.

I shall write to you probably soon again. I send not my love to your venerable and dear Mother because you tell me in your last favor that she will be absent from you till autumn. You must feel her absence much—remember me very affectionately to Doctor Murray and your dear children. I miss my girls very much. Mary is also from home staying with a dear friend of mine (whom perhaps you know something of, Mrs. Garretson, she was a Miss Livingston and married a methodist preacher from Maryland) up the River—I hope Frances may be so favored as to see you. She is my Dear Harriett (excuse a mothers fondness) all, all I may almost say that my fondest hopes can desire.

May God bless my dear friend, believe me to be yours most Sincerely,

Cathae Few

ms3245b02f05 96-97

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River. near Annapolis
Maryland
Postmark—New York, Aug 9th

August 7 1811

My dear Friend

I have received your affectionate letter. I can only say I do sincerely love you and thank you for it. I shall answer it more particularly at a future period. Two of my children are indisposed and I am necessarily occupied in attending on them this morning. My poor anxious heart was much pained. This evening, thanks to my merciful God I am relieved, they are both much mended. O my Harriet what a restless, inconsistent, miserable worm am I. Lord prepare for what remains of discipline and correction ere, we have done with this vale of tears.

I have wrote to my Frances the purpose of your letter as it respected your seeing her. She has previously wrote to me that she was very anxious to return home and intended, if no earlier opportunity offered, to return with a gentleman in a fortnight from the date of her letter which was July 31. I mention this to you my dear friend because I should be grieved if you should unnecessarily hasten your jaunt to the inconvenience of yourself or family. A line from you directed to her at Mr. John Montgomery, Belair will put it in her power to inform you of her arrangements.

I enclose you a draught on the Bank at Baltimore for seventy dollars due to you for Books sold. Adieu my dear friend. Believe me yours most sincerel,

Cathae Few

If Mrs. Murray will please to sign the enclosed check it will be paid to the bearer at the Muhanud [?] Bank, Baltimore.

MSA SC 2301-2-15

Mrs. Catharine Few
Greenwich near New York
Postmarked—Balto

Aug. 27th, 1811

My Dear Friend,

I have to apologize for not acknowledging the rec't of your favour enclosing the draught, which came safe to hand in due time; but when I tell you my reasons, I know you will excuse me. I recd. your letter at West River; and in two days after the rec't. of it I came to Baltimore fondly hoping I might get up in time to have an interview with your dear daughter (a pleasure I earnestly wished). Immediately on my arrival I wrote her a few lines addressed as you directed and have been ever since impatiently waiting an answer; and not until last evening could I gain the least information respecting her. My Nephew, Henry Rogers, (whom I had commissioned to make every enquiry he could) saw Mrs. Montgomery who told him she had returned to N. York. I need not tell you my dear Kitty that this is a mortifying disappointment to me, but so it is, and I must submit. I deferred answering your letter before, hoping for an opportunity by your dear daughter, but she has again slipped thro' my fingers. She cannot lament it as I do, nor would I wish her. Her anxiety to return to you overbalanced any desire she could have to see me. But I would have sacrificed a great deal to have held her to my heart and have conversed with her only an hour.

I know not how to express my gratitude to you my dear friend for the kind interest you have taken, and the trouble you have had in disposing of the Books. Had the whole edition been as well attended to, it would have been much more profitable to me; but I am thankful it is as well as it is. At one time I had fears it would not clear the expenses, but I am happy to say they are paid; and the sum you sent me (which is by far the largest I ever recd. at a time from the profits of it) came most opportune and had been of essential service to me. You will receive your compensation from consciousness of having served a friend, who prays that better blessings may be poured on you than can be bestowed by the acquisition of anything this world has to give.

I have been two weeks from home tomorrow, and begin to feel a great drawing towards my dear little silent retreat. The bustle of the populace city does not suit quiet people. Indeed were it not for a few relations and a very few friends that reside here, I could bid adieu to Baltimore forever without the least reluctance.

You must excuse a very incorrect miserable scrawl at this time my dear friend, I am interrupted continually, and what few ideas I have are very much disjointed. You promised in your last to write to me soon again. I hope nothing may happen to prevent you. My heart is with you. My best love to your Mama and dear children.

And in all situations, Believe me to be with unalterable Affection, my dearest Friend, yrs.

H. Murray

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark—27 Dec.

Greenwich, December 17, 1811

My Dear friend

For the first time in my life I am now truly in glasses. and that to write to you the friend of my youth—how affecting the metamorphous, where our views bounded to the present life— when last we met, an unwrinkled brow countenances blooming with youth and health—hearts elevated with hope and anticipations of terrestrial Edens—now disappointment, anxiety, sorrow have made deep their furrows in those visages faithfully impressed by the hand of time, but we will acknowledge the goodness of our God, the wisdom and the grace which have marked all his dealings with us—our destinies are not terminated here. It is nothing but the bitter experience that we have had that could be effectual to prepare us for his heavenly kingdom—Severe has been the discipline but all needful, and consoling is the hope that we shall yet praise him together in that blessed rest where “age, nor, care, nor crime” can reach us more.

It is needless my dear friend to apologize to you for not writing before, I have felt your goodness, I have many times regretted that you should have had so much trouble and considered your attention to my daughter as a most affecting proof of your friendship for me. She too was sensible of your goodness. How it was things were arranged so badly I cannot tell, but Frances passed three months in Maryland and a large part of that time was expecting to know, from one or other of us, in what way she should be favored with the pleasure of your company. All this and much more have I intended to relate to my friend long since, but I know not how it is. I never possessed much energy but of late I feel a criminal slothfulness of mind and body and duties are too often deferred till the necessary exertion is most unpleasant. I am in debt to all my correspondents & three besides yourself make up the whole number.

I have enquired in book shops and libraries for “Bales on the attributes of God” in vain. I find my sweetest comforts derived from the contemplations of His glorious character, it is the only way in which I can be reconciled to the most severe of his dispensations towards me. It is right, it must be right, love is his name, his nature is love and the immutability of Jehovah is a sure foundation, and whatever [?] there may be respecting the application of the word. I believe every Christian will resort to it at last as full of consolation to his tempest lossed soul—for with the prophet we must exclaim “My [?] my [?]” what is there, what can there be us.

I have not as yet parted with all the “extracts” but I have no doubt but in time I shall find no difficulty, for they have been valued for their intrinsic worth. I am now more remote from visitors than when I lived in the City and it will of course take longer time to dispose of them. I have however determined that rather than delay I will send on to you the amount of the whole number, which if I have calculated justly will be complete when you receive thirty dollars enclosed in this letter—I am rejoiced to hear that at least you will not be

injured by the publication, your friends I am sure if it is not their own fault will be profited, for I can say with truth, they have afforded me much real pleasure, they contain the best parts of the writings of the best authors and selected by a dear friend are to me rendered doubly valuable.

I am my dear Harriett with sincerest affection and with love to Doctor M and all the younger circle Yours truly,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-17

Mrs. Catharine Few
Greenwich near New York
[to the care of Mrs. Montgomery]

January 7th, 1812

Yours of the 17th of December My beloved Friend came safe to hand a few days since, for which I return you my warmest thanks, I had been long wishing to hear from you, and as often resolved to write to you myself to enquire after your health, but I feel the backwardness to my pen that you complain of, and hope you'll forgive me, as I excuse you. It is one of my short comings (tho' comparatively small) that I regret very much, for no one loves to write to those who will not reply, and I lose one of the greatest pleasures that friendship affords, when those I love cease to write to me.

I have lately been to Baltimore where I had the unexpected pleasure of an interview with your dear Sister Montgomery* I cannot tell you the sensation it gave me. She is so extremely like you that I scarcely took my eyes off of her whilst I staid with her, (which was but for a short visit after Tea in the evening), and I fully intended repeating my call, but was prevented. She showed me a portrait of your dear Mother, which tho' the effect of time is very visible since I saw her, yet there was a striking likeness of her, and the recollection of her countenance brought back to mind those days that are forever past, Alas! What can we look at that does not admonish us of the fleetness of time, and the continual change of every thing below the sun. I cannot help feeling as if I had got another chance, in my favour, of seeing you, now Maria is in Baltimore. Do my dear Kitty use some endeavor to come amongst us, you know not how much pleasure you would give us. I have a thousand things to say to you and one personal interview is worth a score of letters. My dear Mother spends this Winter in Baltimore and my last visit there was entirely to her. I did not even give a day to either of my sisters. The time appears precious now that I can spend with her, dear old lady, tho' very far advance in years, she has the perfect use of her faculties, and her mind seems as strong now as I ever remember it; and her health as perfect as it has been for many years. It would do you good to see her letters. I got a very afflicting one from her yesterday announcing the death of Mrs. Rogers (Harriett Murray's mother) one of the most alarmingly sudden calls into Eternity I ever heard of. She went to bed well about 10 o'clock and waked about 4 in the morning with a great difficulty of breathing, her maid got alarmed and called the family up; but there was no time for medical assistance. She was a corpse in five minutes. She was perfectly sensible and

called on God to receive her spirit. Her poor Husband and Son are inconsolable, and her dear Daughter no doubt will feel it as a severe dispensation, but "who can say unto the Almighty what doest thou." It is enough for short sighted mortals that Infinite Wisdom disposes such events. Happy are they whose will can submit in such cases, but nothing but the Grace of God can effect that. I often ask my heart how I should feel in such circumstances. I know I am one of the weakest of Gods creatures, but my comfort is, that his Grace is sufficient for all trials, and my hope is in Him.

You have been very good to me my dear in taking so much trouble in disposing. of my books. but I would by no means have wished you to have advanced the money for them. I cannot bear the idea of being benefitted at the inconvenience of anyone, particularly so dear a friend. You give me sincere pleasure by saying you have had satisfaction in the perusal of my Extracts. I have a large Vol. in manuscript by me which I think we could read together with much pleasure. They are altogether religious, and a great many from the work I mentioned to you, which I am sorry to find you have not been able to procure. I suppose you have read Miss More's Practical Piety. I have been delighted with it. If we were within thirty miles of each other we could read each others books and have an intercourse which it is not possible to enjoy as we are now situated.

My Mary is now on a visit to her friends in Annapolis and I have none of my own family with me but my Husband, who joins me in much love to you and your dear family.

I am my much loved Friend Most truly yours,

H. Murray

I do not know the difference in our ages, but I have worn spectacles for 6 or 8 years and cannot read at all without them. Tell me how old you are and also the age of your dear Mother.

Have you read a late Publication by a Gentleman of Charleston, S. C. entitled The Weekly Monitor? I am sure you'd be pleased with it.

*Sister Montgomery—Catherine's sister Maria Nicholson Montgomery

ms3245b02f05 101-102-103

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River. near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark—New York, 25 April

April 18, 1812

My dearest Harriett

It is high time that I should answer your last favor which I shall endeavor to do without any apology. My present situation gives me great leisure and the most melancholy event of my life, aided by the retirement in which we now live (and which happily is congenial to the feelings of our whole little family) is very favorable to contemplative mind. Often do I think of you, and among the shadows which have passed in such quick succession, none more frequently recur to my imagination than those days of our youth when a thoughtlessness of the future gave a sort of substance to our enjoyments which no pleasures

of later years can boast, experience has intruded and the transitory nature of all created things, beneath the Sun, checks the ardor of pursuit and chills the pleasure of possessions. Still my dear friend let us adore the wisdom and the grace of our God. remember in one of your letters to me you said we are too apt to view the adverse dispensations of divine providence as the visitations of anger from incensed justice and thus mistake the correction of a tender father. This has been eminently my case, and tho I see the gracious effects of his chastisements I am still tempted to review days of anguish when the idol was torn from my bleeding heart and say surely I must have been the chief of sinners—and so I was—but yet it was love that dispelled the delusion of fastening my affections on objects which could not satisfy a soul in its nature.

I was very lately reading your account wrote to me sometime ago of the death of a beloved nephew of yours, the Son of Mrs. Govane.* You mention her saint like submission to the will of God, “she gave up her child without a murmuring word”— what insensible creatures we are. We know not how to weep with those that weep, we know not how to give glory to God for the support he affords to his suffering creatures till the stroke reaches our selfish hearts and we are taught by painful experience.

Ah my Harriett with what different sensations did I experience that letter of yours—how affectionately have I since sympathized with your excellent sister and how I, in the comparison shrunk in my own estimation. Be not surprised that I dwell thus on this subject. I write to the friend of my heart and the idea of my dear and too deeply lamented child is always most ever present to my view.

Do you wish to know my age. The 7th of next August I shall be forty seven and my mother is 20 years older than myself. It is time my dear that we should indulge in the anticipations of our heavenly rest. I feel much weaned from this world and my chief pleasure were it is the blessed chart that marks the way to heaven, sweet are the promises, precious the consolations of the word, may we find them increasingly precious until the shadows flee away and we know as we are known.

You tell me you have made a short visit to Maria Montgomery, I hope when you go to Baltimore again you will become better acquainted with her, you will I think be pleased with her. She has a cultivated mind and I trust in her heart divine grace has placed the incorruptible seed. This my dear friend be assured of that I at present know of no circumstance that could induce me to make a visit to my Sisters in Maryland without visiting you at the same time. I have not any near prospect of going there. Mr. Few's health is not very good and my spirits would scarcely be equal to the undertaking. Still I do ardently wish to see you, and I think our young folks would have loved each other had their lots been cast near each other. Frances possesses Miss Moore's “Practical Piety” and has read H K Whiles remains[?] work is peculiarly affecting and interesting. We all read much of our time, and every one in their own way may be called great readers, and in general our taste of Books, surprisingly, considering the disparity of years, correspond: during this winter and our absence from the City we have really indulged ourselves with very little interruption and I hope with some improvement.

Ah, how sudden was the summons to Mrs. Rogers,* how affecting your account of the grief of her Husband and Son. O to have our lamps trimmed and our lights burning.

Adieu my dear friend, accept of the sincere respect and regard of all my family circle, and remember me affectionate to Doctor Murray and your dear children.

believe me to be ever Most affectionately yours,

Cathe Few

*Mrs. Govane—Mary Woodward, Harriett's sister

*Mrs. Rogers—Rebecca Woodward Rogers' mother-in-law. Her son was Philip Rogers, Rebecca's husband.

ms3245b02f05 104-105-106

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Sept. 28

Greenwich, New York, September 27, 1812

I have been so long used to indulgence from you my dearest Harriett on the score of writing that I know not how to take your long silence. Sometimes I fear you are not well or I surely should have received an answer to my last letter sent by post 6 months ago. I hope however I shall soon hear that it has been nothing more than procrastination. My troublesome besetment, which has so often [. . .?] suspended, not my affection, but my intercourse [?] with my best friends.

I have had my sisters with me from Maryland this summer, but it has almost past, and you I have not seen, Sister of my heart. Is this to be so? and are we to wait for our meeting till we arrive where parting shall be no more—Blame me not my dear friend, I assure you I have proposed a visit to you more than once. I have seen no difficulty if I could have induced my. Husband, but he seems to have sunk into a kind of calm since our deep affliction that has made him unwilling to move or make any change however needful even for health itself. While this is the case I shall not see you for I cannot leave him unless you and your dear family or some of them if all cannot leave home, will make me a visit, this I trust is not impracticable. Tell your dear Mary Ann one at least of three young friends who long to see her shall return with her. Their Grandmothers* were sisters. Their Mothers were friends and I long to have them made acquainted. The season is not too far spent we may have pleasant weather even till Christmas, it is not unusual: Now Dear Harriett think of this. It you will not come send me your Daughter and deny me not.

Times are very serious to every reflecting mind, while Mr. Gallatin* is with us we are beset with politics and politicians—O what a life of turmoil and anxiety is that of a Statesman. I bless the Lord that in his providential dealings with us we have been happily able to retreat from the bustle. Altho I cannot but say my feelings are tremblingly alive for the interests of our Country, yet is it best to be away from the collision of different parties and different interests resolving all into the will of God and committing all unto his wise disposal—. I trust my dear Harriett is living this life of faith and enjoying it in all its sweet

dependancies. Myself the most dull and perverse of scholars in the school of our Lord Jesus creeps languishingly along earnestly desiring, but alas making feeble attainments. My beloved friend pray for me.

Remember me most affectionately to your venerable and dear Mother. How happy should I be to see again that aged saint. I have often thought nothing can be more interesting than to behold a servant of the Redeemer almost come to the close of their Christian course, borne up above all the storms of life, rich in faith and rejoicing in the prospect of a glorious immortality.

Tell Doctor Murray Col Few and myself would be much pleased to see him at Greenwich and if he will bring my Dear Harriett with him, the pleasure will be doubled to us. Most affectionately and sincerely yours my dear frien,

Cathae Few

*Their grandmothers were sisters—Anne Smith and Hannah Smith. Anne Smith married Dr. William Murray of Chestertown. Hannah Smith married Joseph Nicholson.

*Mr. Gallatin—Albert Gallatin, U. S. Sec. of the Treasury.

MSA SC 2301-2-18

Catharine Few

Oct. 10th [1813]*

[letter torn, sentences & phrases missing]

The time appears. there has been any communication between. that it ought not to be and I acknowledge my part of the blame. of making reparation which in such cases is all that can be done, you have. subject of my most affectionate remembrance notwithstanding my long silence, which has been protracted from an uncertainty where to direct to you, from the state of alarm that all our sea port Towns have been in, since the British ships arrived in our waters. I thought it possible you might have removed from New York and there would be difficulty in getting a letter to you, but I am at length determined to make the attempt. Mr. & Mrs. Cox of your Town are here on a visit to Mr. Phil. Thomas, (who married Mrs. Cox's sister) and altho' she has not the pleasure of. being personally acquainted with you, has kindly offered a conveyance of my letter to you.

When writing to those we love and by whom we are beloved, there can be I think no apology necessary for the dullness of our letters, or I might offer one at this time. My remote situation affords little subject more than the occurrence of our own family. Indeed I regret less and less every year of my life the small commerce I have with the world, and particularly at this time of war and tumult. I could almost wish with Cowper for "a lodge in some vast wilderness" where I could hear no more of the contending horrid spirit that seems to pervade the whole earth. O' when will the blessed Gospel of peace actuate all hearts, when shall the meek and lowly spirit of the blessed Jesus prevail, when shall nations who call themselves Christians cease to hate and devour each other. It is a time for all the true followers of Christ to be much in earnest. For I believe the genuine spirit of vital piety is at a lower ebb than most people

are aware of. Christians are emphatically "not of the world." I am so circumstanced that (except when I go to Balt.) I do not hear a sermon, perhaps more than. . . . in a year, but the war. . . .

The Christian Observer too has been to me. O' what an inestimable treasure good Books are! Have you read Smith's Lectures address to the Clergy? They are most excellent. When I am with my beloved Mother we read a great deal. Our tastes exactly agree and religious reading is her chief amusement, but I have been deprived of that pleasure this summer. She grows in years and is very infirm. She felt afraid to undertake so long a ride. but I am not without hopes that if we all live and do well, I shall have her with me next summer. She wrote me in her last, that she had just entered on her 75th year. Every hour of her life seems now very precious, indeed it is very edifying to be with her, her age, piety, experience, together with her uncommon understanding, makes her an able instructress. Mamma has been spending a month or two with my Sister Rogers* who has lately had a very agreeable acquisition to her family by the marriage of her eldest son to a Miss Dulany, the daughter of the friend of heart who died some years ago and left her to my sister's care. Mary is a lovely amiable young creature, and I hope and trust her union with Henry may be as productive of happiness as the nature of humanity will allow, but I tell her there is sorrow in store for her as for every daughter of Eve. They are at present living with My Brother and Sister Rogers, but mean I believe to try house-keeping this winter or in the spring. I am entirely alone today (which is very unusual) and I am so disposed to chat with you my dear Kitty, that I fear I shall tire you with the minuteness of my detail. You having been once intimate in my sister's family, I concluded you would take an interest in the events of it. My Mary and her Brother Alexander are gone over to see their Aunt Thomas's* family who lives about 2 miles from us.

Doctor Murray is out on his professional duties, (of which he has had a great deal this Autumn) and my sons, James Brice and William Murray are both in Baltimore. I thank the Lord I can tell you we are all in good health; and that His goodness has compensated a great many of the sorrows of my former life by giving me a great deal of pleasure in the duty and affection of my dear children. I could tell. my dear friend, but the medium of pen and ink do not do, but I know it will. to know I am a much happier woman than I ever expected to be. I pray that the goodness of My God may bind my heart in thankfulness to Him forever.

It will give me true pleasure to hear particularly how you and every individual of your family are. My love to my dear Mrs. Nicholson.* I hope she still remembers me. I cannot express the pleasure it would give me to see you all. Tell me if you ever think of coming to Maryland. How much I regret the distance between us.

Remember me my beloved Friend in your addresses at the throne where the prayers of the faithful meet, and believe you have the tenderest interest in my heart at all times, with true unalterable affection,

H. Murray

*The year has to be 1813 as Harriet speaks of the good health of her family. Therefore this letter was written before her son, William, was wounded at

Bladensburg. Also she says her mother (Mrs. Hesselius) is going into her 75th year.

*Sister Rogers—Harriet's older sister, Rebecca Woodward.

*Aunt Thomas—Dr. William Murray's sister, Sarah.

*Mrs. Nicholson—Catherine Few's mother.

ms3245b02f05 107-108-109

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
forwarded by Miss Mary Few
Postmark—Baltimore, Apr. 25

Greenwich, 22 April 1814

My dearest Harriett

Do not ask me why I have not written to you before, could I tell you through what I have passed, how rejoiced I should have been to have laid my head on your faithful bosom and told you what it was impossible for me to write, what languor and inaction has in my mind succeeded to a tumult of contending feelings. I know you would say my earliest friend is still the same. She has not written because she does no long love me. My poor Frances, after an attachment to a young man* of singular talents and every way worthy of her, an attachment which had grown with their growth and increased with their years and after innumerable interesting and affecting circumstances arising from what I cannot here relate, was last summer thrown into the most heart render sorrow by his death, while engaged in his professional duties at the Lakes. He was but 26 years, a colonel in the army and high in the estimation of his country. What had opposed their union, through my interest with her Father, was nearly surmounted and he left this place confident of obtaining that prize which he fancied would have blessed his future days—but God saw otherwise, and I trust she is at last brought to a humble submission, but the conflict has been severe. —And ah my dear and precious friend, when calamity overtakes us, how consoling to say "I have washed my hands in [. . .?]," but when a consciousness of failure in duty haunts us—what regrets, what poignancy is added to sorrow—but you cannot comprehend my meaning.

There is one sentence in your last that I do not forget "I am a much happier woman than I ever expected to be" Dear Harriet, from what ever source this arises, I thank God that it is so. You have borne the yoke in your youth, the prophet says it is best that it should be so. May your last days be eminently blessed with smiles of divine providence and the rich harvest from experience of past be the sanctified use of present mercies.

I thank you for your observations on the Books which have interested you. The Christian Observer I do think is a very judicious publication. I too have for years past been very much pleased with it, and contrary to what is usual in most periodical publications I do not think it has in the least degenerated.

I am always glad to hear of the family Rogers welfare. I had early a very great respect and affection for her. How pleasing the circumstances that her young people have connected themselves so much to their parents satisfaction.

Now my dear Harriett I send you Mary, her visit is to you and her Aunt Montgomery. She has promised me not to return without seeing you. Put her in the best way of getting to you at West River and do not put yourself to any trouble to amuse her with visiting. She is used to retirement and very anxious to become acquainted with you and young [. . .?] be indulged with that is what I earnestly wish she may accomplish—She will answer all your questions respecting us, and happy shall I be if this visit our friendship to each other should be transposed to our children.

When I shall embrace you I know not, it would appear that I have not much to detain me at home, my family is not large—but Mr. Few has important business which continually occupies him and I do not like to leave him—but I often muse upon the prospect of a reunion to you and dear Christian friends who have entered the haven before but ah how much is to be done in and for us ere we are fitted for that blessed abode. May we know continually and in all circumstances that the Grace of Jehovah whether living or dying shall be sufficient for us, to that I commend you.

Believe me ever yours,

Cathae Few

Respectfully and affectionately remember me to your venerable and excellent mother, also to Doctor Murray and the young people.

*young man—John Chrystie, Col., commanding the 23rd Infantry, U.S. Army, died of “natural causes” at Fort George, 22 July 1813, following action in Dearborn’s Campaign there. He had earlier been involved, as a Lt. Col. of the 13th Infantry, in the “disastrous campaign” against Queenston, Oct 1812, and was accused privately of contributing to the defeat by disappearing at a critical moment. He received minor wound in the retreat. No formal charges were placed against him, and Chrystie subsequently advanced in rank. See David Stephen Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812*, Naval Institute Press, 2004 (p. 105).

ms3245b02f05 110-111-112

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River near Annapolis
Maryland

Greenwich, September 2, 1814

My dear friend

Having had the promise of a longer letter from you, when you last wrote, and having heard very particularly of you and yours by the return of my Mary, has in some measure been the cause of my delay in writing to you, but our late intelligence from Maryland makes us very desirous to know how far your dear Son* has been seriously injured in a wound we are told he received at the unfortunate affair of the destruction of our Capitol. Mary and myself with all the family are much interested in knowing the event and trust you may be preserved from any serious affliction on this account. Ah on what an uncertain and precarious tenure do we hold all our comforts here. I had just heard that my friend was in the bosom of one of the happiest families in the world, the

beloved and respected parent of the best and most affectionate of children, but I will not anticipate ill but trust that your blessings may be lengthened out and you and yours spared so many days of earthly bliss in the enjoyment of all that this world can give.

I find these visits, tho they cannot be frequent, will be favorable to the promotion of the same affection we have so long experienced for each other, in the hearts of our children, therefore my dear Harriett let me beg you to encourage this intercourse as much as possible, and send them (that is your own) to see us. I will not be backward, I assure you I wish I could come myself and there is but one circumstance, except the situation of our Country, that makes it a difficult task. Mr. Few holds two offices and one of them is of great responsibility which ties him fast to New York, and I do not like to leave him, but if we should be favored with peace, and may the Lord grant it, I would endeavor to overcome every obstacle. It would cheer the heart of our poor Maria Montgomery too to have us with her. Her affliction in the loss of her little one has been great and her sensibility is of the tenderest kind.

We have had a very pleasant visit from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Nicholson, they staid with us three weeks, he is indeed a very clever fellow, wanting but the one thing needful and she is very amiable and affectionate. I regret that we live at so great a distance from so many that we love, but this is indeed a very imperfect state and we have much cause to be thankful that we have so many blessings in such a miserable world. The best enjoyments is to live much in the faith of things unseen. This I long for, this I pray for.— It is four years tomorrow since one of my fairest earthly possessions was laid low, one which gave every promise of future excellence. It pierced my inmost soul, and I think I can say the world has never since appeared to me what it was before that. You my Harriett bore the yoke in your youth, Jeremiah say it is good for us so to do, I was as a “bullock unaccustomed to it” but I trust my murmurings and rebellious are all forgiven for the alone sake of Him who bore our sorrows and carried our griefs and you have worked for your present and everlasting peace— and there remains to us both the blessed prospect of dwelling together where every tear shall be wiped from every eye. I should be glad to see dear Mrs. Thomas, Cousin Sally,* as I used to call her. Do my dear friend present my most affectionate remembrance to her and to your Doctor Murray also. Mary is naturally very reserved, but I am glad to find from her conversation respecting you all, and from the letters she has received from yourself and your dear Maryann, that she has overcome her diffidence and feels herself very much of a dear friend and relation to you and them.

I hope you will write soon and let us know how Mr. William Murray is,—I find we must not talk politics together. I am sorry for it. I should like to think with union on all interesting subjects. One point our prayers will agree and oh may they ascend with acceptance— that god will bless us, and continue to make our land as it has been for 30 years past eminently the seat of civil and religious liberty—but don't be out of humor with your old friend Dear Harriet for thinking a little more partially, every one of your children who has proved himself a gallant soldier and call himself a republican: May the Lord bless him and restore him to his family and country. Poor Mary's appetite was lost for her

dinner and her eyes run down with tears when she heard of this sad disaster. She loves you all very much, and says she spent her time most happily with her mother's dear and earliest friend.

Believe me yours my dear Harriett most affectionately,

Catha Few

* dear son—William Murray, wounded at the battle of Bladensburg.

* Cousin Sally—Dr. William Murray's sister.

MSA SC 2301-2-19

[The postmark to this letter has been cut out by someone in the past (probably a stamp collector), and by cutting out the postmark, they also cut part of this letter. However whoever did this put a date at the top of the letter, Sept 11, 1814.]

Sept 11, 1814

[To: Catharine Few]

I have accused myself numberless times of a breach of promise to you my beloved friend in not writing; and had determined not to let this day pass without doing it, when your acceptable favour was put into my hand. The sympathy of those we love is particularly gratifying in affection and I found your dear letter acted like a cordial to my spirits.

It is indeed true that my beloved William was severely wounded in the Battle of Bladensburg.* A bullet passed into his side just above his hip and another through his ankle, and the third* (which nearly deprived me of his precious life) broke his leg in a most dreadful and serious manner, in which state he was taken prisoner, and from Wednesday until Friday lay without the assistance of a surgeon, or any dressings to his wounds. It is almost miraculous his leg will be saved, although in that mangled state they were obliged to move him more than thirty miles over a very rough road. It excited scarcely any fever. . . . and his spirits have been invariably good. There has been much mercy mixed with this bitter cup; and I trust the gracious hand which inflicted the chastisement will bring good out of evil. I cannot describe to you the horror which took possession of my mind on the day of the Battle. We were within the sound of the guns, and every explosion seemed literally to go thro' my heart. In vain I strove to comfort myself with the possibility that my dear child had escaped unhurt. I could feel no assurance after 48 hours suspense, my terrible forebodings were realized by the account of his having been wounded and taken prisoner. The village where he was, being in possession of the British and full of wounded soldiers, rendered it impracticable for me to go to him. His Father and Brother went and staid until the surgeons insisted on his being moved to Baltimore where he now is and where his Sister is attending him. He has insisted on not seeing me. He thought it would agitate him more than his spirits could bear. I therefore have complied with his request until he wishes me to go to him. This my dear friend is a short sketch of a tale of woe that has cost me many severe pangs; and happy should I be could I think that in this event my sorrows occasioned by the war would have a period; but I still have two sons whose lives are equally dear who will in all human probability be equally exposed to danger. I acknowledge I have nothing the Spartan Mother about me. Neither

do I feel any ambition that my Sons should be signalized in achieving any of the honour and glory that is merely of this world, particularly those that are acquired by spilling the blood of their fellow creatures or of hazarding their own lives. Indeed every precept of the Gospel is so directly opposed to the spirit of war and discord that I have no idea how it is possible a real Christian can countenance it.

You say my dear Kitty that we must not talk politics. I think we could without materially differing. If I mistake you not, you are a lover of peace, if so, you must certainly lament the horrid state our poor country is thrown into. May God speedily put an end to blood shed, and let his blessed religion of humanity and peace cover the earth.

Bless My dear Mary Few, I do most sincerely love her, and nothing the less for the kind concern she has expressed for my poor dear Boy, upon a more intimate acquaintance I do not think she would find him unworthy of her sympathy. I do indeed cherish the hope that there will be an intercourse kept up between our families. My children want no inducement to visit New York; but these are not times for pleasure. Do come yourself my Dear. If Baltimore is spared I hope we may meet there one of these days. I do most sincerely condole with Mrs. Montgomery on the loss of her dear child. I am sure it is a severe stroke for I have suffered in the same way. She has the consolation of knowing Infinite Wisdom has directed the blow.

I have. . . . a long time, you will I know excuse this. . . . My dear Mother (who has spent the summer. . . . I hasten to go to her in her own room. Give. . . dear Mary and tell her she must. . . . let her come to see us the next time.

We scarcely had any of her. . . .

Adieu,

I am made extremely unhappy this afternoon by information that a larger fleet. of more than forty sail having gone up the Bay, we fear to attack Baltimore. My dear James* is stationed at the fort in Nicholsons Artillery. Pity and pray for me my dear friend. I am indeed wretched.

[Harriet adds the following note along the side of the letter:]

Until then he maintained his post and fought gallantly with two successive wounds. He was carried to a small house between Bladensburg and Washington; where he was found by accident by an acquaintance of his Fathers (who got leave from the British to go in search of some friend whom had fallen in Battle) or he might have suffered still more.

*Battle of Bladensburg—Daniel Murray, William's first cousin, and then living at "Melrose" on Bayard Rd near Lothian, Md, commanded a small local force, probably including William. He drew 14 cavalry swords and 30 pistols from John Shaw, the armorer, at Annapolis, which he returned two days after the battle.

*James—James Edmund Brice, Harriet's son by her first husband, Edmund Brice.

ms3245b02f05 113-114-115

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River, near Annapolis
 Maryland
Postmark—Annapolis, Md. Sept 30th

Greenwich, September 23, 1814

My dear Harriett

You have been sorely tried, but I hope the Lord has been with you in the furnace, and the "thornbud may have a bitter taste, yet sweet will be the flower." This I trust will be the gracious result of all your past and present sorrows.

I this day have had the pleasure of hearing from your dear William thro Maria Montgomery who dwells with enthusiasm on his virtues his gallantry and misfortunes. May God bless the dear youth and long preserve his precious life. She tells me he is doing well, tho his confinement is likely to be tedious. Your dear James has also been the case of a merciful providence, tho greatly exposed if in the Fort during the dreadful bombardment. —Ah —what anguish must you have experienced. These are indeed solemn times and earnestly do I plead that the Lord would restore to us peace and national prosperity. Yes my dear I am a lover of peace. My principles and my nerves equally prohibit my approving of War and the horrors attached to it—for even victory has its horrors—yet we as Citizens of a free country have precious rights and privileges that we are bound in duty to preserve—that these rights were invaded I have never heard even Anglo Americans deny. That the time to assert them had arrived is the principal circumstance of difference. The present, at any rate, is the moment in the providence of God in which we are called to contend for them. Therefore I can, I do pray for every precious life exposed in this contest, with an ardor, which I have never known, but when pleading for the immortal souls of those who are dear to me. I believe the Lord is humbling us and has humbled us, greatly humbled us in our own eyes and in the sight of all the nations, by the manner in which we have abused the privileges he has conferred on us and which have been principally used in opposition to every measure of our own government—but my dear Harriett I feel the confidence of faith that the God of all mercy has not forsaken us, nay I believe that his omnipotent arm will yet be displayed wonderfully for us and that His people who love their Country, I am sure that is a christian virtue, will yet raise their Ebenezers in praise to him as their deliverer. America has been an asylum from its first rise, for the oppressed of other nations. Its laws secure great privileges to the stranger. The Church is free from all ecclesiastical tyranny,—and I think, notwithstanding our present depression, great things are intended for this nation. To Men I am not attached, the best of them have sinister, have selfish views,—but however we are reviled, and humbling to say, reviling each other—still we are not forsaken and I trust and believe the God of Israel will be yet manifest as our Glory and our defense. There is a remnant among us, whose heart and eyes are lifted up to heaven, and let us my dear, cordially unite in this at least that the kingdom of grace may come here with power and that multitudes in this favored land, still highly favored, may fly as a cloud and flock as doves to their windows. All things

seem to be hastening to that great event when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. In the mean time you and I my love shall be gathered to our Fathers. Here never shall any asperity arise to mar our friendship, there all shall be harmony. Our hopes full of immortality anticipate the blessed day, not for distant, when years of separation shall return no more—when we shall with adoring gratitude bless God for the way in which we have been led to our Father's house and bless him "most for the severe."

I delivered your message to Mary. She says she has wrote very lately and begs to be most affectionately remembered to her dear Aunt Murray. Her friend Maryann I find is in Baltimore. Dear Girl, she has had no doubt an afflicting time, may every blessing be the lot of you and yours dear Harriett, and soon may your dear Son be restored to your prayers. You wish not for him the honors and glory that is merely of this world, but you cannot but be pleased to know that he enjoys the approbation of his own mind and the sympathy and best wishes of his Country.

You tell me your dear Mother is not well. My poor Mama also is exceedingly indisposed today and yesterday was quite ill. They have nearly finished their course. Great will be our loss but infinite their gain. They I trust will both have an abundant entrance into the rest remaining for the people of God. My respectful love to dear and venerable Mrs. Hesselius, to Doctor Murray and Mr. Alexander.* Also I beg to be remembered and am my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

Cathae Few

*Mr. Alexander—Harriett's youngest son (Alexander John Murray).

MSA SC 2301-2-20

[The following letter is missing conclusion page or pages. The date is determined by the content of the letter, reference to Harriet Murray's Mother's age and reference to the War of 1812.]

1814

To: Mrs. Catharine Few

I promised some time ago My Dear Kitty that I would soon write to you; and I have upbraided myself for not doing it before; but the truth is, I have had nothing pleasing to communicate; and you have lost nothing by my silence. There is now an excellent private opportunity offers to your city, and I am determined to scratch a few lines, as I think it will give you some satisfaction to hear we are all still in the land of the living. Indeed I feel it a peculiar mercy that I can tell you so at this time; as it is a time of much sickness and death in our neighbourhood. Many are gone into eternity who appeared subjects of long life. There has been an epidemic prevailed for some weeks which has proved fatal in a great many instances; but thank God neither any of my family or particular acquaintances have fallen victims to it. The labouring class of people have been the greatest sufferers. But all humanity is interested in calamities of this kind, and it becomes us who are spared to humble ourselves in the dust before God for his mercy, and to strive to make a better use than ever of the times that yet remains.

I have the satisfaction of my dear Mother's society this Winter, (with two lovely Nieces) which is a great support to my feeble spirits. Mamma was prevented returning to Baltimore, her usual winter quarters, by the Town being subject to continual alarms from the British, and her advanced time of life, she thought it would not do, which determination has made much in my favour; for at the age of 75, I find her a most delightful companion. We read a great deal together, and never find the time heavy. I am much indebted to your dear Sister Montgomery for a Vol. of Adams Sermons which she lent me. We have read them with great pleasure and intend going over them again. Now I wish I was within reach of your library. I have a particular desire to read Romaine's works and more pleased with the Christian Observer. It is a treasure. We have a few late numbers which I have read with great pleasure.

I congratulate you my dear friend on the prospect of peace. God grant it may be permanently established. I believe everybody is sick of this horrid war. I am sure I have need to be so. My beloved William has been confined to his bed for six months and there is no probability of his getting on his feet for many months to come; and what is worse, it is to be feared the long confinement will injure his health. This is dreadful; but is a light affliction compared with what some mothers have suffered from this contention, which make the best of it, will end just where it began. I pray they may be forgiven who have plunged us unnecessarily into so much evil. My dear Brice has just embarked for France, not to return till June, which will be a cloud over me until the time arrives.

My Alexander has left us to try his fortune in Allegany County, "to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow". Ask Mary if she does not feel sorry that such a clever creature as he is, should have not other resources? Perhaps it is better for him than a situation that would please him better. He is a gay volatile lad, and a City life would not be so safe for him. He will at any rate be out of the way of temptation to follies which young men are apt to fall into who live in Towns. I have only my daughter with me, of all my children. She is not very well. For the last two or three days she has had what they call the nettle rash, which is troublesome from its excessive itching, but no way dangerous, I believe.

My husband is much occupied in his vocation, which has not been little trying this very severe weather. I think of all professions a . . .

[page or pages missing].

ms3245b02f05 119-120-121

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock, West River
Maryland

Richmond Hill, August 8, 1815

There are some parts of your last letter my dear Harriett that I acknowledge were so repugnant to my own views and feelings that it has caused more reluctance than I have ever experienced in answering a letter of yours, but that friendship which has stood the test of many changes and survived the absence of many years, cannot now yield to difference of opinion tho on the most interesting subjects. I cordially unite with you in blessing God for his goodness to

this country in removing our national distress. I thank him also that your family, tho suffering in what ought to have been a common cause, have survived to bless you, and I hope your promising and amiable children may be long spared, the solace and comfort of your future days.

I regret that we did not see the Gentleman who brought your letter, indeed it would have given both Mary and myself great pleasure could we have contributed to render his stay in New York agreeable, but unfortunately we did not see him and knew not where to enquire for him. MaryAnn gave us some hopes that she would make New York a visit this summer. We flattered ourselves that perhaps her Brother William would have undertaken the journey with her and a change of residence from the City of Baltimore, to a beautiful and elevated spot near New York, might have contributed to have restored his health__. We now live, that is since the month of May, a short walk from the City in a noble and venerable Mansion, command a delightful view of the Hudson and the opposite Jersey Shore here, how glad should I be to welcome you or yours and tho it is late in the season, I might hope your dear children would come, were it not for one circumstance that might render it less agreeable to them. We have had two Cousins of mine staying with us this summer, Eleanor and Sally Nicholson, who are shortly to return to Maryland, at the earnest request of my dear Cousin Joseph Nicholson, whose recent affliction, renders a request from him, on that subject, equal to a command. I am about to permit Mary and Matilda to accompany the girls on a visit to Baltimore. He is very desirous of seeing them and I only wish that it were practicable for me to be of the party. I should then in addition to other pleasures, once more, see the friend of my youth, talk, and weep over the past, anticipate the future ah my dear there (?) are all our hopes, in futurity they center (?) is indeed a broken state of things: and I trust tho many hindrances prevent our reunion here our friendship will be perpetrated thro a blissful eternity.

Your Alexander did not remove to Allegany County, I suppose, as you expected, I hope he will do well, without going so far from you. Mary says that he is a charming young man, with whom we should be delighted. Ellen tells me is going to be married as she hears, and is still at West River. I hope your dear son, James has returned from Europe before this. The circumstances of his Birth has always rendered him very interesting to your friend. As far as I can hear my Dear Harriett you are very much blessed in your children, and it would give me heartfelt pleasure to be better acquainted with them.

I once purchased Romains works for you and they stand now in my library, tho the set has been broken with your name in them; however I do not know whether I should prefer to give them to you now. Perhaps he is too much of a sectarian to be profitable to all. We have been a subscriber to the Christian Observer for years. It is a most pious and judicious publication and as they are Englishman I feel no difficulty in overlooking their enmity to this country, of which in common with their countryman they appear to know little about.

I have been this summer on a visit to my friend, Mrs. Garretson, with whom you are perhaps acquainted. She married a Methodist minister from your state—there I met with your old friend "Bates on the attributes of God". I do not wonder that you were pleased with it. I could read but little in it, but

what I read I admired very much and read with much interest recollecting how much you admired it.

My paper prevents my proceeding, but I must not close without saying that Mary unites with me in the most affectionate remembrance to her dear Aunt Murray, I am delighted with the appellation. Did we live near together I should adopt your children as my own, and to MaryAnn, begging to be mentioned with respect to Doctor Murray. I am Dear Harriett yours as ever,

C Few

*Harriet Murray was opposed to the war with Great Britain and not satisfied with Pres. Madison's administration. The first paragraph of this letter shows Catharine is not pleased with her friend's attitude.

ms3245b02f05 122-123-124

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland
forward by Mr. Brice

Richmond Hill, Aug 25, 1815

Dear Harriett

I have had the unexpected pleasure of seeing your dear Son, and I do assure you the intercourse that is now opened with us, thro the medium of our children, is most grateful to me,— even your letters, welcome as they always were, have never brought you so sensibly to my recollection, since our long absence, as the sight of your amiable Son, whose chief pleasure, on his arrival to his native country, seems to be that it has relieved his Mother from anxiety and that he shall once more have the pleasure of embracing her:—tho, I am told he has another pleasure in prospect which he chooses to be more reserved in communicating—if report says true, my friend is going to be rich in daughters. May they be just such as her judgment and heart will approve but I feel a little jealous, I should have liked much to have given you one of my own— but providence and parents generally plan very differently.

Mr. Brice tells me that he hears Doctor James Murray* is very ill. He was so like my dear Father that I always felt a particular regard for him and I hope his latter end may be peace. O my dear, how constantly are we admonished, to "look at those things which are eternal", how fast is the fashion of this world passing away—but how hard to rise above its entanglements, first it has its allurements for ourselves, it revives in our anxiety for our dearer selves, it puts on a tempting appearance and notwithstanding our own painful experience, we are weak enough to expect something from its smiles to bless our Children. I know nothing in which I detect the deceitfulness of my own heart so sensibly, I know this is but one thing needful, and yet how languidly does my heart aspire to obtain this blessing for them, and on minor and earthly subjects, what hopes, what fears _____. Alas my dear Harriett how does a small acquaintance with our own heart convince us of our weakness and inconsistency. How happy to be enabled to see by faith the glory and grace of him who fulfilled all righteousness and to believe that in Him unworthy as we are, we are accepted.

Mary is going to write to her friend Maryann. I hope they will be much with each other, if Mary should go to Maryland this fall, which seems to be a thing pretty much determined on. I think their education must have been somewhat similar and therefore I flatter myself there is some similarity of character. My views on serious subjects, have so far prevailed that my Children have had very little intercourse with the gay world, that is in its gayest seasons—but tho in consequence, reserved at first, they are susceptible of the most affectionate feelings toward their relations and friends, and I know Mary regards your dear Girl in both those points of view.

If your excellent and venerable Mother is with you, do remember me most affectionately to her. In the lengthening out of her days, how much are her children favored. My respects to Doctor Murray and love to your Children and believe me my dear friend, Yrs most sincerely,

Cathae Few

(Aug 26) I send you my Dear Harriett the works of Romaine, had there been any new publications which I had thought equal to them, I should have preferred them, you must, if you are opposed to the writings of Calvinists, pass over those passages which are sectarian, I am sure you will find Dr. R__ a great judge of human nature, both in its fallen and renewed state in Christ. In these volumes, is the foundation and step stone—and walking by faith in the way he points out cannot but be safe and comfortable. I view my maker face to face. Oh! how shall I appear

*Dr. James Murray is Dr. William Murray's older brother.

ms3245b02f05 116-117-118

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock, West River
Maryland
Postmark—Jan 1

New York, December 30, 1815

My dear friend

You are by this time returned to your cottage, as you call it, and I hope are in the enjoyment of as much happiness as falls to the lot of Mortals, which blessed be God consists not in the abundance of what man possesses but in his favors which is life and better than life. I have not heard from you since your return from Baltimore. I hope Maria Montgomery was privileged to see you often. I think you would love each other if you were well acquainted. She complains much of the want of Heart Society where she is, and I think her capable of a sincere friendship and if my Harriett were to see her often, it might prove a blessing to Maria.

We find our Hill, with all its delights in Summer, but a dreary place in Winter. Every house and tree in view is covered with a pure white robe and the clouds thickening round us promise a deep snow. This used to be a pleasant appearance in former days, but lately our Winters have become milder and it

is only the prelude to wet roads and uncomfortable walking. I was about to say how pleasant would it be, while all is dreary without to have my Harriett and her family circle united with our own and placed around our comfortable fire-side; but this is visionary and while our young ones may indulge themselves in fancies of imagination and vain desires, it is more rational for us to anticipate and talk of a rest which remains for the people of God, thither I trust we are both hastening. O that you could animate your sluggish friend to press onward with more diligence to the heavenly mark, our encouragements are great for it is a bliss which the heart of man cannot conceive. One of its enjoyments will surely be the perfecting of those friendships which have had their spring in the love of God in whom is the centre of all blessedness, they who have praised him together on earth, who according to his command have borne each others burdens, who, while time and changes have done away worldly friendships, are united by the bonds of His own spirit, shall they not rejoice together in heavenly places where all that is imperfect shall be done away in the close of the present year give rise to some pleasing and many painful reflections.

Mary was disappointed in her journey South, but much flattered by the kindness of her friend Maryann who expressed much regret at not having seen her according to promise, well, I hope if it please the wise disposer of all events, next Spring may bring them together and your dear daughter will return with Mary and spend some time with her New York friends. I did not show Mary that paragraph of your letter addressed to Matilda and herself and she wondered why she was not permitted to see what her Aunt Murray had written as usual. I will tell you the reason Dear Harriett, because their knowledge that we had conversed on this subject might be a ban to the better acquaintance of our young folk at a future period. Was I not right?

I hope your Dear Sister Rogers, whose affliction my soul too well knows how to sympathize with, "which the present is not joyous but grievous." O how grievous—yet I hope the Lord is causing the sad dispensation to yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. to her and also to her family the [?] of her sorrow.

My dear friend, you once gave a friend of yours introduction to us, and tho I have often thought of it, I have always neglected to express my regret, that I had not the pleasure of seeing him, owing to his (Mr. Johnson) calling on us while I was out and my ignorance of his lodging in the City: a circumstance which I was very sorry for.

Farewell my Dear Friend, Believe me your most affectionately,

Cathae Few

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
 To the care of Doctor Wm. Murray
 West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark—New York 14th

New York, Aug. 12, 1816

Just as I was about to write to my Dear Harriett, I received your letter of the 31st. That you had not written before was no excuse for my silence. I love to hear from you but know many things occur to prevent and interrupt the only intercourse to which we are confined,—but our friends and acquaintance have rapidly passed and are passing onward to that state where friendship shall be perfected and often my beloved friend, in my happier moments, do I anticipate the time when we shall meet and part no more. How gracious is the Lord thus to wean his children gradually from a world, not intended for their home, and by faith, lead them to look through things temporal unto things eternal. How different our feelings, our prospects, our enjoyments now, to those we professed when last we saw each other. The ardor, the hopes of youth gone, succeeded by sorrows, by disappointments, and but behold, the goodness of our God. We would not have it otherwise. It has worked together for our good—we trust. All these shall lead to an [?] incorruptible undefiled end fading not away—Your Dear Sister! I did not hear of her great affliction tho it appears by your letter that her loss is not very recent. Is it not the same who some years since lost an only son—your letter mentioning that circumstance and relating the great faith and resignation she was enabled to exercise under that sad dispensation, was blessed to me, many months after I received it—I read it with sympathy at first, but afterward, when her sorrows were made my own and I became her Sister in tribulation—how did I pray to be assisted to emulate her submission and patience.

Frances is the only one of my Children now at home with me, Mary and Matilda went with their father to Philadelphia, who had business there. He left them with Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson and after staying a little while at Long Branch, I shall expect them all in New York. We have had a visit from your Nephew, Mr. Henry Murray. I read your letter to Frances and she interrupted me with two of her remarks which I told her I should repeat to you "Tell Mrs. M, mother, we have found out that Mr. Henry is a very clever fellow already". "No, no, the girls know too well to appreciate honorable scars ever to consider them as deformity"*—so my dear you see your dear interesting son has a double claim on our regard, and I regret very much that we were disappointed in not seeing him here. Do you know Mr. Carmichael of the E Shore, a nephew of Doctor Murray's? I am very much delighted with him. His wife is a very pleasing woman. They passed thro N. Y. to the Springs. I hope to see more of them on their return.

Mr. Addison* has been to see me two or three times. Your letter was written in Autumn, I did not receive it till the Spring—since which I have been endeavoring to cultivate an acquaintance with Mr. A and am obliged to you for a letter of introduction, but I see he is very diffident. He resides with a very clever English family that were neighbors of ours at Greenwich. He seems to

be an intelligent, agreeable, young man and I really hope he will give us an opportunity of forming a better acquaintance with him.

Are we not to see your dear daughter in New York this summer. Mary Few told me that was according to promise. Mr. Murray says he heard nothing [page cut] an arrangement. The weather is warm for [page cut] now, but give my love to her, tell her if she [page cut] up early enough to make us a visit and gives [page cut] time to return before the winter sets in they [page cut] accompany her to Maryland, if nothing [page cut] prevents. Do you know my Dear Harriett. I [page cut] great friend to these little jaunts, I think it [page cut] cheerfulness among young folks, and home is not left [?] for absence from it sometimes.

I do not know how I have got thro my letter, you will say, not without an abundance of mistakes, but I find this warm day has affected me very much, my hand trembles, and I feel hurried, I know not why, but my dear, dear friend will excuse it all, and believe me with the most affectionate remembrance to Doctor Murray and your children, in which Frances most cordially unites,

Yrs. most truly,

Catha Few

I have brought you in my debt very soon, but you shall not be obliged to write— yet as I said before I love to hear from you.

*Mr. Addison: Rev. Walter Dulany Addison

*deformity—William Murray was lamed at battle of Bladensburg.

MSA SC 2301-2-21

Mrs Catharine Few

New York Feb 16th, 1817

I am ashamed my beloved Friend when I think how long it is since I addressed a line to you. I have but illy requited you for your prompt reply to my last. Nevertheless, I am convinced could I acquaint you with the various reasons and feelings (which would indeed be impossible) which have prevented my writing, you would acquit me of blame. There has been no defect of the heart, be assured. My poor shattered mind has not been in a frame of epistolary communications these many months nor should I attempt it now. but that I cannot bear the idea of appearing ungrateful or unfriendly. You will not be at a loss to conjecture what has unhinged me when I inform you that, both my dear sons, James and William* are in Europe this winter, or what is worse, I have been uncertain whether they were not suffering all the perils and danger of a tempestuous winter voyage in returning to America. I cannot describe to you the wretched sensations I have suffered every hard wind, (of which there has been such numbers) and what a poor worthless creature I feel myself for not being able to commit my cause entirely to the Lord. I know it is my privilege to do it, and I have in so many instances experienced his mercy on similar occasions that it ought to encourage me to rely fully; yet I am miserably deficient, and my poor heart is kept on the stretch of anxiety too often about them. Why should I tell you of my troubles? I don't know how it is, but my letters have always more of the melancholy than the pleasant in them and of course I cannot be a desirable correspondent. My mind has that cast and I believe is more apt to retain and dwell upon subjects of that nature. This winter has been coloured

by the scene I passed thro' when I was last in Baltimore attending the death bed of my beloved friend, Mrs. Sophia Carroll* (the only child of my friend Mrs. Gough) and altho' her blessed spirit took a most peaceable and happy flight, yet the bereavement was such to those she left behind, that it could not be witnessed without exciting the most heart-felt grief, and making an impression not easily to be effaced. I hope my dear Kitty you and your dear family are in health, I have absolutely longed to hear something of you. I think my niece, Mary, might have favoured me with a few lines if you could not. My daughter, contrary to her usual custom, has spent this winter at Woodstock, happily for me, for I know not what I should have done without her. Her Cousins, Juliana and Elizabeth Murray* have been with us for some weeks and will remain until April. They are now at Mrs. Thomas's* or would join in love to your daughters, with whom I understand they are well acquainted. I am thankful I can say we are all well. I do not remember a healthier (or a colder) season. I think you good folks of New York must have had something to do to keep yourselves from freezing. I suppose you are some degrees colder there than we are here, and we have found it very severe.

When I wrote you before I forgot to thank you over and over again for making me acquainted with Romaine, who I read often with sincere pleasure. Mrs. Montgomery was so kind as to lend my Mother the *Life of Mrs. Graham* with which I was delighted. The book stores in Baltimore were searched in vain for a copy of it; it seems it was not printed for sale. I should like of all things to possess it and should you have a spare copy I must beg you when you have an opportunity to send it to me. This you'll say is making pretty free, but I know you will forgive me. You can't tell in my retired situation what a treasure a good book is.

I fear my dear you will be hardly able to decipher this scrawl. My pen is bad and my paper worse. It is the best offering your friend can make at present, and I hope you will accept it as a proof of my love, it having no other merit.

Mary Ann joins me in a great deal of love. She says she is afraid her friend Mary has forgotten her. She has been long a letter in her debt.

My very dear Friend, I am with true affection unalterably thine,

H. Murray

My husband reproves me for not sending his love, which I now add.

*James & William—It seems likely that they were accompanied by William Moylan Lansdale, who was the brother of Cornelia Lansdale, who married Philip Thomas. (This information comes from Maria Hornor Lansdale, *Two Colonial Families: The Lansdales of Maryland: the Luces of New England* [Philadelphia, May 1938, privately printed]. William T. Murray III may have a copy. There are books and microform in several libraries as per WorldCat September 2013).

*Mrs. Sophia Carroll—see note on Harriet's letter dated 5/24/1808.

*Juliana & Elizabeth Murray—Commodore Alexander Murray's daughters. (Dr. William Murray's nieces.)

*Mrs. Thomas—Sarah Murray Thomas, sister to Dr. Wm Murray.

ms3245b02f05 128-129-130

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 West River, Woodstock
 Mr. Brice

New York, Feb. 24, 1817

My dear Friend

My letter ought not to be very long at this time for it will be accompanied by a much more welcome visitor, and I should have no right to be affronted if it should for awhile be laid aside as an intrusion. Mr. Brice looks very well and I hope has been a successful voyager, glad should I be to hear that you would have no more anxious days and nights tho the winds and tempests may roar, on his account: O may it please a gracious providence to grant that the evening of your days may be rendered happy in the society of your children.

You mention the death of Mrs. Carroll in your last letter. I was immediately transported in idea to the days of her childhood, since which I have never seen her. What a darling was she then, what hopes, what prospects were then cherished as respected her future life. And I have heard, sanguine as they were, they have been realized, but what all the advantages now—had the pearl of great price been left out of the account. O my dear Harriett how monetary is this to us "There is but one thing needful"—Why is not the weight of that sentence more deeply impressed on our souls, why do we not cease with our anxious cares for this life and for ourselves and children be importunate for the blessings of that life which is to come. I never was more sensible of the rapidity with which time flies on. I think a City life tho possessing many advantages, is very unfriendly to the improvements of our souls in the best things, so many interruptions, company, business, and all summed up amounting to nothing that has really any importance attached to it, affords one but an affecting retrospect: Methinks I should rather like to be in the neighborhood of Woodstock, with one dear friend whose society would compensate for the absence of many City acquaintance.

How very opportune did you mention your wish to possess the life of our venerable Mrs. Graham, I shall now have an excellent opportunity by Mr. Brice of sending it to you. I did not see him till Saturday Evening. Sunday intervened, and this day we have a very tempestuous snow storm. I fear if Mr. Brice leaves us tomorrow morning early I shall be obliged to send you my own copy, which tho a little worn is perfect, should he not go so soon I will procure the less defaced: You must not mention your request as a freedom—it is a real pleasure to me when I have the privilege of obliging you in this way.

Mary I hope will find time to write to your dear daughter, I fear the girls are rather more occupied in parties and pleasure than is for their true interest, but I know receiving letters from her friend, MaryAnn, makes one of Mary's chief enjoyments. She and Frances both expect to make a visit to Maryland this spring. The pleasure Mary expects in seeing you all at your Cottage, as you call it, is anticipated as one of the principal delights. I hope they will return accompanied with your dear girl. Next to seeing yourself it would give me the greatest pleasure to embrace her.

I said something about not troubling you with a very long letter, but you see how I am running on. I must add that I wish to be remembered very affectionately to my Cousins, your good husband, and Mrs. Thomas, the remembrance of Mrs. T's kind attention to me, while I was an inmate at her house at West River I shall ever cherish.

You say nothing in your last of your dear Mother, from that I suppose she is not with you, but I hope she is well.

I commend you and yours my Dear [?] the blessing of God And believe me with love, ever yours,

Cathae Few

I have bad ink and and much hurried. I ought to beg you to excuse my letter. My Dear Friend, Look at the latter part of the Irish and sacred melodies and you will find some thing that will please you. I ought to apologize for the Vol, but I could not get them bound separate.

CF

ms3245b02f05 131-132-133

Mrs. Harriett Murray
West River, Maryland
avored by Miss Few

New York, March 18, 1818

My dear friend

How so long an interval has been suffered to take place without my hearing from you, or writing to you I cannot account for. Yet I will not attribute it to any thing on my own part but a listlessness in writing which I have found real upon me as age advances, but totally distinct from any indifference to those I have loved and still love with the affection I bare them in the days of my youth, more especially you my dear Harriett live in my most tender recollections. I am sensible that there has been much congeniality in our feelings and pursuits and that our lot has not been cast together is one of those, to us, perverse things, which tho just, and right is constantly occurring in this dark state, and were it not so transient we should find it more difficult to submit to. As it is we have nothing to do but to commit ourselves and each other to infinite wisdom who will finally make darkness light before us and crooked things straight. I have many, many mercies some sorrows, some humblings, the last chiefly from a knowledge of my sinful self, which brings me low indeed; but in letters we cannot detail, nor perhaps is it best we should. I am often checked when I think O how I should like at this moment to pour out my heart to this or that dear friend and graciously admonished to turn to Him who says "cast all your care upon me".

Frances has at length determined to visit her Aunt* in Baltimore that, and a hope of seeing you my dear friend and her cousin Mrs. Rebecca Nicholson (with whom she truly sympathizes, and to whom she is much attached) is the only inducement she has to take this journey. For several years she has secluded herself from the gay world entirely and has deeply felt the blight of

early sorrow and disappointment.* I think you will find her intelligent, possessing a considerable degree of independence of character and in her habits of reading and thinking much like ourselves. And I am thankful to add she has quite recovered the natural cheerfulness of her mind. Yet notwithstanding a circumstance I once explained to you, has given a cast to her character which I am well persuaded will remain with her thro' life, and has rendered her very indifferent to general Society.

Mary, this winter, has been much troubled with an inflammation in one of her eyes and that is the cause that she has not written to her friend Maryann. We were disappointed in not seeing her last summer. I hope she and Frances, with Miss Rogers, will make an arrangement to come on together when Frances returns. To your dear daughter I need say nothing about her residence while in N Y—this must be her home, but to Miss Rogers, who is a little more of a stranger it may be necessary to assure her that I flatter myself she will permit me to have the pleasure of her company also. It will be indeed a real gratification to me, to see the daughter of my dear Mrs. Rogers as an inmate in my house.

My dear Harriett, I am very much hurried, and have only time to request you to remember me with much affection to Doctor Murray and your children all of them

I am with the most sincere love, truly yours,

Cathae Few

* Aunt in Baltimore—Maria Nicholson (Mrs. John Montgomery).

* sorrow and disappointment—This is a reference to the death of Frances Few's friend, John Chrystie, who was a young Colonel serving at the Lakes when he died. See letter dated April 22, 1814.

ms3245b02f05 134-135-136

Mrs. Murray

To the care of Doctor William Murray

West River, near Annapolis, Md.

rec'd in Baltimore

Postmark- New York, July 18

July 1, 1818

My dear friend, long dear, but rendered still more so by the sweet intercourse we have lately enjoyed thro the medium of our children. Frances has returned, and we have spent hours in conversing of the dear family at West River, sometimes I feel inclined to give you an extract from her journal, intended for her Sisters only which will say more for her enjoyment while with you than I in my own language can communicate. She has profited very much herself, by her jaunt. For 5 years past she has had very little to say to any person out of her own family, and tho latterly often cheerful, yet absolutely precluding all gayety. but I think she is herself entirely. Tell dear doctor Murray, whom I used to call Cousin Billy, that a mother's heart is gratified by his kind partiality, and I fondly hope and verily believe, that with the blessing of God upon our children, that the principles they possess, tho they cannot secure them from adversity, will bring them honorably through all changes, so that neither yours or mine dear Harriett will every bring the glow of shame on the cheek of parental love. It is a mercy to be able to say thus far, with humble confidence, as it re-

spects this world,—God grant us a still greater privilege, of knowing that their interests for Eternity are safe. Some of mine have met with disappointments which I hope will in the end be sanctified, if so, there is nothing to regret.

I find our taste in reading continues similar. Is that not a pleasure? I reflect upon it in this manner, tho we have been long absent, The Lord has been leading us through different paths to meet at last, in his high way of holiness, I do admire Chalmers exceedingly—he admirably unites the sublimely and simplicity of the Gospel in his discourses.

I saw much of yourself in the Miniature of your dear Maryann was so good as to grant a look of, but your Son William conveyed more impressively the youthful countenance of my friend to my imagination.

I will reserve a part of my letter for the journal, the subject occupies 2 or 3 pages of a large book, in which I see your well known hand and I have transcribed here and there a passage because I thought it would be gratifying to my friend. Altho it is a perfect theft, and we must say no more about it hereafter. Remember me my Dear Friend to Doctor Murray and all your dear children, I am with sincere love yours,

Catha Few

Extract

“Variety is the charm of life”. Never was there a greater contrast than between this peaceful, frugal, religious family, and the gay and splendid family at Wye, I hear no longer the noise of different games, or the sound of the violin etc.—My slumbers this morning were disturbed not by [?] but by a summons to prayer, and the day has past in reading, conversation and walking. “A* is a charming fellow. I admire him exceedingly, but in spite of his cheerful air, there is something of melancholy about him, his brow is not unclouded with care.— Mr. A reminds me of [Du Vernow?] bold, honest, independent and sometimes so cutting, his conversation is so peculiar and so pleasing”. Aunt M, for so she bids me call her, is every thing I could wish her, has a [torn, ildness?] and melancholy about her which united to her [torn] of devotion makes her appear almost a [torn] her. And I love Mary Anne too, her noble [torn] independent and affectionate spirit must always [?] my admiration and my love. Towards A I feel a great drawing. I hope he will be happy. Could you see Mr. B* in the midst of his family, you would be delighted, so kind, so tender. They really seem to adore him. “Brothers noble, generous spirit”. MA* says and she bring tear mounts to her eye while she speaks of him. ”

“Doctor M gives me the idea of one who has lived his happiest days. He is good and amiable and quite lover like to his wife” —

“ Tomorrow I leave this dear family. I feel as if I was to part with old friends. Farewell to Woodstock, often shall I revert to thee with pleasure, often shall I recall the days spent with thy amiable and interesting inhabitants”

*A—Alexander John Murray (b. 1793–d. 1843), youngest son of Harriett and William Murray.

*B—James Edmund Brice (b. 1784–d. 1827), Harriett’s son by her first husband, Edmund Brice.

*MA—Mary Anne Caroline Murray (b. 1789–d. 1836), daughter of Harriett and William Murray.

ms3245b02f05 137-138-139

October 10, 1818

[To Harriet Murray]
My dear, dear friend

I this morning received your very interesting letter and hasten to answer it at your request. I will first of all apprise you that no other has seen or shall know the contents of it but yourself, myself only.*

Believe me, I was most sincere, when I affirmed my ardent wish that our friendship should be perpetrated by our children. It seemed from circumstances to be exceedingly desirable, particularly as the wise but mysterious providence of our God has made a very unmerited difference in outward circumstances—but it has happened as most of our plans do in this life, adverse to our expectations, at least so I fear. Bear with me while I give you a little sketch of poor F's early misfortunes. When about 16 years old she became acquainted with a youth* possessed of every fascinating accomplishment of person and mind, but thoughtless and unsteady in the pursuits of literature and business which had been chosen for him by his parent, who was a particular friend of my own. F's father early determined against this union and opposed it with a uniform steadiness for years. Their attachment was ardent and unceasing. She was submissive to her fathers will, but always cherishing a hope that a superior genius and address, on the part of her lover in a professional line would one day or other surmount all objections. He at length told her he had determined not to live in the same place and circumstances so painful and so mortifying—left N Y and entered the Army. The War broke out, he was distinguished, and tho but 25 obtained the commission of Lt. Col. He returned to this City renewed his addresses—had some hopes of success* and was ordered to the Lines. The anguish F suffered at this time was almost more than she could bear, from the fear of her parents refusal as last and anxiety for a life so dear and so exposed, her health suffered and I really was in the greatest trouble myself lest she should sink under the trial. But O what a dreadful one awaited her. She heard the news of his death (from a poor thoughtless creature) while absent from home, where I had persuaded her to go that her harassed mind might be cheered by society of friends. She was brought home to me in a state of distraction, laid on a bed convulsed. -----
-----but I cannot proceed, suffice it to say my beloved friend that it is a period of my life I can never review but with anguish and reprove. Be not surprised at this last expression. There is more in this tale of misery than I can probably communicate to you. Several years have elapsed. She has become pious. So far this great affliction has been blessed, but until her visit to Maryland she has never been persuaded even to visit only in the family of him whose Mother she always calls her Mother. Her cheerfulness. since her return home has been a circumstance of joy to us all. We think her jaunt worked wonders for her and have been thankful for it. But I am very sure her heart would be pained did she know the subject of our present communication for I do not think it has entered her thoughts that she has excited any other than a general interest in a family that are exceedingly dear to her.

Your letter was received by me before the young people were up and therefore can give rise to no curiosity.

And now my beloved friend, let me add I can scarcely forgive you for your concluding observation "you have betrayed no weakness"—why should we not speak on all subjects without reserve that are interesting to us. I am sure I shall feel no difficulty, and if you wish me to say or act any further on this let me know. I wish her united to one worthy of her and frankly confess I lately had hopes that she would have connected herself to one whose profession would have enabled her to extend her sphere of usefulness in the present life, but that hope has entirely vanished and I desire to leave her and all my children with submission to the will of God. You cannot know and I hope you never will know what I have suffered on this subject. You cannot know, because you have never had to conflict with a heart, in its natural state; so desperately wicked.

Mrs. Gough has been in this City and on a visit to Mrs. Suckley,* a friend of mine who lives in the neighborhood of my Mother and who invited her to dine with Mrs G, but she was in town passing the day with me. I hope both Mama and myself will have the happiness of seeing her on her return from Saratoga.

I bid you adieu my beloved friend renewing the assurance of my affectionate love,

Catha Few

*Harriett's letter must have been destroyed.

*youth—John Chrystie, died July 1813.

*had some hopes of success—from events relating to which Mr. F and myself seemed favorable to his wishes.

*Suckley—The family descendants built Wilderstein in Rhinebeck, N.Y. Margaret "Daisy" Suckley was a close friend of President Franklin Roosevelt. See Ali Caron, "Margaret 'Daisy' Suckley" (2012), online at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum website.

MSA SC 2301-2-22

Mrs. Catharine Few

Oct. 29, 1818

I little thought my beloved Friend when I last wrote to you, that my next communication would be that of the deepest affliction. It has pleased God to bereave me of one of my strongest ties to earth by the death of my precious and much beloved sister Rogers,* a loss deplored by all who knew her, how much more by those of her family. To you my dear who have some knowledge of her character it will be unnecessary to say that the chasm made by her loss can never be filled up. Yet her friends have every consolation that the death of a Christian can afford, for she died in the Lord, and as long as she could articulate she testified of her hope in him. She lived the life and died the death of the righteous! I acknowledge my regrets are altogether selfish, but nature will have her pangs.

*When such friends part,
'Tis the survivor dies!*

My saint like Mother stands the shock as one that looks far beyond the world and draws great consolation from the anticipation of a happy re union

where parting shall be no more forever. Whilst I have to cry out Lord increase my faith, subdue my will and give me to see a Father's hand in all thy afflictive dispensations. I do not believe my Mother had one rebellious thought or wish on the occasion contrary to the Will of God. She said with the acquiescence of holy Job "The Lord gave and Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

My blessed Sister's health has been for some time in a declining state, but her last attack was sudden and unexpected, but it pleased God that she retained her senses to the last which was a great comfort to her friends.

I received your letter in answer to my last, but my mind is in such a state that I can say nothing in reply. When I get back to my own home, and I have become more tranquil, I hope to write to you again.

Do my dear excuse this incoherent miserable scratch. I love you or I would not write at this time.

Adieu Dear friend of my heart. May God bless and prepare you for every event of this uncertain life prays your Affectionate

H. Murray

Give my love to the dear girls.

*Sister Rogers—Rebecca Woodward (Mrs. Philip Rogers).

ms3245b02f05 140-141-142

Mrs. Murray
Woodstock, West River near Annapolis
Maryland

New York, November 6, 1818

My dear Friend

How sad were the contents of your last letter, I know your dear Sister* was no ordinary chain in the social link, she was admired and respected by all who knew her, and how great the chasm in those hearts when she lived as one identified with themselves, but let me recall the sentence, she lives there still and if memory is possessed by the glorified saints, you live in her affections still. My dear Harriett, our hope is full of immortality—very soon "for what is our life but a vapor" you shall be reunited to her, and never again experience the parting conflict—

"Waiting pilgrim patient stay. In thy mouldering house of clay cheerfully thy path pursue, Blest eternity in view, let no anxious thoughts arise, God is righteous, just and wise. All the promises are thine, legacy of Love divine."

Thus my dear are we permitted to comfort one another. The Cup goes around—Blessed be God we drink it not to the dregs, that was the portion of him who exclaimed "Why hast thou forsaken me"—But the gates of everlasting life were opened for us when Jesus obtained the victory. Whither are we, who love the Lord, rapidly following each other—gathering to our Fathers.—I trust the anguish of your spirit is in some degree allayed, for as you say nature will have its pangs—Ah, my rebellious heart, knows but too well what that means—yet humbled to the dust,—let us consider—let us praise our God to—

the breaking those ties, "close twisted with the. . . ." I trust I do not feel one rebel murmur at the dispensation. . . . a thorough conviction, that whatever Divine Wisdom orders is right, that I dare not but acquiesce. And I trust my most fervent prayer will be heard, that God may sanctify my sorrows, and prepare me, by his grace to suffer all his righteous will with a holy submission. I left my blessed Mother in a state of composure and tranquility beyond what I could possibly have imagined. I have been with her in many sore bereavements, and seen her heart tried to the utmost, and I can with truth say I never saw the power of Divine grace shine so conspicuously in anyone as in her. She has passed thro' the furnace and has come through like pure gold. She is a woman of exquisite feeling and keen sensibility, which makes the conquest over nature the more striking. She has two children left out of twelve.

As to the subject of a former letter My Dear Kitty, I have nothing more to say, than to beg it may remain as if it had never been mentioned, perhaps if I had weighed the matter as I have since done, I should not have communicated. . . to you. (which to a friend so dear seem'd like second th conscious to many it might appear like grea to have ever entertained an idea of this. . . . of fortune in eye of the world, in ge. everything. but to those who can discern a character such as the one in question. more valuable. However, there are many. . . into consideration so weighty a subject. importance so I deem it that I should best. my vote on such an occasion, even where th. the. most flattering. I shall not make him unhappy him anything about it and the tranquility of her will never be disturbed by me or mine. I love her and I hope and trust she will be eventually as happy as she deserves to be.*

I owe my dear Frances a letter and wi. I can with more pleasure to myself, write to her. Please to give my kindest love to her and dear Mary. fear has almost forgotten us. I left my daughter with her afflicted cousins who were desirous to having her a little longer. She intends home after Christmas. Tell Frances she would be grieved to see poor Sophia.* I think she would scarcely know her.

. rested me when I wrote to you again love to tell you it would have given her great would have spent more time with you. She considerable benefit from the saratoga water. her way home and Has been much indisposed poorly when I came away. written enough to tire you my dear friend. as often as you can, your letters are Ere Most tenderly and affectionately yours,

H. Murray

*This paragraph is the beginning of some matchmaking that Harriet is doing promoting James Edmund Brice and Frances Few. This becomes very evident in a later letter (6/15/21).

*Sophia—Sophia Rogers (daughter of Rebecca & Philip Rogers), Sophia DeButts.

ms3245b02f05 143

New York, Feb. 4, 1819

[Catharine Few to Harriet Murray]
My Dear friend

What shall I say to you and how shall I apologize for leaving so long unanswered your very affectionate and interesting letter. You will hardly believe me when I complain of the hurry of a city life and tell you at the same time that I do not visit half a dozen families, but it is a truth that time is consumed in the most unaccountable way and the best purposes are deferred.

I was glad to observe from your last to Frances that your spirits had in some degree recovered from the very great shock they have recently experienced. There is indeed so much consolation to sustain us in the loss of a dear Christian friend that we ought to weep as tho we wept not—we ought to—ah how great the effort—nature cannot triumph thus—it is grace alone—it is by the mighty power of our sympathizing and divine High Priest who himself was made perfect thro sufferings. It is his power and love that can sustain

[The rest of this letter is missing from the scans sent from the Hargrett Library.]

ms3245b02f05 144-145-146

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock, West River near Annapolis
Maryland
Postmark—New York, Sep 16

New York, Sep. 15, 1819

My dear friend,

There had, as you observe, been so long a pause in our communication, that, not knowing how to account for it, I felt rejoiced to receive a letter from you once more. I thank you for your kind and affectionate enquiries about my family, some of us early in the summer were weak and debilitated, but through the tender mercies of our God we have returned, the latter end of July, from a very pleasant excursion in Jersey and the western part of this state much improved by our jaunt. I think we should certainly have gone southwardly were it not, that the only season in which we can conveniently leave home, is that period, when it is not so healthy to travel in that direction and O how pleasant would it be to enjoy your society once more on this side the grave. Frances often says to me Dear, dear Mrs. Murray—Mother, how you would love her—Well, my Harriett I do love you—and a few more passing days, and tho we should never meet in this world, will bring us, we humbly hope, to that blissful rest where friends shall never part, and sorrow never enter.

I am glad to find that Doctor Murray and yourself have a union of taste in religious reading. It is a great blessing to both, and is one of the most pleasant of our domestic enjoyments. I speak from experience—I was very much pleased with Milner Church History. He is rather too much of the high church man, for Mr. Few, who prefers [Haweis?] which we read after the other.

I am sorry to hear that your dear Mother can no longer make you her annual visit. This must be a great privation to you. How affecting to witness the gradual decay of one so dear, but I check myself while writing this last sentence.—There is something elevating in contemplating the aged Christian, tho imperceptibly sinking beneath the pressure of infirmity and weight of years. They are on the threshold of eternal blessedness. They are anticipating and that often with the rapture of hope, the reunion to beloved friends. They will soon be conducted to their Father's house, and behold his reconciled countenance forever lifted up on them.

With you, my Dear friend, I can say, my views and desires, are, as to this world, circumscribed within a narrow circle, and it is a part of that wisdom that cometh from above to know that, however it may allure, it has nothing to give—Our inheritance is above—and so far as we enjoy an evidence of this we have a sure consolation, and a present peace—but it is a peace, that the world cannot bestow.

We hear much talk of the Yellow Fever in this City—but there seems no alarm, except among those who live in the lower part, near to wharfs and crowded places. I hope it will please God to avert this dreadful calamity. We are thronged with Foreigners and poor creatures it would be a scene of desolation with them were its ravages extended.

Mary Anne will I hope write soon to her friend Frances, who is now returned from all her country excursions for this season. Mrs. Wright and Mary Nicholson are at present with us waiting for a passage to Europe. This occupies my daughters a little more than usual, but Frances says, she does not mean to make any excuse about writing to you, tho she cannot bear you to think that she is in your debt, for that would have been inexcusable, considering the length of time that has lapsed since she answered your last letter.

Remember me affectionately to Doctor Murray and all your Dear Family and believe me my Dear Friend with tender love, yours,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-24

[To: Catharine Few]

Nov. 11, 1819

I have to thank you my beloved Friend for your acceptable favor rec'd some time since. I will not pretend to apologize for its laying thus long unanswered; only acknowledge that it ought not; but I have so little energy in my nature that I too often debar myself of what gives me the greatest pleasure for want of exertion to "push my purpose to resolve". Alas! what pleasure can such a correspondent as I am give my friend, the first sentence begins with complaints. You will forgive me for it I know, and I will strive to do better.

Then I will sing of mercies. I am thankful it is in my power to inform you that after so eventful a summer, I can say we are all in the land of the living, and in our usual health. There has been no breach made by death either in our own particular family circle, or our connections. The yellow fever made

great ravages in Baltimore, where some of my greatest earthly treasures lay, but divine mercy shielded them from the pestilence. In one instance most singularly, a gentleman, who wrote in the same Bank with my precious James, fell a victim to that dreadful disease, (a father of a dependent family); and yet he was spared, I trust to be as eminent a servant of God as he has ever been distinguished for his love and duty as a son. It has been a trying season to my aged and beloved mother, her nerves and spirits are at best but weak; and the distresses of her fellow mortals always took deep hold on her feelings. The encampment for the poor inhabitants that fled from the Point, was immediately opposite to Mr. Roger's* house and were continually coming over, begging for necessaries and lamenting their distresses, so that her mind was kept forever on the stretch and almost proved too much for her. I am of all things anxious to be with her and have been expecting to go from week to week, for a month past; but have been prevented by William Murray's* detention by business in Baltimore, who was to come down to escort me up. However tomorrow is the day he has at length fixed and I hope in a few days I shall be there from whence I propose writing to my dear Frances* to whom I feel more indebted than I can express for her last charming letter and the excellent little book accompanying it. Give as much love from me as she will accept, and tell her how much obliged to her I am.

My dear Kitty, if I did not presume much on your affection for me I would not send you this incoherent, incorrect, scratch of a letter, but I know that any expression of your regard is dear to me, therefore I venture this.

My Husband and children join in best love to you and yours. My hand trembles so much this morning, I write almost too bad to be deciphered.

May heaven bless my beloved Friend, I am always yrs

H. Murray

*Mr. Rogers—Philip Rogers, husband of deceased Rebecca Woodward.

*William Murray—Harriet's son.

*Frances—Catharine Few's daughter.

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Mrs. H Murray
to the care of Mr. James E. Brice
Baltimore
Postmark—New York, June 21

June 20, 1820

My Dear Friend

My last letter from my sister Maria contained the affecting intelligence of the illness of your dear and venerable Parent. I would say, I hope, by this time, that, by her recovery, your affectionate heart has been relieved of its anxiety; but her advanced age makes me fear that this is not the case—if so—may the Lord, the God of your excellent Mother and your own God, reconcile you to all his holy will and enable you to bow with submission thereto. Your own mind must suggest many consolations. A christian shaking of the load of mortality, the body of death so often experienced as an intolerable burden, putting on

immortality and winging their blissful flight to regions of unknown blessedness—possessing fullness of joy—what is there to grieve for? O much, does the filial and tender heart of my dear Harriett, reply. I shall see her no more on earth—true—great is the loss—but—the time is short—The separation will be but for a little while. Do you not realize this. O how quickly do days and months and years pass away. Ah what prospects are before us—soon my Harriett the conflict will be past. Friends once separated shall part no more—all dullness in the service of the best of Masters shall be done away—loving one another with a pure heart fervently—we together shall behold the face of Him, who hath loved us with an everlasting love, who hath never “afflicted us willingly” while on earth and who will cause all our trials and sufferings here to be subservient to our everlasting good, working out for us an exceeding weight of glory. Blessed be the Lord that we are permitted to comfort one another. And O may the consolations of the Spirit of all grace rest upon you in this trying moment and sustain your afflicted heart.

My Dear Frances desires her most affectionate and sympathizing love to you. She says, she intended to have written to her much loved Aunt—but fears to intrude at this time.

Perhaps my fears may have been groundless—but Maria’s letter to me was exceedingly discouraging. In whatever circumstances this may find my beloved friend, may every blessing needful, be your portion for time and eternity is the prayer of your own friend

Catha. Few

MSA SC 2301-2-25

Mrs. Montgomery, * Baltimore
to the care of James E. Brice, Esq.
for’d by Mr. I. G. Rogers

West River, July 28, 1820

I should feel very ungrateful my very dear Friend were I to neglect the first opportunity of acknowledging the rect. of your affectionate and welcomed letter. For only a heart that knows what sorrow is that can duly appreciate the soothing attentions of a friend. Indeed to me, the common attentions of uninterested persons are extremely irksome, where it is the tribute of custom not of the heart. Yes my dear, I do thank you most sincerely for remembering me; you are bound to my heart by many ties, which have been much strengthened by a more intimate acquaintance, and more particularly by the love that was reciprocated between you and my Angel Mother, which she often expressed to me and regretted that she could not enjoy more of your society. It was not possible to know her without loving her, and I now think how much to be lamented it is that those who had a congeniality of mind and knew how to value her precept and example, could not have been always with her. O’ how unworthy have I been of such a Mother. I feel it now, and can only pray for grace to emulate her extraordinary piety, the powers of her mind, and given to but few and her profound humility to fewer still. I never cease to regret my dear friend that our lot is cast at such a distance. You are one of the few in this

world to whom I could communicate all my feelings, and who could understand them. I should have much pleasure in showing you the little sketches of my beloved Mother's pen, though much of her writings are lost or mislaid. She never wrote (except her letters) for any eye but her own, and since she broke up housekeeping and alternately at the houses of her different children, her papers have been dis sorted and left about, and I am sorry to say, that some, which in former days, I had the perusal of, now I cannot find. However what remains you shall certainly see. May I not flatter myself, you will at some convenient time come to my cottage and spend a week or two with me? O'you don't know how much pleasure the bare idea gives me. I think you would be repaid for all your trouble by the satisfaction you would give us all. I beg you to think of it and let me know if you do not think such a plan practicable. Then I could show you a great many letters as also all the writings that I possess of my dearest mother. I do not remember ever seeing any comments of hers on the scriptures, but in conversation I have heard her opinion of different passages, which to me were very satisfactory, and very striking. Few Divines I believe ever studied their bibles more diligently, and latently, it was the only book she read. O' my dear, how should every selfish regret be banished from my mind on the reflection of the perfect state of blessedness she is now in the full enjoyment of. But nature must feel (and ought to feel) upon such occasions. I trust I have never indulged a sorrow, inconsistent with a perfect resignation to the Divine Will. Mine is certainly an irreparable loss. But "the time is short". I shall meet her and humbly hope when the "tears shall be wiped from all faces".

My nieces, Henrietta and Sophia,* I know are both attached to you. I have frequently heard them say how highly they valued your character and how much they wished to cultivate your friendship, but as in many cases, where we wish it to be otherwise, there conduct has not corresponded with their desires. Do not be ceremonious with them, but call when you can make it convenient; and (without partiality) I will venture to assert, you will find more sterling worth in them than is to be found in the generality of society.

I have still some very strong ties to Baltimore; but at present I feel as if it must be a long long time before I can again visit it. My heart sickens at the very thought of Green Wood.* Some of my choicest blessings have taken their flight from thence, never, never, never to return, and left a chasm that can never be filled up. It is enough for me that these events are ordered by unerring Wisdom.

*"God gives us friends to bless the present scene
Resumes them to prepare us for the next."*

That end answered, all will be well—for this I earnestly pray.

Since my return home I rec'd a letter from my precious friend, your sister, which I have not yet answered, as I heard she and her family were on their summer excursion. I have thought it might be as well to defer writing until I hear they have got back to New York, as I know not where to direct to her. If you should write before that time, do mention me in the most affectionate terms and tell her the reason of my silence. Please also to give my kindest love to your dear mother* whose health before this, I hope is restored.

I have scribbled a great deal to you my dear Mrs. M. very incorrect, and incoherent. Yet I will not apologize for it. If I judge you by myself, I know we are not apt to look with a critical eye upon the letter of those we love.

Mine will answer the end for which it was intended, when it assures you that I am with unalterable affection your sincerely attached Friend,

H. Murray

M. Addison* is still with me, and if she knew I was writing I know would add her love. She is a lovely amiable young creature, and I am sure you would love her very much if you knew her. I am in dread of her leaving me soon. Her Father wishes to have her at home, and I know not how to part with her.

H.M.

*Mrs. Montgomery is Catharine Few's sister.

*Henrietta & Sophia—daughters of Rebecca Woodward & Philip Rogers.

*Green Wood—probably home of Philip Rogers, Baltimore.

*mother—Mrs. Nicholson (wife of Commodore James Nicholson).

*M. Addison—Mary Young Addison, daughter of Rev Walter Dulany Addison and Elizabeth Dulany Hesselius (half-sister to Harriet).

Mary Addison marries Harriet Murray's youngest son, Alexander, about 10 years from the date of the above letter.

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock
West River near Annapolis, Md.
Postmark—Feb 22

Feb 22d 1821

My dear Friend

I will not begin my letter with excuses, for I frankly acknowledge, I have not a sufficient one to urge—that I love you I feel, that you have the slightest reason to doubt it, I regret—yet, may my silence never be imputed to a cause which can not exist—The visit of Frances to Woodstock seemed to have obliterated the lapse of years and renewed affections and interest which time had never effaced. I am in hopes she will be favored by an opportunity of seeing you before she returns home. She wrote me that she was much disappointed in not finding you or her friend Mary Anne in Baltimore upon her arrival there. That pleasure has been always associated with her plans of visiting Maryland.

We made a very pleasant jaunt last summer and spent our time principally with friends who live about 100 miles up the Hudson River. They are friends to whom I am very much attached, but I would gladly have bent my steps southward had it been in my power. I indeed my dear Harriett wish very much to see you, but O what ravages must time have made since last we met, but that assimilating principle which results from similar feelings and similar views respecting the things which are eternal, no external changes can destroy. Grace is an assimilating principle. I hope in some degree I experience this. The gen-

tleness and mildness of your natural disposition aided by early affliction has save you from the conflicts which a mind restless and ardent like my own must necessarily have experienced. yet at last I trust we shall both possess the mind that was in Christ and be fitted for an eternal union in his Kingdom.

I am glad to hear your dear family are doing well. Mr. Brice I hope will have no longer occasion to travel the Atlantic. Mr Wm, Frances writes me, it is said, is to be married to a young lady to whom there can be no objection. Some talk also of Mr. Alexander taking the same course. As for our Maryann—Mrs Murray who always, when we meet, has a great deal to say of you all—thinks her very hard to please—and indeed, I must believe, she has very good right to be so. I deprecate the thought that any of our young folks should think the thing indispensable.—I cannot bear to think of the many unions that are formed as it appears to me solely on that principle.

What Books have you been reading this Winter. I shall like to know that I may follow your track. Although this City Life, that I lead, is a great consumer of time. Yet think not by this, my dear friend, that I have any thing to do with fashionable society. No—from that I entirely preclude myself—yet time is wasted, in numberless frivolities, which are unsatisfactory and painful to review.—Season succeeds to Season and I may truly confess “I have done those things which I ought not to have done and left undone those which I ought to have done”—and in the latter catalogue is my omission in answering the letter of my Dear friend.

Give my love to your Dear Family, particularly remember me to Doctor Murray. My Mother, notwithstanding her advanced age (76), enjoys a very tolerable state of health and blessed be God contemplates that change which so nearly awaits her, with great composure, indeed, often with elevation of soul, rejoicing in the prospect. Your excellent parent has gone a little while before—but how soon will it be—and God grant that we may be fitted for a reunion to those we love, who have entered into their rest.

I am yours my Dear Friend, most affectionately,

Catha Few

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
to the care of Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, May 26

New York, May 23d, 1821

It is sometime since I received your letter my beloved friend, since which Frances has returned and so much have we talked about you and yours that I may say I have been present in spirit with you often and often—after all that is notwithstanding your many sorrows and many trials your heavenly Father has been mindful of you in a very essential ingredient of earthly happiness, he has

given you good Children and children who are capable of estimating the blessing they possess in the best of parents—I want much to be better acquainted with them all and long to be introduced to your dear Maryanne and Alexander.

I have often remarked to Frances, that the remembrance of early friends is not unlike the recollection we have of scenes that have enchanted us in our youth, we long to see them again, and if per chance we should be so favored, we too often find the charm has fled, the spell is broken, we are so changed and they are so changed that they are only as other strangers, and often less interesting.

Frances says 'but how different would be the case, could you see our dear Mrs. Murray, similar views of the past, of the future, similar in principles in affections, you would be more dear to each other than ever.' This is saying a great deal for me and I hope there is some truth in it. There is a comforting, operative cause, in the Religion of Christians that is a bond of union for time and for eternity—and I trust my beloved friend that the changes which have passed over us both in the long course of years, since last we met, have but likened us to each other and will ultimately bring us with entire conformity to Christ our glorious head.

How you gratify me by your kind and affectionate tenderness to my Frances. I must say for her that it is amply returned to you and yours. It would be the chosen society in which she would wish to spend her days. This she says herself—and happy would I think myself if any earthly circumstance could more closely unite us. I thank you my dear for your wishes "that all may be directed by an unerring hand" I hope I am less so solicitous about present things as it respects my young folks than I have been. I have thus far, it is certain not had my own way; but if I am lead truly to submit that perverse will to the will of God, it is a great point gained, a triumph which nothing but grace could have effected.

You are fond of reading "The Christian Observer, I had concluded that there was so much locality in it that I would this year give up taking it—but I have been so pleased with the two last numbers (Nov and Dec) that I have changed my mind—Have you read his review of "The Memoirs of the life of Oliver Cromwell" I think it will be if you have not, interesting to Doctor Murray and yourself.—I never expected so much conception from them respecting the piety and patriotism of the Puritans.

My Sister Maria is now with us, how glad should I have been, had she been accompanied by Maryann, the opportunity would have been so good had she wished to return about the same time. Frances tells me I am to consider her visit, if ever accomplished, a very great favor, as she is an important personage in the Family circle, whose presence cannot easily be dispensed with. Give my love to her and tell her difficulties may be surmounted, when we are very much in earnest.

May God bless you my dear and much loved friend—believe me ever yours,

Catha Few

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—June 15

West River, June 14, 1821

Nothing, save a personal interview with you my ever dear Friend could be more gratifying than your last affectionate letter. It was every way flattering to my feelings, and though you do not often set me the good example of a prompt reply I can no longer withhold my acknowledgements. It is the only way I have of conversing with you, and tho' pen and ink is a medium very inadequate to the conversations I would hold with you, yet it is the best I have, (and I have good reason to speak well of it, as it has kept up an intercourse between us for the last thirty five years which to me has been a source of sincere pleasure,) but there are times when nothing seems to do but the ear of a friend, and just now is one of those periods. I think our dear Frances judges right when she says we should enjoy each others society, for though I have. suffered so long a separation from you, I feel as if there is no one in the world to whom I could with more implicit confidence commit the inmost secrets of my heart, or to whom I should less fear to betray the weaknesses of it. The bear idea of a possibility that the union of our families might be having strengthened has excited feelings in my heart warmer than I thought it capable of, because I think perhaps if matters were rightly understood, the happiness of two of the most worthy young people. I know in the world might be promoted knowing so perfectly as I do, the principles, motives, temper, and many virtues of _____.* and also how highly he would appreciate the merits of dear F,* and how devoted he would be to her happiness. I think it a pity they should not be better acquainted. He was so occupied in his office when she was down he wrote me, that it was not in his power to pay her the attention he wished, and indeed there was a delicacy of feeling about him that kept him back, in a picuniary point of view. He is not what the world would call a match, and it might be thought presumptuous in him to cherish an idea of the kind, but what in his estimation stands much higher, character, integrity, industry and of these he can boast as much as most people. I have written before on this subject. Yet I have thought perhaps time had made some change since that period, and if there is the least hope that a visit would not be disagreeable he would go on to N.Y. though the Directors of the Bank have in a late meeting deprived him of an assistant in the business, he would find time to see you all. Now my dear Friend I am presuming much on your affection for me in thus unbosoming myself, but you will forgive me I hope, and let no one see this but yourself.

Give my kindest love to the dear girls. Tell Frances that John Rogers has brought his negotiations in Baltimore almost to a conclusion. The 28th is appointed for his marriage and on the 29th, we expect them at Woodstock to stay some weeks. Mary Ann no doubt will give her an account of the affair in her next. It will be a great acquisition to our neighbourhood; as they'll live within three miles of us. My sister has written to me requesting my presence on the

occasion; but I beg to be excused. My last visit to Balt. was on an occasion so different, and everything there would so remind me of it, that I think it will be a long time before I can bring myself to visit my friends in that quarter. My dear Sister* has very delicate health and very weak spirits. The parting with her daughter is a great trial to her. She compliments me by saying, it is some measure reconciles her to parting with Sophia, that she is coming to live so near me. She is a sweet interesting innocent young creature, and remarkable for her duty and attachment to her mother. I am sure there will be many tears shed on the occasion of their parting. I flatter myself it will be the means of bringing my Sister down into our neighbourhood, which I have never been able to do, tho' I have lived here more than twenty years.

My dear William too has hopes of residing at West River when he is married. He is fond of a country life, and proposes purchasing a small Farm near us, (that will not require his keeping slaves,) and shall try to live a rational, and I hope a religious life. It will be a bright beam on my declining life to have my children situated near me. They are indeed most dutiful and affectionate. I have heard it observed it is most generally the case, when they have a good example in the eldest child. Such a son I never knew, nor ever heard of as mine has been; and I trust Divine Providence has some blessing in store for him as a reward for his tenderness and affection for me. Don't think me the weakest old woman in the world my dear Kitty for dwelling on the perfections of my Son. If you knew him you would find my acct. of him not exaggerated. He very often mentions to me the subject nearest his heart, and it has been owing to his diffidence and fear of not being successful, that has prevented his revealing it where he might have known his fate, but he had rather doubt than despair.

I fear I will not be ready for the mail, if I scribble any longer. My Husband desires to be presented in the most acceptable terms to Col Few, yourself and daughters.

My Mary sends much love, and thanks you for your polite and friendly invitation to N.York. It will give her unfeigned pleasure to accept it when a favourable oppty. serves. I hope it will not be very long before you'll see her, for she loves and admires your daughters. They are just the kind of girls she wishes for her friends, and she is not very easily pleased.

Adieu my beloved Friend.

Believe me to be with sincerest affection, Always Yrs.

H. Murray

* _____ Although Harriet purposely uses a blank line, she is referring to her. son, James Edmund Brice. The F. refers to Mrs. Few's daughter, Frances. Some very obvious match-making is going on here.

* John Rogers—son of Rebecca Woodward Rogers & Philip Rogers.

* Sophia—Sophia Owings, daughter of Mary Woodward Owings & Samuel Owings (John and Sophia are first cousins).

* Sister—Mary Woodward Owings, who was previously married to James Govane, who died in 1787.

Mrs. Harriett Murray
 Woodstock, West River
 near Annapolis, Maryland
*Postmarks—New York, June 22;
 Annapolis, Md., July 11*

New York, June 21, 1821

Has it ever my dear friend, that for weeks together, seemed to you, as if there was nothing in the world worth a thought, nothing sufficiently interesting to arouse you to feeling or action.—This is my malady. It is not low spirits. It is worse in one respect. There is more of ingratitude to God in it for a little excitement, as to external things, has a powerful charm to dispel the ennui. And there is no state of mind which convinces me more of the sinfulness of my own heart. But I don't believe that you at all understand me. The construction of our minds are different—or rather the feelings of our heart—In the school of adversity my dear Harriett has learnt the best of lessons, cheerfulness, submission and thankfulness. Now if you were sitting beside me how would I pour forth my soul in your bosom—but perhaps it is best as it is, if you knew all, how unworthy would you think me of your friendship. But I hasten to answer your affectionate letter, for I feel bound to do so immediately, and let there never be an apology necessary for the most unreserved communication between us. Indeed I have often said that the happiest and most rational union's would probably be the result did the parents of both parties feel less delicacy in the first instance. Europeans are not so tenacious. For while the feelings of young people ought to be consulted, there are other things very important to be taken into consideration. In the present case I sincerely wish that all our feelings and views were in unison—and I assure you I should be flattered and gratified by such an event—were that the case. Mr..... * is worthy of any lady with whom there is "a similitude of mind, a something which God alone can give but which at this time he may have been pleased to withhold—This conjecture I mention merely from a conversation I have had with F.* She has been absent 3 weeks up the River on a visit to a dear old friend, who is a second Mother to her, and whom once she had the prospect of calling so in truth, but God was pleased to appoint otherwise. When she returns (altho I am well convinced her heart is disengaged) I will talk with her on the subject and if I have any thing to say will write to my dear friend. Otherwise our correspondence will proceed as usual; and believe me your dear Son shall never be wounded thro any publicity on so delicate a communication.

I have made, above, a little extract from the memoirs of Mrs. Fletcher, have you read it, if you have I should be very glad to have your opinion of her—There can be no doubt of her being a pious woman—but what think you of her exercises and experience.

I am rejoiced that my dear friend has the prospect of gathering her children and the children of her dear Sisters around her, and I trust in their society that you will experience many happy days—a calm and settled peace even to the

end and then we shall experience more, I trust, what is the true meaning of that word. happiness. For in this world at best it must be greatly circumscribed.

Remember me with much love to your dear family, and believe me with the greatest sincerity your affectionate,

Catha Few

*Mr. – James Edmund Brice, Harriett's son.

*F. – Frances Few, Catharine Few's eldest daughter.

See Harriett's letters: June 14 1821, July 26, 1821, and August 23, 1821 (to Miss Frances Few).

MSA SC 2301-2-21

Mrs. Catharine Few

July 26, 1821

I have indeed my dear Friend experienced the feeling you describe exactly tho' not for so long a time together as you mention, but I was more afflicted in this way some years ago than I am now. At that time I was obliged to exert myself, my daughter being very young and incapable of taking charge of the family; and I have often looked back on it as a blessing that I was not permitted to indulge the disposition. It grows upon me even now when I give way to it, and I find no antidotes like constant employment. It is a complaint my dear Kitty I never expected to hear from you, a mind possessed of so much energy, and so capable of exertion as yours, I should never have suspected of such feelings. I thought they were only attached to such languid inactive beings as myself. I have always flattered myself that they belong more to the body than the soul, and have often under the pressure compared my state to that of the impotent woman spoken of in the Gospel, "That could in nowise lift up herself". I find when I begin on this subject I could run on until I should tire my friend. Let us turn to the bright side of our situation, that "we have a high Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Whoever liveth to make intercession for us". I should utterly faint but for this strong consolation, for I feel that verily I am dust, and that there is no good thing in me but what is derived from the Eternal Fountain of all blessedness.

I cannot tell by what mis-management it happens but, your letters are a great while in getting to me. Your last dated June 21 never reached my hand until July 18th; and I concluded after your silence by so many posts that you and your family were set out on your summer excursion. I however answered a letter I received from dear Frances (without date) at a venture, since which your welcome favour came to hand. I thank you my dear Friend for the favourable opinion you are pleased to express of my best of Sons, I perceive your delicacy on this subject that you might hurt my feelings, and your expressions which were most discouraging could not "wear a smoother form". Where our hearts are most interested, our judgements often defeats our purposes; and I have thought perhaps I had better not have said anything on this subject, nor should I but for one reason, there was a peculiar delicacy in the state of _____ mind and affections, which precluded all hope of anyone's succeeding with her

until she had got the better of it; and as I was sure you were the best judge of that, I knew you would have candor enough to tell me and save pain to both parties. But on more mature deliberation, and from calling to mind a little of my past experience in these matters, I do not think a woman can tell herself (unless indeed she feels an absolute disgust) how she would like a Gentleman until he addresses her. Therefore I may have done more harm than good by my affectionate interference. This I can say with the strictest truth; if I did not believe it would be as conducive to her happiness as his, I would not have it take place, if I could effect it by a single word; and I shall not love her the less because we may not think exactly alike on the same subject. Tho' I own it would give me sincere pleasure if she could. I wish you and Colonel Few were well acquainted with this young man, you would not think it is owing altogether to a mother's partiality that I think so well of him.

My poor Mary has been a great sufferer for the last six or eight days with a dreadful pain in her face. She thought it was owing to a defective tooth which she had the resolution to have extracted; but has suffered more since the operation than she did before. She desires me to give her best love and tell Frances that her indisposition has prevented her writing to her by this mail, but she intends it as soon as she gets well. Give my love to her also if you please, as well as to dear Mary. How are her eyes?

I have read the life of Mrs. Fletcher, and think as you do; there can be no doubt of her piety; but her experience is so entirely out of the usual walk of pious women that few I believe can be edified by her example, I mean as a public character. She acknowledges herself disappointed in almost all the undertakings, which she felt such powerful impressions, she was called to; which lead me to think she was a great enthusiast, nevertheless she might be a great Christian. I believe it is better to aim at more than we are able to do, than to be backward. in doing as much as we have ability to do. I am too cold-hearted to judge of the conduct of so ardent a mind as hers; but I know as I read the work I could not help making the comparison in my own mind, how much more edifying to me the life of Mrs. Graham was. Others I know just reversed the comparison; but it is fit there should be different tastes both in authors and friends etc.etc. As a zealous Christian, I love and revere Mrs. Fletcher, but the character and walk of Mrs. Graham comes much nearer to my ideas of a useful devoted follower of Christ.

I am truly ashamed of this blotted miserable scrawl, but I am writing by candlelight, under many disadvantages. Do my Dear creature throw it in the trash after you have deciphered it.

I have only time to tell you what I hope you will always believe that I am with Unalterable and true affection, Yrs.,

H. Murray

Miss Few

Postmarked—West River, Aug. 24, 1821

Woodstock, Aug. 23, 1821

Your letter my dear Frances reached me only a week ago, and according to my old fashioned custom I am seated for the purpose of answering it. I will not apologize for being so quick, as you are in retirement, chatting in this way with a friend may not interfere with more agreeable occupations.

I am sorry to hear of the feeble state of my dear old friend Mrs. Nicholson,* but imbecility is a tax they have to pay who live long in this world. For after a certain period, our stay here "is but labour and sorrow". Happy they who have laid up their treasure where she has; altho' in all situations and stages of life, a hope in Heaven is a "a noble anchor", and the best foundation for peace and comfort. We find it more peculiarly so when the days arrive wherein the prospects of this life fade in our view; and we take no pleasure in them. I highly commend you my dear Frances, for preferring the path of duty to that of pleasure; and altho' in giving up the society of your dear family circle, and not with them enjoying their summer excursion, you sacrifice a great deal. Yet the reflections that must arise from a sense of having done right will yield you pleasure, when the recollections of what you might have seen or felt, would be wiped from your memory. I think you pass too severe a censure on yourself my dear, for the listlessness you describe. I do not believe it proceeds from a want of resources in yourself, but from a sudden change in your situation, and loss of that society which is dearest to you, as also, from being placed with those so much your elders. Yet I think, though not so pleasant, it may be profitable for you. Solitude for a season, is good for every mind that is capable of serious thought. It is then where the world cannot obtrude, we can commune with our own hearts, and extend our views beyond this trodden clod, and all the perishable enjoyments of it. The world has little to give. It is only when viewed through a false medium that we can be satisfied with what it gives for the present, or rely on its promises for the future. "A broken reed at best". You do yourself injustice my dear Frances, when you think you could ever pursue its pleasures with avidity. No it is only for the thoughtless, and those who have never given themselves time to weigh the infinite concerns of a soul immortal, that can draw their supreme pleasure from any source beneath the stars. It is the Work of our Arch Enemy, to make the walk of a Christian as uncomfortable as possible. And if it is done by magnifying the difficulties in the way, and the sacrifices they are obliged to make, or by obscuring the pleasures which result, and the peace which attends, our conforming our lives to the will of God, the effect is the same. But we are not ignorant of his devices. Our religion is a religion of privileges, not of restraints; and they who make the most perfect surrender of their hearts to God, are the people who enjoy both this world and the next in its fullest sense.

You my Dear acknowledge that you "know God is good, but you cannot always feel it", then strive to act upon your knowledge, and do not attend too much to your feelings. It is what I have ever been obliged to do. There are times, if I were to judge of my religion by my feelings, I should conclude myself

a reprobate. Make no excuses my dear young friend for communicating your secret thoughts to me. Whatever concerns you can never be uninteresting to me. I take those communications as the most convincing proofs of your regard, and love you the better for it. If I could only convey the consolation to your mind that I desire, you would not find me an unprofitable correspondent. That I trust will be administered by a Higher Power; and that in the strength of it, I may one day hear you acknowledge, that as far as the heavens are higher than the earth, so far the pleasure that religion affords is above all that the world calls good or great.

My poor Mary has been a great sufferer indeed since I last wrote to you. The pain in her face drove her to such extremity, that she had two teeth extracted, and was blistered from her ear to her chin, beside various other severe applications. She has at length got relief (tho' not til within a few days) and I hope will have no return of the same kind for years to come. She begs me to give a great deal of love to you for her. As to her visit to you, it is rather what she wished than expected. I have my doubts of her ever accomplishing it; tho' it will do no harm to indulge the hope.

And now my dear Frances I cannot conclude my letter without saying a few words on the closing paragraph of yours. I feel a backwardness in doing it, as you have declared the subject to be distressing to you; but you'll pardon me, as it is merely to exculpate myself from blame, so far as I may be implicated. Had your dear Mother understood my letter perfectly, or rather, if I had not been unfortunately awkward in expressing myself, the feelings of all parties might have been spared. All I ever wished to know on the subject was, her opinion whether, such a proposal would be disagreeable or not, without directly saying anything to you on the subject. If in four words.....do, the whole affair would have been at an end for..... hurt the best feelings of his heart they would have said.....yours should have excited either to revolt or distress, and that they have been, I shall hope to keep a secret from him.

I thank you for your candour, as also for the good opinion you are pleased to express of him, (and happy I am in knowing he deserves it). Your determination will never lessen my regard for you; and I most sincerely wish the person whose affection you may reciprocate may prove themselves as worthy as I know him to be. And here concludes all mention of the subject from me, and I hope none other may fall from my pen that will be productive of one moment's uneasiness to you. That it ever has been, was not my intention, which is all the apology I have to make.

Be pleased to present my love to your G Mamma and Aunt, also to your travelers when you write. When you can spare an hour or two to me I shall receive your communications with much pleasure.

I am my dear Frances with sincere affection yrs,

H. Murray

*Mrs. Nicholson—Frances's grandmother (Frances Witter Nicholson, wife of Commodore James Nicholson).

ms3245b02f05 159-160-161

To Mrs Murray
to the care of Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—Dec. 4

New York, December 3, 1821

My Dear Friend

Never have the shadowy things of earth and sense appeared in their true light to me more than at this time, and when this is the case we are rightly exercised. Our animal spirits are depressed, but it is in seasons like this, that the soul aspires to some enjoyment, more substantial, more suited to its nature. Since I have written to you, in the families of two of my most intimate acquaintance Death has made its awful entrance.—That dear old friend and sainted companion of ours, the venerable Mrs. Chrystie, died at Newburgh, the week before the last. Frances, who was unto her as a daughter, arrived there two days before she departed. The visit was in a measure accidental, but I hope the hand of the Lord was in it, and that the solemn event may be blessed to her. The other bereavement was that of a daughter and sister, who had just attained her 20th year I have been staying with the mourning parents who live a short distance from New York for a few days. There is much of bitterness in this last event. and He who has wounded, alone can heal. You, my dear friend, have been differently occupied, and most sincerely and affectionately do I congratulate you on the marriage of your dear Son,* may it be a union most propitious to all the parties concerned. I know it has been an anxious time with you, it is an event, that seems to seal the destiny of our children as to this world, and tho it should be upon the whole agreeable, it seldom I think takes place without some alloy resembling all our other earthly pleasures—tho, indeed this remark is not in its proper place, and does not arise from any circumstance connected with the subject of my congratulation.

You have heard that my daughter Mary, left us in October on a visit to her Aunt in Paris. I know not how I have been brought to part with her for such an expedition. It was long talked of and her mind was full of it. I have not yet heard of her arrival and a thousand anxieties cross my mind. My inducement to let her go were her health and her improvement—her principles on religious subjects were firm as my own, and I have thought, and think so still, that to a reflecting mind a view of differing societies and other Countries cannot fail of being useful—but parting with so dear a Child was agonizing indeed for a few moments. However I have committed her not to the winds and to the waves, but to that gracious providence, whose eye pervades creation, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.

I began to flatter myself the past autumn that I should have accomplished a visit to Maryland for a few weeks, but Mary's voyage, and other things quite defeated all my plans, and I do not find Mr. Few so cordial to my undertaking as I could wish, and I now almost despair of succeeding. Yet it would be most pleasing to me to see you once more. I have often desired it, but never with so much ardor as since Frances's visit to you. It is delightful to find that time

and experience produces many changes, and so often, and indeed so generally, dissimilates the youthful friends, should have rendered out estimates of this world and our prospects for futurity in perfect union. That is, as to what constitutes the happiness of both. Poor indeed has been my progress in the heavenly race, and no wonder that doubts often arise as to the attainment of the promised rest—but still the hope remains as the sheet anchor of the soul.

I ought in order to have apologized to my dear friend for my long silence. I have not done it because I could offer nothing as an excuse—that I love you most sincerely at all times do me the justice to believe and present me most affectionately to your dear family. Yours my beloved friend as ever,

Catha Few

* Son—William Henry Murray, oldest son of Dr. Wm and Harriett Murray, marries Isabella Maria Stirling, Oct. 28, 1821.

ms3245b02f05 162-163-164

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock, West River, near Annapolis, Md.
honored by Miss Montgomery

New York, Feb. 18, 1822

My dear Friend

You have not written to me for a long time. I have given up, I may say, all my correspondents but yourself, and I feel that with you I cannot part, that you are dearer to me than you ever were, that years and experience have assimilated us more to each other, that our friendship will have no termination here, and shall shortly be renewed in more perfect enjoyment beyond the grave. Yes, I do not doubt it, tho, we have so much to discourage us in ourselves. Yet, the Captain of our salvation is a great deliverer and will perfect what concerns us before he removes us hence.

I am very much pleased to find that your new daughter has endeared herself to you all. It is a great favor conferred, when a stranger thus introduced into a family, has essential qualities that are congenial to our own habits of acting, and our own views of life.—I have been led very much into a train of thought on this subject, from a recent occurrence in my own family. There is a Providence ruler, directing the most minute circumstance, the hairs of our head are all numbered—and when we not only believe, but see his hand, it becomes us to say good is the will of the Lord—It is six years I think since the Brother of Col Chrystie, to whom she was passionately attached, offered himself to Frances. Her mind revolted at the union, and she declined his proposal. Her attachment to his Mother, to whom since the death of her Son, she had ever been as a daughter, led her often to spend some days in Mrs. C's house. On one of those visits, very unexpectedly, her dear old friend was suddenly removed to a better world the day after she arrived. The grief of the young man, the breaking up of the family and other circumstances, which were extremely interesting at the moment, determined her to follow the leadings of divine providence (as she thinks) in uniting her destinies to his. After what had passed, we felt no inclination to with-hold our consent and the union has been determined on—He is

independent in his circumstances, and extremely good looking, of her own age, virtuous and amiable. Yet such is the fond partiality of Parents, it is not what I expected for her. It has been determined on at the moment of great excitement, and I have no doubt of his long and even fervent attachment to her, but I should have liked to have seen her own feelings more deeply interested. I have told her and indeed she wished it, that I should write to you on the subject. What I have written, she must not know. She loves you exceedingly and is extremely attached to your dear Maryann—and indeed to all your interesting and dear family.

My dear Mary has safely arrive, after a very tempestuous voyage, at her Uncles house in Paris. She has shown a great deal of enterprise in the undertaking, but appears highly gratified by her visit. She tell us she will endeavor to send some garden seed early enough for the spring and if so, and they be anything worth having, my friend, Maryann shall have a share of them. I am always delighted with Frances account of her active and useful pursuits and as these are united with a cultivated and excellent understanding I say you can have nothing more to wish, than, that a gracious God may make her all his own by the renewing and quickening influences of his HolySpirit—and if there is not to be a union of our Children here as we fondly desired O that our prayers may be heard, that they with us may be united in that blessed Kingdom where there is no marrying or giving in marriage, but where we shall be as the Angels in Heaven.

God bless you my beloved friend, and grant he sees best for you, that the Evening of your days may be crowned with every, domestic felicity. I beg to be remembered most affectionately to Doctor Murray and all your Children. I am yours most sincerely with love,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-29

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, N.Y.

March 8, 1822

Yours of the 18th of Feb. never reached my hand until yesterday, and as tomorrow is our post day I have determined to write immediately, that I may not have to reproach myself as I have done for weeks past, for neglecting to answer your favour received just before my visit to Baltimore.

Your dear letters are ever welcome to me, but your last peculiarly so. Your affectionate expressions acted like a cordial to my depressed spirits, for lately I have had those forlorn feelings (which I hope you never experience) that I have thought myself unworthy of a friend, or any other blessing, and could hardly realize the idea that anyone in the world cared for me. Then you may imagine how gratifying, to be assured that I still have a place in a heart so tenderly beloved by me as yours, and that you still retain me as a correspondent, and confide in my friendship, bless you for it. All those feelings of affection are most cordially reciprocated on my part. Few of your friends can feel a deeper interest than I do, in whatever concerns you, and in the case of our precious

Frances the excitement is something like that of a Mother, for I love her very sincerely. I trust the selection she has made will be worthy of her, and that she may find that congeniality of mind and feeling, (which is the grand essential in the happiness of married life) in the man of her choice, who I am persuaded must be uncommonly clever, or she would not have given him a place in her heart. I should not, myself, be surprised at her not expressing any great fervor of feeling upon the subject. Affections that have been widow'd (If I may use the expression) can hardly ever return to their former tone. Yet there may be an approbation of the judgement, as esteem for the character, a value for good qualities, in short a great many things which may create a strong preference, and which I think may form a better foundation for rational happiness, than the violent prepossession accompanying romantic love. I hope and pray that heaven may smile upon her union, and her lot may be as exempt from trouble as humanity admits of.

I congratulate you on dear Mary's safe arrival in France. If she was of my make, she would have but small enjoyment there from the apprehension of what I was to suffer in another sea voyage before I could see my own home again. But I hope there are few so very weak and good for nothing as I am—being literally one of those who take up trouble on interest.

My visit to Balt. was clouded by painful recollections, and also by afflicting events, and altho' I had the pleasure of seeing my dear son happily married, and very comfortably settled, together with every affectionate attention both from him and his wife, yet it was not to me what former visits had been; nor do I think it possible I ever can enjoy myself there as I used to do. For besides the friends I have already lost, I am in daily expectation of hearing of the death of my much loved and long tried friend Mrs. Gough. She was ill when I left her, but there was then a good hope that she would recover; but I have heard from time to time of her that she has never been able to leave her bed since I saw her; and my son Alex who came from Balt. last night, informs me that there is no hope of her life. There is every consolation in her death, as to her state, for I believe "There is laid up for her a crown of righteousness" but she will be a severe loss to many. The effects of her benevolence, and charity is incalculable, it was her meat and drink to do good. She has often expressed to me how willing she was to be dismissed, and how much she wished to be at rest; at the same time observing, as long as she was capable of doing any good, she acquiesced in the Will of the Lord and was resigned to stay.

My feelings were much excited when in Balt. by an interview with my dear old friend, Col. Rogers two days before his death, it was truly afflicting, and what I never can forget, his dear afflicted daughter was present whose heart was sorely wrung, but she appeared to receive the stroke with humble submission, and was most of all anxious that her dear Father should be able before his departure to testify the all sufficiency of the Saviour, and that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Her sufferings seem'd to draw her very close to my heart, and I sympathized most sincerely in her sorrows. I wish my dear Kitty you would go to see her. She speaks in the highest terms of you, and at this time particularly the conversation of a religious friend would be soothing to her wounded spirit.

My Mary desires to be affectionately remembered to you and thanks you for your kind intention of sending her garden seed. She has just now her gardening mania upon her, and there is no keeping her in the house. The first coming of Spring depresses my spirits exceedingly and I feel as if I had not energy to do anything. I thought myself unfortunate in not once getting a sight of Mrs. Montgomery whilst I was in Balt. I went to see her and she was not at home, and she came to see me and I was from home. The weather was very severe, and I went out very little except to Church.

Mary says please to give her love to Frances and tell her she shall write to her very soon. And give my love also if you please and tell her she need never be afraid that I shall forget her. I am a letter in her debt. When I write again it shall be to her. If my husband knew I was writing, I am sure he would join his love to mine to all your dear family.

I remain my dear Friend, With unalterable affection ever tenderly yrs,

H. Murray

ms3245b02f05 165-166-167

Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock
West River near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark—New York, June 27

June 26 1822

My dear Friend

Often does my mind turn to you and acknowledge how probably my earthly enjoyments would have been increased had my lot been cast near your habitation—but on this subject as well as every other, adverse to my own wishes, I am slowly learning to say the Lord knows best. Of my early friends there are very few with whom I have much intimacy. Some like myself are but too much occupied with their own little concerns and years and different pursuits, and different habits of thinking have so changed others and changed myself also, that we seem when we chance to meet to have scarcely any point of union whereby our former friendship can be recognized—but to my once dear and still dear Harriett there is an assimilating principle. God grant that his blessed Spirit being the bond of union here, we may be prepared to spend together a blessed eternity hereafter.

I opened my heart to you, in a former letter on the subject of my dear F's marriage. It is now over and she is pleasantly settled on the Banks of the Hudson, and I feel more at ease—I was in some measure reconciled to the event, principally because I saw a train of providential circumstances which I thought could not be mistaken had lead to it, but I knew where the energies and the affections of her youth had been spent. and there it had pleased God to disappoint her—this was entered on from sympathy only and a respect for his character on her part—which combining with his ardent attachment to her, and her devotion to the interest and happiness of that family. In a season of mutual affliction caused her to resolve on the event which has since taken

place. I think she is much happier than she ever expected to be in her new situation and writes to me in good spirits. I wish her friend Maryann could come on and see her. It would be a high gratification to Frances. The neighborhood is genteel, the country and scenery beautiful, I may say beyond description. Albert, her husband, is well bred, amiable and affectionate in his disposition and very much disposed to render his house agreeable to his friends. We shall leave N York on Monday next on a visit to them. Her Father has already been there and returned very much pleased with their establishment and arrangements. I do not expect to return to the City till autumn tho I do not exactly know how we shall regulate our summer excursion. We have been very much scattered of late and now I have none at home with me but my dear Matilda, who really seems lost without her Sisters.—I shall leave the City with some reluctance, as I now begin to look for the return of my Mary and it seems like removing farther from her. I am filled with solicitude on her account, but endeavor to cast my care on the Lord—Her visit to France has been very gratifying to herself and if she returns in safety, will, I have no doubt be eventually for her benefit. The sad fate of one of our Packet Ships has made us more tremblingly alive to the dangers of the sea—before this fearful event, a voyage to Europe, seemed to be little more than a journey to Maryland.

Have you read Lady Maxwell? Our Methodist friends are very much delighted with it—for myself, I think she looks too much at her own attainments and too little at the fullness and merits and grace of a Redeemer. Tell me what you think of it. I know I ought to speak with diffidence—but have not so learned Christ. I wish I had an opportunity of sending you a late work entitled “Rural Philosophy by E[?]. I am charmed with it. It is wrote [?] position [?] man on solitude, and takes up the subject on Christian and philosophic principles. I find it has gone through 4 London Editions. How much are we indebted to our good friends across the Atlantic for their literature.

I have almost drawn my letter to its necessary conclusion without saying a word of your dear family. Maria says Mr. Brice is again going to Sea, a circumstance I very much regret, knowing your anxious feelings. I had hoped he had possessed a permanent situation as Cashier of one of the Banks, and that pecuniary affairs would no longer have obliged him to absent himself from his friends, to whom he is so justly dear.

You tell me your visit to Baltimore was gratifying as it respects the domestic establishment of your dear Son tho painful from the recollection of past enjoyments. O my dear friend how necessary does it become even to our present happiness that we should live in the anticipation of future blessedness—shall we not be reunited to those who have only gone a little while before. God himself will wipe away all tears from our eyes and there shall be no more death.

Dear Mrs. Murray* I have been to see her. She is greatly afflicted, and is a most interesting young woman. I think her very serious and engaged in the best things. I hope the Lord will abundantly bless her and make all work together for her best interest. She loves you very much, the friend of her lamented Father, not only, but as one whom she had long admired, respected and loved for your own dear sake. We talked much of you, I found her alone and she seemed pleased to unbosom herself, with many tears.

I bid you adieu my beloved friend and with love to your Husband and Children I am yours truly,

Catha Few

*Mrs. Murray—Mrs. John R. Murray of N.Y. formerly Miss Rodgers of Baltimore, one of Philip and Rebecca Rodgers's daughters and Harriett's niece.

ms3245b02f05 171-172-173

To Mrs. Murray
care of Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

Mount Pleasant [no date]

I hardly know how to begin a letter to my long neglected but ever dear friend. Day after day slipped away while I was in the City until it brought me to the period of leaving it; and still your affectionate and dear favor was unanswered, and now I have left it behind me tho as I often, very often, read it over I am still able to say much to my Harriett of its contents. First let me congratulate you on the birth of the dear little one Grandmother. O what a record of the lapse of time is this event. Ah, how soon will the generations to come forget that we were—be it so, there is nothing to regret in this, but I trust the blessing of God who shows mercy unto thousands of those that love him will be the inheritance of this little stranger.

Do you hear often from Mr. Brice is he pleased with his situation at Haiti, or is he making a great sacrifice for pecuniary advantages, and what stay does he propose to make there—I feel very much interested in his plans, for I am sure he must suffer much as well as his dear Mother from an absence at such a distance, unless he has a prospect of a speedy remuneration.

You will find from my address that we have changed and I can assure you that it is a circumstance that has been the source of much temptation to me and I fear that I am not innocent of murmuring and ingratitude to that Good and Gracious God who has led me all my life through, and crowned that life with mercies more than I can enumerate or recall to remembrance—We have been in the habit for years past, as our family was small, of passing some months in summer, traveling from place to place. Last season the epidemic in the City detained us 4 months from home—in consequence of which Mr. F. determined to purchase a small place in the Country and set himself quietly down during the hot months returning to the City to pass the Winter. He saw a place that determined him at once and notwithstanding all objections, has made it his own and here we are—The spot is beautiful, on the Banks of the Hudson, the House is good and the scenery magnificent—but it is difficult of access 33 miles from my dear Mother and near 40 from my Frances, through a mountainous and rocky country—no Churches that are acceptable to me and a very poor neighborhood—I endeavor to accommodate myself. It is the will of God—and as I have all my life (except six year past in Georgia) leaned very much on dear friends and enjoyed social intercourse, with what may be called, in every sense of the word good society. I bear this arrangement very ill and am really sorry for my Children whose past excursions, thro a great variety and scenes and

company, will I fear very much unfit them for the secluded situation they are now placed in. Still I hope the good hand of our God may be discerned and I pray that he may lead us to profit by this seclusion, in which half our life will probably be spent. It is near a village called Sing-Sing, and the district of country for 6 miles round is Mount Pleasant, at the latter place you will direct me for if indeed my dear friend will so far forgive me, my slothfulness as soon to write to me.—I shall no longer defer from the hurry and tumult of a City life and engagement which give me a claim on my dear friend for her letters. and which, let me again and again assure her, constitutes when received a pleasure to me, most sincerely and affectionately appreciated.

I scarcely dare ask any of your dear Children to make us a visit after what I have said of Mount Pleasant—but we should find it pleasant indeed to have them with us, and, for us, other company then would be unnecessary. There is a Stage Coach twice a week from N York to Sing Sing, and sloops also ply continually.—tho alas—not the Steam Boat, which, if that was the case, would remove all difficulty—and tell my dear Mary Ann I would promise her to take her to visit her friend Frances who lives just a days journey from us and in the midst of a much more agreeable and polished Society.

I procured Erskine on the Evidences of the [?] Religion, shortly after I received your last letter [torn] much obliged to you for mentioning any books perusal of which has given you pleasure, I read them with much more interest on that account—and have the satisfaction of finding that our taste in reading very much agree.

Did you know Mrs Vanbibber (Miss Forman that was). She visited this part of the U states 4 or 5 years ago with a very lovely young woman, her daughter, whom I find by the papers is since dead. They were settled in Virginia—Mrs. V was an intimate and beloved friend of mine in the days of our youth and this was a beautiful and idolized child—I feel much for her—Our acquaintance was renewed at the time of her visit here and for this world I thought her prospects very bright—but what is this [?].

God bless you my beloved Friend. Remember me affectionately to Doctor Murray, tell him altho we have been so long separated, that I do not forget our descent from one stock and the union and affection which for so long time subsisted between the offspring of his and my dear Father's venerable parents. Matilda was in Philadelphia very lately and saw Mrs. Commodore Murray.* I say with you, that she is a surprising woman. I think there must be a great deal of Christian Dignity in her deportment and Christian fortitude in her resignation to the adverse providences which afflicts her. She has ever shown much kindness to me and mine.

Adieu dear Harriett. Yours truly,

C Few

*Mrs. Commodore Murray, formerly Mary Miller, Harriett's sister-in-law. The reference to affliction could be her husband's career misfortunes or her health. This letter has no date, but is probably summer 1823.

Mrs. Frances F. Chrystie
to the care of Col. Wm. Few
Elm Wood, near Fishkill Landing
Postmark—May 2, 1823

Woodstock, West River, Md., April 29th, 1823

Your letter, my dearest Frances, which gave me the most sincere pleasure I should have answered long since, had I followed the impulse of my own inclination, but I feel it is necessary that I should not be so very prompt, when I consider the length of time there always is between your receiving and answering my letters. I may not calculate properly the variety of occupation that engrosses your time, and how much more you are engaged than I am; but I always feel impatient before your letters arrive and your silence has come home to me like a reproof, and I have lately thought "I will follow Frances's example and not be quite so quick".

I am much gratified my dear that you have it in contemplation to make us a visit, and I flatter myself you will not disappoint us; but I must say when I found you did not mean to come this summer, I felt somewhat of the sickness of "hope defer'd", for I well know the variety of hinderances that occur in married life, and which increase every year, beside a disinclination to leave home, which we will take no excuse, come you must. Mary Ann is in such a hurry to see you, you must not be surprised if she should pop in upon you in the course of this summer. I heard her laying a plan the other day with her Cousin Henry Murray* to that effect, and they both thought it very practicable; but it is much easier to talk about than to do it; especially one who is so excessively afraid of steam boats as she; but of this I am sure, nothing could give her more pleasure than to see you, and if she can conquer her objections to the mode of traveling, you will probably see her at Elm Wood.

Doctor Murray and myself are entirely by ourselves just now, which seldom happens, but Mary had been under a long engagement to accompany her Cousin Mary Addison to Baltimore and had been obliged to put it off from one week to another until she could do it no longer without giving offense. Unluckily Alex had been summoned as a jury man to attend our Court (now in session) therefore he was also obliged to go, and the old people obliged to do as well as they can without having chick or child with them. We are almost spoiled by the attention of our children and hardly know how to do without them. Yet I pressed Mary very much to go, her health has been delicate all winter, and she has been so closely confined that I thought it absolutely necessary she should leave home, and try the effect of change of air and change of scene for a few weeks; at this season she could not be prevailed on to stay longer. as her garden interests her much, and about that time her roses will be in bloom, which is the time of all times she enjoys it the most. I suppose my dear Frances you have been busy this spring in arranging your garden as you were in the Fall planting your trees. It is very amusing and a very innocent occupation, and I am fond of seeing people engaged in it, but at no period of my life had I ever energy or spirit enough to take pleasure in doing anything of the kind, and I look with wonder at my daughter to see what exertion she will make to accomplish

her little plans, when I feel as if there was nothing in the world worth making an exertion for. These are the two opposite extremes. The first is best no doubt to get through life with. Indeed every duty is performed better by an energetic mind; but mine is constitutionally otherwise, and by no means improved by years. Yet I am thankful to say, I have that hope for an anchor that does not suffer me in the worst of times to despair, though I have less of joy than those of a different mould of mind.

Your acquaintances at West River are all quite well, very little change amongst us except now and then an addition to John Thomas's family. They had another daughter a few months ago which makes the third they have had. There is a great change in John and indeed the whole family. They have become very religious, but I believe I told you this in a former letter. Elizabeth* expects to have her mother and sisters* to spend the summer with her again I am sincerely glad of it. Mrs. Murray is an excellent pious woman and withal a most agreeable companion. She would be an acquisition to any society. Whilst here last summer she used very often to mention your dear Mother with affection, and desired me frequently to give her love to her.

Mrs. Galloway* has just recovered from a most dangerous illness, her life was despaired of. She was ill at Belvedere, on a visit to her Howard. She has just got home with Mrs. Maxy* who is in a very delicate health. Mrs and Miss Cheston* have just got back from Baltimore where they spent the winter. Daniel Murray's family* having left our neighborhood leaves a chasm that cannot be filled.

What is my dear friend, your Mother, about? Has she entirely forgotten there is such a being as I am? I have not had the script of a pen from her since last June. I could ask many more questions, and scribble for hours, but my paper warns me it is time to conclude. My best love attend you and all that is dear to you. Should you see your Mother tell her I have not forgotten her. My husband desires to join in love and best wishes.

Adieu my Dear Frances. Believe me to be at all times yours with true affection,

H. Murray

*Henry Murray—see note on letter of 1/28/1811. It was less than a year later, April 1824, that Henry was killed in a steamboat explosion.

*Elizabeth—Elizabeth Murray, wife of John Thomas of "Lebanon."

*Her mother—Mary Miller Murray, widow of Commodore Alexander Murray, Dr. William Murray's brother.

*Mrs. Galloway—Sarah Chew, widow of John Galloway and mother of Mary Galloway Maxcy. Mrs. Galloway died in 1826.

*Mrs. Maxcy. Mary Galloway Maxcy, also of "Tulip Hill."

*Mrs. Cheston—MaryAnn Hollingsworth, who married James Cheston of Baltimore in 1803. They lived at "Ivy Neck."

*Miss Cheston—Mrs. Cheston's sister-in-law, Francina Augustina Cheston (single).

*Daniel Murray's family—lived at "Melrose" on Bayard Rd, near Lothian, West River, until 1822, when they left for Mary Dorsey Murray's inherited property, later called 'Rockburn,' near Elkridge in Howard County.

MSA SC 2301-2-31

Mrs. Catharine Few
 at the Rocks, Mount Pleasant
 West Chester County, New York
[to the care of Mr. Wm. Few Esquire]
 Postmarked—August 1, 1823

July 31, 1823

I cannot express how much I was gratified by the receipt of your letter by the last mail, my dear Friend. I do indeed most heartily congratulate you and my dear Frances (an in a word all who are interested) on the happy event your letter announces. May all possible blessing result from the acquisition, to his parents, and all to whom he is dear! I had heard a rumour some time since that there was an expectation of your becoming a Grand Mother, but after I got your letter (before the last) wherein no hint was given of such an event, I thought the report was not true. I must repeat that it has given me heart-felt pleasure. I know of no letter since the one that announced the arrival of my G.daughter* that yours has done. You must say everything for me to your dear daughter that is affectionate and expressive of those sentiments that are better felt than described. My Mary has been waiting very impatiently a reply from Frances to a letter she wrote her a long while ago. As she has been so importantly employed Mary I believe has forgiven her her seeming neglect, for I heard her say the other day "Well bad as I hate writing, I do think I must write to Frances on this happy occasion". Indeed we all love her very much here, and can't help being selfish enough to regret, that her situation precludes the hope of her visiting us as often even as she used to do, but she has given me a promise that we shall see her here, and I trust she will not disappoint us. I well know that in married life there are so many occurrences (unlooked for) which prevents our doing as we would and particular that of going from home, that I rather hope and wish for the pleasure of seeing her, than expect it.

Alas! my beloved Friend, the uncertainty of our ever meeting again in this world is painful to me. Yet I think were it as practicable for me to go to you, as for you to come to me, I should not long demure upon the subject. For me it is utterly impossible. I could give you a long list of reasons why and wherefore; but that would remove none of the difficulties, and I find in this as in many other instances, it becomes my duty to submit. Though I earnestly desire an interview with you, I am sure it would be attended with pain to us both. Our hearts and minds are as well acquainted as ever, but our person no doubt are changed past recognition—only conceive the difference of appearance between 18 and 61 and you could hardly expect a trace of my former self to be left. I am most flattered indeed by the favourable account my dear Frances has given you of me, and the more so as I know what she says does not proceed from a cold-hearted flatterer, and did I not feel such a deep sense of what I really am it might give me a little better opinion of myself, but indeed you must attribute all to her partiality for me which tho' I am sensible I do not merit. I feel grateful for, as it is a proof of her affection, which I highly appreciate.

I hope my dear friend you have found your new place of abode more pleasant than you at first expected. It is true that at the time of life at which we have arrived we are not fond of change and cannot soon be reconciled to it; but I doubt not ere this you have brought your mind to an acquiescence that makes you at least comfortable. This as a Christian I am sure you aim at. With the enjoyment of pure air and good health in your family, I think you'll find the hot months pass very tolerably, especially with the anticipation of returning to your City residence in the Autumn where you'll have a double relish for the society of those you love and find them all delighted to see you. We cannot have, indeed I believe it is not fit, we should have all things according to our own mind, and very often we find that events to which our minds had the greatest repugnance after a short time has become a source of comfort to us. I have found it the case.

I thank you for your kind enquiries after my precious Brice, dear creature, he is still at Cape Haytien* in a state of exile from everything that he values on earth, but he was urged by the pressure of the times the want of something profitable to do to try an opening that he thought offered in that quarter. I hear very frequently from him. He writes in good spirits and thinks his prospects in business are brightening; but I have no hope of seeing him for another long year. He is blessed with the happiest disposition in the world, and often maintains a hope where others would despair. I know not what is best for him and dare not offer a petition for his worldly prosperity. The only prayer for him is that he may be made the subject of Divine Grace. in which case all things will work together for his good. He is a dear and exemplary, dutiful son to me and I trust it will all be returned tenfold into his own bosom.

Mary Ann begs me to mention her most affectionately to your dear Frances and Mary. By the by I fear our dear Mary* has forgotten her friends at West River. Why does she never say a word to us? Send her love. I want to see her, and also to be introduced to Matilda.* How is Col. Few, his health now? If he takes an interest in farming and country pursuits, no doubt his health will be benefitted. My husband I am thankful to say enjoys good health, and an even flow of spirits. He desires me to present his love to you. He has not forgotten that you are of one stock, and would be unfeignedly gratified to see you in his cottage or any that belongs to you. Mary Ann and myself want to know what name Frances has given her Son; whether she intends nursing him herself, etc,etc. Indeed you can't be too particular in telling us all about her. Most gladly would she pay a visit to Elm Wood, for she sincerely loves Frances; but there are numberless obstacles. It is time to conclude, tho' I always feel when writing to you as if I could not leave off whilst there is room to add a word. When was I two letters in your debt before? Write soon my beloved Friend.

Believe me to be always with true affection yrs,

H. Murray

*Cape Haytien–Cap-Haitien, on north coast of Haiti. Haiti achieved independence from France in 1804. In 1823 it was ruled by Alexandre Petion and was a very dangerous place to be, let alone to try to make and keep a profit.

*Mary–Mary Few, Catharine Few's second daughter.

*Matilda–Matilda Few, Catharine Few's youngest daughter.

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To Mrs. Harriett Murray
 Care of Doctor Murray
 West River, near Annapolis, Maryland

The Rocks Oct. 7, 1823

My ever dear friend,

I have been lately reading a book which I have read many times before, and I think always with more or less profit "Foster Essays" particularly that one "on a man writing memoirs of himself" by which I have been forcibly reminded of the phenomena of two persons who tho in early life assimilated in mutual affection, yet of widely different dispositions, differing also in education, passing thro the discipline of divine providence under different aspects, separated by absence most of the time, arriving nearly at the age of 60 years and yet as far as I am able to judge, engaged in the same pursuits, estimating things past precisely in the same way, anticipating also the same blessedness for futurity, [?] now as my friend Foster would say, by what mental process has this result been attained. I cannot tell—except we allow that the spirit of God has been the teacher of both. and happy for me and great will be the glory where alone it will be dire, if at the close of all a spirit like mine should truly assimilate to the humility and meekness which it is the privilege of my dear friend to possess—if we feel alike, we think alike. on any subject of vital importance there must have been a severe training that has produced this effect, a daily conflict on my part—yes it has been so—and the conflict ceases not—how great will be the glory to sovereign mercy at the great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be unfolded if both attaining fully the mind that is in Christ our Lord shall enter clothed in his righteousness the gates of eternal life, where all conflict with the world, the flesh and the adversary shall forever be at an end.

How kindly do you interest yourself in what concerns me and mine, as I before mentioned, I am situated at the distance of 40 miles from Frances. I however very lately spent 8 or 10 days with her, and left her and her dear little one in very good health. She has named him William Few after her Father and is a very good nurse for the little fellow, tho she looks very thin and I think is much altered, not for the better herself. We talked much of you as usual. Tell our dear Mary Anne, not for a moment to admit the thought that she is forgotten or even less valued by her friends here. I hope Frances has before this redeemed her credit as a correspondent, and Mary says if her love enclosed in my letters have not reached you, it is my fault, and indeed I am too apt to be negligent on that score. I always lament that where there is so much congeniality. in opinion and feeling as there seems to be in our children that their lot should be cast so far apart.—Say not that "were it as practicable for me to go to you as for you to come to me I should not long demur upon the subject"—It is not practicable and has not been or I should have visited Maryland and my dear friend, the greatest inducement, long ago—my sister too thinks herself very much neglected, but I am not to blame.—I thank my friend for her enquiries re-

specting Mr. Few. He has enjoyed his health remarkably and is delighted with his new purchase, and indeed it is a beautiful situation, my eye has just rested on one of the most lovely prospects in creation—rendered more so by the variegated hues caused by the fading verdure on the sides of the mountains—but is desolate and cheerless as it respects society. There is absolutely none at all—or which is the same thing, none interesting to us—I wait for this result, and pray in all things to be able to submit my will to the divine will.

Matilda is at her Sisters at Elmwood, or else would express her thanks for your interest in her. She sometimes thinks of going to Baltimore this autumn. Had Miss Bosley visited N.Y. as she has intended I think it very like M. would have returned with her—but I do not know how it will be now. She thinks of spending a week or two in Albany which will make it rather late in the Season to accomplish another jaunt. We shall not break up here until the first of November. I shall at least regret the retirement and quiet that we have enjoyed here [torn] it probable I shall have the charge of a large family this Winter. I do not know what Mr. Gallatin's arrangements are, but should they remain in N.Y. they will I think be with us in Park Place.

Remember us very affectionately to Doctor Murray and every member of your dear family. I think I have a claim on you now respecting some information of the little stranger* in Baltimore, what is her name, what does her physiognomy indicate, and who does she resemble:—Fanny had a Bust placed before her, numbered, and was examining the lumps on the boys head, day by day—but as I have not heard there are any indications of Genius signified by her study of [phraseology?]. I suppose she does not flatter herself much. God bless you my beloved Friend.

Yours truly,

Catha Few

*little stranger—This is William and Isabella Murray's daughter, Elizabeth, b. 9/5/1822.

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To Mrs. Harriett Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—Dec. 20

New York, December 19, 1823

My dear Friend

I should have written to you by my Matilda, who has gone with her Uncle and Aunt Gallatin to make a visit of a few weeks to Baltimore, but a busy [?] thing to do and to think of just at their going off, has prevented me. She will be able to extend her jaunt to West River [torn] not, the season of the year is so unfriendly to [torn] of place that she may be prevented, but I am very desirous that she may be made known to you and your dear children.

We returned from The Rocks the 1st of November and are now quietly settled in our old habitation at Park Place, and so quickly and imperceptibly has the summer flown, that I can scarcely realize the interval of time that has elapsed during our absence from this place. O what solemn reflection does this flight of time, bring to the thoughtful mind, we sometimes under pressure of mental anguish exclaim "There is nothing here" nothing satisfying, nothing permanent—This will be forced upon us even in fortunate and youthful days—but the soul soon finds a reaction and pursues with equal ardor these nothings these illusions—yet there are minds that are habitually under these impressions, and age very naturally leads to them—how melancholy, how sad, if unaccompanied by "the hope full of immortality". We thank God that the Scriptures in its promises and in its prospects, excites and animates us, to look beyond, to press forward unfolds to us the gates of paradise—gives us the hope of a reunion to departed friends—speaks to us of God and of attaining the perfection of our nature in being made like to him and enjoying the presence and the favor of Him which constitutes the Glory and happiness of all his Creatures.—Alas, that there is so much in us [?] and often times to interrupt these consolations, which ought to abound to the Christian at all times—more especially when long experience and grey hairs have convinced us that indeed there is nothing here, nothing in the things of Earth and sense, that is worthy of the ardor and intensity which we expend upon them.

Mary will be very much alone this winter and we have often said how glad we should be to have your dear daughter with us, how much she would have supplied the loss of her sisters to Mary, but I suppose her importance at home together with the season of the year will preclude our indulging in any prospect of that kind. Frances has been with us 3 or 4 weeks since our return, and at first, her absence made a sad chasm in our little circle. She has a very fine baby, healthy and good humored, and the little creature fastened himself very much in our hearts.—My poor Matilda has gone to new scenes for happiness—which she will not realize—but if the result of all their disappointments and changes, does but lead them to the only resting place, all will be well at last. She has already had her share, and if one of the most affectionate and amiable dispositions in the world could have been soured by it—it would have been her lot to have experienced it—but I hope otherwise, and that the result of all under the control of Infinite goodness will prove salutary to her best interests. She will see your family, part of them at least, in Baltimore and we I hope commend them to each others friends and relations.

When you write to me, which I hope will be soon, please to mention to me your dear Son in the West Indies. I know your happiness is intimately connected in his welfare, and independently of that circumstance I take much interest in it myself. With love to the Doctor and your children which Mary most affectionately unites.

My ever dear Friend, Yours truly,

Catha Few

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place,
New York, N.Y.

Jan. 8, 1824

I feel so much indebted to you my beloved Friend for your two last letters that I cannot delay answering them, and acknowledging your goodness; I ought to have replied to the first long since; but two long visits I made this fall, had put me so much behind hand with my domestic work that I have been pretty tightly employed since my return to make up for my holiday. It is very unusual for me to be long from home; but my spirits and health both seemed to require it; and my indulgent Husband (much as he dislikes my leaving him) would have me take a trip to Elkridge, to visit a Nephew* of his, and I found it of the greatest benefit. I spent four weeks there most delightfully and returned just as Doctor Murray was summoned to Balt. to attend as a witness in a law suit; and as he made a point of not going without me, I set off with him in a few days, and staid five weeks with our dear William and his family; so you see I have been quite a gadder.

Just before I received your last I heard that your dear Matilda was in Balt. and we were casting about in our minds how it could be possible for us to get her to West River. The season as you observe is very unfavorable for moving; but I cannot give up the hope that some way or means may be brought forward whereby we may have an interview. Alex. went to Balt. a few days ago, and we charged him to try to persuade our young friend to pay us a visit. If she visits Mrs. Nicholson in Annapolis, which I suppose she will, there will be but little difficulty in getting her here. I am anxious to hear her determination. Indeed I cannot bear the thought that one of your daughters should be within a days ride of me, and I not see her. Mary Ann is as anxious as I am to see her. As she is much attached to both Frances and Mary, she is sure she shall love their sister. My daughter desired me (when she heard me say I was going to write to you) to remember her most affectionately to you and dear Mary, and to say few things would give her as much pleasure as accepting your kind invitation to pass the winter with you both; but her situation does not admit of her indulging herself in such gratifications. Most happily she is able to suit herself to what her duty requires of her, though she has a mind capable of enjoying the pursuits of first grade society; she contents herself by staying at home and contributing all she can to the comfort, by lessening the cares of her old Father and Mother. This I think she rather carries to an extreme, for I can scarcely ever persuade her to visit our neighbours. She however appears cheerful and contented, and that is as much as this world can afford (I believe I may say more than it can afford). when its pleasures are sought to its utmost bounds. My experience with respect to the passing events of life, and my situation in it, has been such, as to convince me of my entire ignorance of what is good for me, or mine as it regards earthly things, and I never dare to form a wish, (much less to put up a petition) for what, in the eyes of the world may be deemed good. It is my humble desire, (tho' in every thing I come far short of my duty) to seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, being well assured that all

that is needful for life and goodness will be added. Whilst we were in Baltimore this Fall we met with the misfortune of having a large barn burned down, with a considerable part of the crop my poor Alex had made in the last summer. The amount of the loss between 7 or 800 dollars, which to us was quite a heavy loss. I felt afraid he would suffer it to prey upon his spirits, for those who dig money out of the ground feel the full value of every cent; but on coming home I was agreeably surprised to see he had quite got over it, and was only uneasy lest his Father and myself should be unhappy about it. His spirits are light and buoyant and his temper of the best kind. "Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live". We must receive evil as well as good from the hand of the Lord.

I am much pleased with the acct. you give me of our dear Frances and her son, and I can enter into your feelings as a G Mother entirely. I only wish we could be so situated as to witness each others pleasure. My little G. daughter* I think a fine intelligent child for her age, indeed uncommonly forward; she is only in her sixteenth month, and begins to talk very plain. She discovers a great ear for music, she frequently pulls the girls to the piano and ask them to play. I do not know whether her head bears the true mark of genius, but we all think her a paragon. I do not think she resembles our family, though some people think her like me, with all my partiality I do not think her beautiful, "but she is every way pleasing to me." I would apologize now for saying so much about her, but that you requested me, and it is a theme I love to dwell on.

I saw very little of your dear Sister Montgomery when I was last in Baltimore, she was so ill that some of her most intimate friends were not permitted to see her. I therefore went but once. She was then too weak to converse much; but appeared to be in a most happy state of mind; perfectly resigned to whatever was the will of God respecting her. I have very frequently heard from her since; that she was well and about again. Her illness was a very alarming one I believe.

I thank you my Dear Friend for your remembrance of my beloved child, in his state of exile from all he values. I am thankful I can inform you he enjoys good health. I hear very often from him and he appears in as good spirits as one could possibly expect. He is about this time gone into business in the mercantile line, with a merchant of that place; which promises something advantageous. Should it please God to prosper his endeavours, it will be a matter of great thankfulness to me; but I leave it, and strive to be anxious for nothing. My dear James flatters me that I shall see him in June next, but if he comes it will be but to leave me again I suppose.

I am writing in a room where there is but little fire, and my fingers are so stiff I can hardly use them—excuse this scrawl I beg.

My Husband and Daughter send their best love to you and yours and our dear Frances whenever you see, or write to her.

Adieu my ever dear Friend, I remain with unalterable affection, Ever yours,

H. Murray

*Nephew—Daniel Murray (see note on letter, May 2, 1823).

*G.daughter—Elizabeth Murray (b. 9/5/1822—d.10/7/1839), William Henry Murray and Isabella Maria Stirling Murray's first child, one of nine.

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New York, March 17. 1824

[To Harriet Murray]

I am extremely disappointed that Matilda has returned from Maryland without seeing you my dear friend and should be quite displeased with her but that I find it has been a subject of great regret to herself—but one opportunity to make that visit, offered, while she was absent—which in other circumstances would have been a most agreeable one. She says that she came to Annapolis to stay only three days with a small wardrobe, that she had stayed 8 and was obliged to embrace the only conveyance that she had to return to Baltimore—and also understanding that Alexander was on a special mission, She did not like to delay him, and thus missed the pleasure of seeing her Mother's friend, which indeed was one of the objects of her southern trip as spoken of before she left home.

She begs me to say that it was really a serious disappointment to her and respectfully to mention her regrets to you and Maryann. She was made happy by hearing that Maryann was in Baltimore and was hastening to see her, when she was informed of her mistake—something had delayed your dear daughter in Annapolis and disappointed Matilda altogether.—Well I hope it will not be always thus. I do flatter myself I shall see some of you at Mount Pleasant next summer. I was much surprised to hear that the Rev. Mr. Jackson from West Chester was settled in Maryland. When I was in the country last summer his neighbors and friends there, were, as I believe, expecting his return and settlement among them hoping that his presence there would heal the divisions of a Presbyterian Church, sadly torn and divided since he left them. His joining the Episcopalians must have been very unexpected to them.

We have spent a very sober winter. I have almost been sorry for Mary, who has confined herself to the Society of her Parents more than I wished, and has sensibly felt the loss of Matilda—She, has been very much pleased with Baltimore tho the sum total of her observation seems to be, that the inhabitants live for amusement. I suspect she has not had much to do with the more reflecting part—indeed she seems very conscious of that herself. Alas that it should be so. Our friends and relations never seem more dear to us, or at least never excite so much interest of a particular kind as when we see them standing on the intoxicating heights of worldly pleasures, and satisfied. with the pitiful elevation. We are looking for our Sister and Mr. Gallatin every hour to make us a short visit before they go to the Western Country. My dear Mother seems to enjoy their Society while they stay—but parts with them with anxious and painful feelings. She lives very retired, and appears now very abstract tho at times very cheerful. She has passed her 80th year—and truly enjoys a hope full of immortality. She often mentions you, tho I have been very remiss in not sending you her love. She speaks of you and yours with much affection.

I hope you have had an opportunity of reading "Irvings Orations" there is something so new so powerful and so impressive in this production of his wonderful mind that I have been extremely fascinated with it. Notwithstanding,

I had previous to reading it, seen some reviews of the work which were not altogether favorable. It seems to have called forth the pen of Criticism in an extraordinary degree—15 or 20 have scowled or smiled—pretty much as party or prejudice influenced them.

I have not seen much of Frances this winter, she passed a few weeks with us. I hope soon to make her a visit. The ice from our river has entirely disappeared and sloops and steam boats are again pursuing there course without interruption. I have a dear friend staying with me—whom I think you must know something of—her name was Livingston and she married a Methodist preacher from your state, a Mr. Garretson. If you [torn] him you know a great oddity—but his Wife however surprising you may think (and surprising you will think it if you know him) is among the first of Women of Christians. We have been intimate many years, and her Society is a great treat and blessing to me. It is an unspeakable pleasure together, to travel downwards thro youth, middle and old age to the close of life in union and friendship when we have a hope that our enjoyments in each other will have but a short interruption by the severing which Death must make. This hope my dear friend often consoles me when I think how much happiness I might have enjoyed in your dear presence had our lot been cast near to each other—but God knows what is best for us and our blessedness is to commit ourselves to his infinitely wise direction. I assure you I did not read the account you gave me of the Burning of your Barn* and the loss and trial of your dear Alexander without feeling very much for his Parents and himself. Frances was very much affected by it. May our heavenly Father by his mercy and love to you and yours in things of infinitely more importance abundantly compensate for every trial he sees fit to visit you with.

I must conclude may every blessing attend you is the prayer of your truly affectionate

C F

Mama has left but a small place for my letter and my dear Aunt Murray there is room enough to say that I thank you for your kind remembrance, and to say also that I always remember with pleasure the short time spent with you, but it is a pleasure not unmingled with regret that I should have so little profited by it. I suffered so much with the malady [mauvaisi honte?] at that time that I knew little of the pleasures of society, but I hope a time will come, tho when and where, I cannot state I may have an opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with you and your family—and of seeing you and my dear Mother enjoy each others society once more after your long separation. I beg to be affectionately remembered to each member of your family and will you my dear Aunt accept the most affectionate remembrance of (missing?)

M. H. Few*

*Barn—see Harriett's letter dated: Jan 8, 1824.

*M.H. Few—Mary Few—Catharine Few's daughter.

Mrs. Catharine Few
 To the care of Col. William Few
 Mt. Pleasant
 New York
Postmark—New York, July 5

July 2, 1824

[page missing]
 pilgrimage through this valley of tears, how it would support us under every suffering-

I feel ashamed to say that I have a letter from our beloved Frances by me that has laid unanswered even longer than yours. Do my Dear when you see her apologize for me, I acknowledge I am a very good for nothing correspondent, but she must not give me up. If she could see my heart she would find my affections for her out weighs, many letters How does she and her precious boy come on? I don't remember which is the oldest, he or my grand daughter, but she has become a sweet prattler now, and I am in expectation of again being made a Grandmother very soon.

No doubt long ere this you have taken up your summer residence at The Rock, where I hope, on a repeated visit, you find it pleasanter than you at first thought it would be, especially as the situation is so healthy. Mr. Jackson seems to say no spot on earth can compare to the heights of the North River. I should like to judge for myself, but that can never be. But viewing, as I do, my life, with all events, in the hands of my God, I find no difficulty in submitting the remaining part of my journey to his disposal should it be so ordered by his providence that we should see each once more in the land of the living, I would be rejoiced, in which case you must come to to me, I cannot go to you.

It was a considerable disappointment to me that we could not get a glimpse of your dear Matilda when she was in Maryland, but inflicted on myself for having so selfish a wish, for at that season of the year, when the Country is uncommonly dull, and the city uncommonly gay, it would have been unreasonable to have required such a sacrifice of a young Lady, and I feel indebted to her for the desire she expressed of seeing us. I hope to be more fortunate some future day. Tell her and my dear Mary they must both come to see us the latter end of May or the beginning of June, when our country is in its pride, and our little cottage windows are ornamented with roses peeping in on every side, it has looked quite romantic this spring. My Mary's love of flowers seems to grow on her, she had a most beautiful bloom of greenhouse plants through the Winter, (which she preserved in a pit with glazed frames over it) equal to any I ever saw.

We have Mrs. Commodore Murray and Juliana in our neighborhood. Again this summer, her daughter Elizabeth Thomas is about to increase her family (the 4th time) and tis an event that always brings her, she is an acquisition to us all, a far more agreeable woman than she ever was, religion has given a mildness to her character that she used to want. Your Cousin Mrs. Thomas enjoys as good health as any one I know at her time of life, and appears to take an interest in all that is passing. Miss Fanny Nicholson has been down on a

visit to Mrs. Thomas's lately, she is a great favorite with them, and indeed with all who are acquainted with her. She brings bad accounts of the health of Mrs. Lloyd, poor old lady. The Doctors seem to think she cannot last long, I am always sorry when I think what a revolution her death will cause in her family but so it is, the decree has gone out "dust we are and to dust we must return"

I write so small and close a hand, that I cram more into a sheet of paper most people would have the patience to read After apologizing for this miserable scrawl I will release you my beloved Friend Let me hear as often from you as you can in so doing you will afford me one of the greatest pleasures I can enjoy

Mary Ann joins me in much love to yourself and daughters.

Believe me to be with unalterable affection, Ever yours,

H Murray

July 2 1824

Miss Mary H. Few

I am much flattered my very dear Mary by your affectionate remembrance of me, and flatter myself the time is not very distant, when our acquaintance commenced so long ago will be renewed, you and your Sister must come to see us. when you get to Baltimore. You know it is but a few hours ride, we have no inducement to offer but the welcome of warm hearts and that it will gratify us to see you, very much

I must close my letter for the mail. It is dark I can scarcely see to subscribe myself

Yrs. with true affection,

[page torn]

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This must be for mother. W.H.M.

Mrs. H. Murray

Care of William Murray, Esquire

Baltimore, Maryland

received Nov. 4th 1824

The Rocks, October 16, 1824

My dear friend

You will probably have seen Mr. Jackson since his return home before this. I regret that I have seen so little of him. I had barely time to ask many questions of yourself and dear family the short visit he made us, and was in hopes of being better acquainted with him when we returned from our visit to Frances, which we commenced the day after his call at The Rocks. When we returned he had left Mt Pleasant.

The summer has been pleasant, the country beautiful. We have passed our time in more retirement than usual. This I hope has not been unprofitable to any of us. I think I can see the good effect of it on Mary and Matilda both, I fancy them much more thoughtful on the (?) things, I hope I am not mistaken if not this place which really seems sequestered from all our friends, will prove the

best for us, and indeed it must be so at all events. Our lot is disposed by infinite wisdom and infinite mercy too and with you my beloved friend I can unite in praising the Lord for the blessing of good children and we also find them "essential props in our declining years". I am unfeignedly very sorry that our children have had so little opportunity of being well acquainted. I am persuaded that from their education there must be a similarity in their views of things around them, and in their reverence for things that are eternal and if they are never to be better known to each other in this world, it is truly a subject of regret to me, this, however may not, after all, be the case. I begged Mr. Jackson to say to you, or rather I appealed to Mr. Few before him, if it was not so, that I for years had been wishing to visit Maryland, principally that I might see and converse once more with you. All my obstacles have arisen from his desire when setting out on our summer excursions to go north, and now I fear "here" we shall be stationary when absent from the City. Mr. Jackson could tell me nothing of Mr. Brice, but I hope you will not be disappointed in your hope of seeing him this month, two interesting events I find you are anticipating, I trust both may be accomplished to the joy of your maternal heart and that you may greet the return of your dear Son and happily welcome the little expected stranger without any circumstance to mar the pleasure of her entrance on the stage of life. I propose that Master William* shall make a visit to Maryland, that is as soon as he is able to go without an escort, tho I suppose his Mother would be very well pleased to introduce him, and should this young stranger disappoint us, a few months, tho on the wrong side, will not make much difference and Miss Murray may receive him with smiles.---

I have spent near a fortnight with my dear Frances. You are so good my beloved friend as to say to me "your must tell me all about her & her dear child" She seems happy, she married without any very strong attachment, circumstances very singular and interesting led to the union, and I believe it was of God that it was to be so, the providences were very marked thus far it has also been marked with His peculiar blessing the little one is a very healthy handsome child, and they both seem to take much thought for his Education which, if he should be spared, will I have no doubt be judiciously attended to. their situation is a very handsome one and their society the best that our Country affords and I have the happiness to add that I believe they are loved and respected by the neighborhood. Albert is the attentive and industrious Farmer. I wish our dear Alexander would come this way and make him a visit. I would send one or two young ladies from Park Place to introduce him and a Dutchess County farm is generally an object of interest to agriculturalists, it is considered the richest and most flourishing part of our State.

How pleasing it is to hear that Mrs. Thomas* and her family are engaged in seeking the true riches, the pearl of great price how greatly is our union to friends, even the dearest heightened, when this is the case So my dear present my affectionate remembrance to her. Many changes have we both seen since last we met under her own hospitable roof, she the young married (torn), myself the wild and thoughtless girl but now alas let us not regret, happy for us that we enjoy the consolation and hope of the Gospel, that we have the prospect of meeting again in that City which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

This is the second letter that I have begun to you, I have had an attack of Rheumatism in my right hand and was prevented from proceeding with my first letter and I have scarcely recovered from the inconvenience of holding my pen which this has occasioned.

I am preparing to return to the City next week and hope I shall soon hear from you. Mary begs me to give her love to her Aunt Murray and her friend Maryann. She is cultivating a taste for flowers. I wish your dear Daughter was here to encourage and assist her. If am not greatly mistaken they would suit each other very much, without being exactly alike. Mary is very independent in her pursuits and always, cheerful and industrious. God bless you my dear friend, I cherish the most affectionate remembrance of you and often, often (?make?) ideal communications to you, which are forgotten before the pen reaches the paper. but at all times I am with sincere love . your,

Catha Few

*Master William: Catharine Few's grandson

*Mrs. Thomas: Sarah Murray Thomas (Mrs. John Thomas)

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
 Doctor Wm Murray
 Postmark—New York, Jan 13

New York, Jan 10, 1825

My dear friend

As I have not heard from you for a long time I fear that a letter I wrote to you early in November has not reached you. I gave it to a person who was accidentally here to leave at the post office and as I do not know the person I fear that he never left it there. I am thus particular as I would not willingly incur, the otherwise just reproach, of neglect in not answering your last affectionate and welcome letter received while I was at The Rocks. We returned from that place to pass the winter as usual in Park Place and have quietly and soberly set ourselves down here, where I feel more at home than in any other spot in the world and yet I often ask myself why is it so? it can be only the habit arising from early associations, for as it respects religious and interesting intercourse of any kind this City affords as little to captivate as any other place that I can imagine. It is an overgrown place, where strangers jostle you at every turn and business and bustle sets in every countenance. Society as it is termed consists of the young, the gay and the dissipated and when age or reflection dispels the charms, there is little left except your own fire side to interest. Yet nothing can exceed the commercial prosperity of this City. I think the calculation is that near 3000 houses have been built the last year. Many Churches also have been raised and if religion is to be estimated, or rather its advancement to be judged of by external circumstances, we are a highly favored people. Yet, notwithstanding, it may be possible that the retired Villager or rural Christian will find more true enjoyment, more substantial means of real improvement in the knowledge and love of God his Savior than can be found in the meetings for building of churches, for missionary purposes, and It is an age of activity,

and I doubt not but future ages will rejoice in the spirit that now pervades the Churches but how far even religious bustle and hurry promotes individual piety is another question.

How is my dear Friend enjoying herself this winter, have you become the Grandmother of another little one, not one word have I heard from you since the projected visit to Baltimore, Maria Montgomery scarcely ever writes to me, because I am indeed a lazy correspondent, and thus I have not known any thing of you and I fear the same cause has prevented me from hearing from you. When I read a new or entertaining work I think how pleased my dear Harriett, for so I must call you, tho the younger ones may smile at this juvenile epithet, I think then, how she would be pleased and wish I could convey the pages to her. I have been reading Southey's history of the Church, a London edition, it has not yet been reprinted here but no doubt will be, when Bishop Hobart returns and it is a high church publication. As I set off to that I have also read Bristed's history of the Anglo and American Churches and next I propose reading Neal's Life of the Puritans but I have come to the conclusion that it is almost impossible to get at the truth of any history, particularly of Church history, so much does feeling, education so warp the fallible judgement of poor mortals.

I have this moment heard of the death of one of the best of men, an evangelical minister of the Episcopal Church in this City Doctor Milnor, whom I daresay you have often heard of a lamented instance of the instability of all human things. He had died suddenly, and never was a man more beloved in a congregation. I trust he will have many crowns of rejoicing in the great day of accounts but his death is among the inscrutable events of divine providence.

I hope I may congratulate my beloved friend on the commencement of a New Year that find herself and dear family in the possession of health and peace. May a gracious God confer upon them all that "peace of God that passeth all understanding". I beg to be affectionately remembered to them all, in which my dear Children cordially and sincerely unite. Frances is now at her own dwelling on the Hudson. She left us 6 weeks since. I thought she would have lost her little Boy when with (torn) he was extremely ill with inflammation on the lungs. It (torn) been pleased god quite to restore him, tho his poor Mother (torn) severely tried. Yet I was much pleased that when her Christian principles were sorely tested and at a moment of great extremity she was enabled entirely to resign him to the will of that God to whom in Baptism she had truly devoted him.

Believe me my ever dear friend, Your Affectionate,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-33

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York

West River, Feb. 11, 1825

I am ashamed, my beloved friend, when I look at the date of your two last kind letters, that they have laid so long unanswered; but this I can assure you, that it has not been from a forgetfulness of you, or a want of affection for you

that has been the cause of my silence. The one dated from the Rocks, I received a few days previous to my visit to Balt. from which place, I was determined to write to you. But alas the whirl and bustle of the City was I found too great for my poor shallow brain. Not that I had anything to do with it, but to a person living so quiet and retired as I do when at West River, the effect of the going in and out of my acquaintances, with that of the visitors to the family, so bewildered me, that I thought I would put it off until I got to my own peaceful home, where I could with more pleasure converse with you.

We had had a melancholy Autumn at home, and my nerves were in a weak state, and I found that a change of scene was necessary for me; and my Son William came down and took his Father and myself up. We spent five weeks with his family, and had great pleasure in finding he has become a religious character, and has set up the worship of God in his family. It has pleased God to bless him with the acquisition of another darling little daughter who bears the name of Harriette Woodward. You know she is to be your Grand daughter also, and I flatter myself you will not love her the less on account of her name. The Lord has been very good to me and my family. There has been no breach made by death, although there was a very considerable mortality in our neighbourhood the last Fall. No doubt you have long since heard of the death of our dear Sister Thomas*. She had a severe attack of bilious fever, which terminated her life on the ninth day. Dear old lady expressed a good hope through faith and I trust has entered into Eternal rest. The family were in a state of great distress at that time. There was much sickness amongst them and John Thomas's wife* lay dangerously ill at the same time. They have all got well again; but the loss of their Mother lays heavy on Nancy and Sally*. They were the most devoted daughters I ever knew, and I believe they knew no pleasure equal to that of Administering to her comfort in every way in their power. You must think what a chasm her death has made.

Mrs. Commodore Murray has lately suffered severely in the death of her eldest daughter, Mrs. McIlvaine*, who has left behind herchildren. She has been wonderfully supported under her late trials. She has lost her husband, her son*, and her daughter in less than three years. She is a pattern of resignation and Christian fortitude. I had a letter from her the other day expressive of the most perfect submission to the will of God. O'what a triumph is a subdued will. Life will have no conflicts when we have obtained that conquest. We can only gain the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. then should not every Christian heart respond "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!" O what blessings, what treasures, what privileges are bound up in that gift, and are offered to a world, that will not come to Him that they might have life.

I am much pleased to hear my dear Friend, that you have passed so pleasant a summer at The Rocks, and I think it will become more and more so, because to a reflecting mind, rural scene, and retirement are congenial, and to a religious mind, peculiarly so. A bustling populace City, where everyone you see is in full pursuit of the things that relate to the present scene of things; where so much of the lust of riches and pride of life is displayed is very unfavourable to serious thought. Perhaps my way of life may colour my opinion on the subject; but I have not the enjoyment in attending divine worship in town that I think

I have in the country, where after a sermon I can shut myself up in my own room and reflect on what I have heard, and commune with my own heart. I sincerely wish you had as good a minister at Mt. Pleasant, as we have in Mr. Jackson. He is a man I think calculated to do much good. He is a very interesting preacher, and has gained much of the affections of his flock. I only regret that we are too poor to make him a suitable compensation for his labours. Though he is by no means discontented, (as I have ever heard of). Yet it is desirable that such a man should be comfortably accommodated and kept free from pecuniary cares. I was sorry he was so short a time in your company, he was not able to answer half the enquiries I wished to make or to tell me that there was probability of your visiting your friends in Maryland, and sorry am I to find from your letter that my prospect of seeing you only amounts to your wishing to do so. I have lost so many of those who were dear to me in this world, that my heart clings more tenaciously to those few who are left. My circle of friends has become circumscribed indeed. Yourself included, I do not believe I can count half a dozen now, that I loved in my youth, and few very few indeed, out of my own family connexion, on whose love I have any claim. But I hope I may safely add, there are none that dislike me. I am positively sure there are none that I dislike. You know what I mean. I have outlived those with whom I grew up in love and intimacy and have no reason to expect that at my time of life I should excite an interest, anything like affection, in the heart of anyone who did not know me in my best days. I am particularly anxious our friendship should be renewed in our children; and I am sure it would be a source of great pleasure to mine to cultivate a friendship with yours; but the distance between them almost precludes a hope of its ever being in their power. My dear Frances now and then favours me with a letter which is a most pleasing token that she has not forgotten me. She has had a severe trial in the illness of her darling Son, who I am sincerely rejoiced to hear both from your letter and one I got lately from her, that he is perfectly restored. Do when you see the dear fellow, tell him that his Aunt Murray sends her love to him and that she has got the prettiest little wife for him that ever was born (without partiality she is a most beautiful infant).* I hope soon to write to Frances, but if you should see her soon, say everything affectionate for me to her and tell her I long to see her. My Mary happens not to be at home, or I know would send much love, (for I have taught all my children to love you). Present my kindest love to your dear girls. When they visit Maryland again, I hope I shall see them.

And now my dear what apology can I offer you for writing you such an unreasonably long ill written letter? Nothing can I say in excuse, but that I am writing by candlelight on very bad paper, and that when I begin to write to you I never know when to leave off.

Adieu my best beloved Friend

Believe me to be yours with unalterable affection,

H. Murray

*Sister Thomas—Dr. William Murray's sister Sarah

*John Thomas' wife, Elizabeth Murray Thomas, Commodore Murray's daughter

*Mrs. McIlvaine—Mary Ann Murray McIlvaine (died 12/27/1824

*son—Alexander (3rd son of Commodore Murray) died 7/25/1822

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Mrs. Harriett Murray
 Woodstock, West River, Maryland
 Postmark—Mt Pleasant, N Y, July 6

The Rocks, Mt. Pleasant, July 5. 1825

Dearest Friend,

I will not say that you are ceremonious my dear Friend, for I have never found it to be so, still it is a long while since I have received a letter from you, and I know it is too long that I have omitted writing myself. I suspect the same cause prevails with us both procrastination loses none of its paralyzing influence, by time or reflection, we sin on, grieve our friends and wound our own hearts. I have however forwarded two letters I think of yours to Frances for which I sincerely thank you. Your affectionate attention to her is indeed gratifying to her Mother and honorable to herself. The contents of your last I do not know but the first informs her that your Alexander is not well. This has made both Frances and myself very desirous that he should make a visit to the north. Cannot you spare him? About the first of August we shall travel northward 60 or 80 miles, in our own carriage, visiting two or three friends on the way, stop at Mr. Chrysties and return home in a few weeks. This is our plan if it please divine providence to permit us to accomplish it and can any thing better be devised to promote the health of your dear Son and I flatter myself it would not prove destitute of interest and amusement either. It is said here that Mr. Jackson (your pastor) is married and intends to pass the summer at his seat in this neighborhood, is it so, to any friend of yours will not their visit afford us some prospect of a pleasant escort for Maryanne to make us a visit. I do long to have some of your dear family with us. This neighborhood cannot please after the society of West River but the scenery is grand and the friends that would welcome them, love them, and would endeavor by that to compensate for all deficiencies.

We are endeavoring to get a Minister settled in the Presbyterian Church of this village, whether we shall succeed or not I do not know, the people appear to me to be mentally and morally deficient, and very indifferent to all religious instruction. A society of christians in the city to whom some here have applied has sent a young man to preach to them, he stays with us at present. Whether he will accept should they think proper to invite him I know not, but his society is very agreeable to us. He is quite young, was educated at Yale College, and is judicious, sensible and pious. Should he settle here, it will be a great means of reconciling me to this place, for altho the sabbath is sweet and may be passed profitably at home, yet the public worship of Jehovah in his sanctuary at stated times is animating and refreshing to his people. I am glad my dear friend that you are so favored at West River and hope your pastor will continue to be a blessing to the Church in that place.

Dear old Mrs. Thomas, what a blessing to her children to possess the hope that she has entered into rest. Truly do I sympathize with her daughters. We are selfish in our very best feelings. The union of unmarried daughters and

aged parent is often inexpressibly tender, and death never enters a domestic circle which touches me more feelingly.

If Mrs. Commodore Murray is at West River and I take for granted that she spends much of her time with her daughter there, will you give my love to her, heavy indeed have been her sorrows I wrote once to her, after the loss of her dear son, and received a most interesting letter in answer. I remember one expression which was painfully affecting. She desired to fill up the remainder of her life in usefulness to others. fulfilling the will God in all things but prayed that, that life might not be long protracted, Dear Creature, I hope that time and the consolations of the Gospel have calmed the agony of her mind and made her willing to remain an example and blessing to her children who are still spared to her.

Frances made me a visit with her two children about a fortnight since, in the journey they both took cold, and have been very ill, dangerously so. The Boy with an inflammation of the lungs, which is the second attack he has had. Poor thing, she has suffered much. She is one of the over anxious parents I say to her unless by watchfulness and prayer she is enabled to cast her burden upon the Lord she will be in danger of sinking under the weight of it.

Mary gives her most affectionate love to you my beloved, and also to your dear family. I need not say how truly we all join in this remembrance, for myself, I must add that you are exceedingly dear to your friend.

Catha Few

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Mrs. Murray
Dr. Murray
West River, Maryland
Rec. Apr 22, 1826

New York, April 15, 1826

Your letter my dear friend has indeed remained too long unanswered. I perceive by the date it was written last Nov. Time slips strangely away, particularly so, in large and crowded cities but in this instance it has not fled unmarked day after day. I have longed to communicate with you. My life which is now passing more monotonous than it has in days gone, left me little to say as to ordinary events, and I longed and still long to speak to you of views, of feelings, combining hopes and fears respecting that life that is to come and respecting the world within, which no quiet without can always keep in the calm repose of faith and hope and love the Christians privileged, inheritance and generally conferred on the favored possessions, of those heavenly graces But it is in vain, we are too far apart, when I would arrest one exercise of my thoughtful and often agitated mind and seem almost as if conversing with you it is gone and listlessness and even levity (of spirit at least) has succeeded such creatures we are, or rather let me say such a creature am I. One of the most intimate of my friends, long endeared to me by mutual confidence and affectionate intercourse

has this winter passed from time into eternity. I think I have mentioned her to you before Mrs. Suckley* resided a short time in Baltimore many years ago, and at that period was often with your friend Mrs. Gough for whom she had a particular regard. We often spoke together of you and she would frequently say when have you heard of Mrs. Murray but all her kind enquiries are at an end and no one can tell how great her loss to me. Her death was peaceful. She has left a large family of dear interesting young people and said to me before she departed, looking round on her dear children, no one has more inducements to wish to prolong life and no one greater inducements to desire to depart The loss of a friend must be deeply felt at our period of life. We have no hope of supplying their place here but "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". We have a lively hope "that we shall be reunited to them forever hereafter."

Early in the winter Mr. Few was seriously ill with inflammation on the chest his cough has never left him and I think the feebleness of age has increased upon him. My Mother, more recently, has also been ill. I thought we should have lost her, but she has surprisingly recovered and after 3 months confinement to her room, begins to creep about the house, tho much emaciated. We were grieved to hear of the delicate health of Mrs. Commodore Murray alas what sufferings has she not experienced dear creature, may she be supported to the end. Hers has been a bitter cup but sanctified afflictions have also been her blessed portion and she will triumph over all. Of this we are confident says the apostle "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it to the end" But O Lord thou only knowest what discipline what training is necessary ere we are filled for that abode where sorrow and sighing will forever cease.

You tell me that your dear Alexander continues to be much indisposed. Dyspepsia is is not confined to Southern climates, it is well known among us exercise and change of air seems to be the universal remedy prescribed and you say that he proposes to make the experiment this summer. We can say nothing of mineral springs in our neighborhood, but Sing Sing with its mountain air and pure springs is celebrated for their salubrious effects on invalids happy should we feel if it afforded inducement sufficient to him to make the experiment. I can promise him a diversity of healthful amusement such as sailing, riding etc. and good nursing should that be necessary and friends who are disposed to love him not only for the sake of his dear Mother, tho that alone would be sufficient to make his visit very desirable to us. Give my love to your beloved Daughter, I see how much your heart is bound up in her "intrinsic worth" is alone worthy of recommending any of us to each other, but my Frances says, it is not many Mothers that could more truly have added to the account, the charm of an agreeable and delightful conversation. Had she favored us with a visit when Mrs. Montgomery came on, she would have been pleased with New York perhaps not with its Balls and its Operas, which of late I am happy to say have lost much of its pleasures for the younger inhabitants at Park Place, at least our house, but for its endless varieties, which the arts and sciences of Europe, have brought among us, and are daily to be exhibited in this astonishing populous and growing City.

Frances has been making us a short visit this spring with her dear little ones. I showed her your letter. She reproached herself for her neglect and confesses herself a poor anxious hurried creature, her nursery occupying her time too, too much but her dear Aunt Murray will never cease to possess a large share of love and veneration, and this she means to assure you of very soon. Aunt Montgomery tells her that her little daughter in law is very beautiful and as you say dear Harriett I long to see them together. We are doing our best to fit Willie to make an accepted bow to the young lady some time hence.

I rejoice to hear that Mr. Brice is expected at West River and sincerely hope that it will not be necessary for him to leave his Country and family any more the sacrifice must be too great. I leave a postscript for Mary and with respectful remembrance to Doctor Murray.

I am my dear friend with sincerest affection, yours truly and unalterably,

Catha Few

Mama has left me a place for a P.S. my dear Aunt Murray and I gladly avail myself of it tho it be only to remind you of your niece and tell you she loves you with undiminished regard and thinks of you very often not without a hope of renewing my acquaintance with you and your dear family and bring (?better able?) to enjoy such a privilege that I was when we met before. but I know not when it will be unless you could be prevailed upon to visit us a The Rocks is this quite out of the questions? I am glad to hear that my dear Mariann has thought of visiting us. I hope she will be induced to avail herself of some of the opportunities that occur every day after she has paid her duty at home or if we could induce Alexander to turn his footsteps towards The Rocks. I think they would be pleased with our wild scenery. We boast some of the charms of cultivation but those who are accustomed to so much, the change would be an unpleasant one, at least for a short time. If they would come we will go together to Wrygand and they will then see the most beautiful part of our beautiful river. Do dear Aunt talk to them about it and say to them how much pleasure it would give to us all and most to myself.

Your ever affectionate,

Mary

*Mrs. Suckley: Her descendants built the large victorian mansion "Wilderstein" located on the banks of the Hudson. It is open to the public as a museum. (w.w.w.wilderstein.org)

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Mrs. Harriett Murray

West River, Md.

politeness of Mr. James Gallatin (written on the side)

direct for me Sing Sing, Mt Pleasant

West Chester County, N.Y.

My dear friend

It is a long, long while, since last I received a line from you, I have heard and with great pleasure, that Mr. Brice has returned to you and some rumor has reached me that he has been in our City if so, I can only say that I truly

regret that he has not taken us in his way, and gratified his friends at Sing Sing tho it had been but by a short visit the facility of traveling up and down the Hudson River is now so great, that it detains the traveler but a short time, and puts them to no inconvenience. I had hopes also that I should have seen Alexander and perhaps your dear Mary Ann. My daughters and myself had much talk about their visit to us at this place, before we left the City but I fear as the summer has so near ended that we shall be disappointed Wherever your dear son has been, I hope it has pleased God to restore his health. I sometimes fear that you have not received my last letter, it was written in the Spring, and I have daily been expecting an answer hoping that you might have fallen in with my plan of inducing him to have passed some time with us in pursuit of health instead of visiting Bedford Springs. This place has become quite celebrated for its healthful and reviving effects on debilitated and weak habits. I still hope we shall not be disappointed in seeing some of your dear family and that there may be no delay in coming to us, if they should be so disposed tell them that every day a steam boat leaves New York from Murray Street wharf for this place at 9 o'clock in the morning fare 4 shillings, lands them within a very short walk of our house, and a wave of the handkerchief, when they stop at the dock, tells us when our friends are on board and some of us are with them directly. My niece and nephew, Mr. and Mrs. James Gallatin have been spending sometime with us, and are now returning to Baltimore. Should you see them they can inform you more particularly of the best route from Maryland here, and will say more to you of the health and beauty of this place.

My dear Mother has been in a very declining state this summer, I have passed the last 3 weeks with her. Alas my beloved friend, it is but labor and sorrow with her now, she has reached her 82 year. Still I bless the Lord for it, her mental powers are as vigorous as ever her faith and hope, in gracious, and oft times in lively exercise but sight and hearing both have failed in an afflicting degree. She often speaks of you and I fear I have not as I ought to have done, told you that she remembers you with tender affection.

Frances and her children are well, she has shared in our disappointment, thus far, in not seeing Alexander and his dear Sister, indeed she calculated on it with more certainty than I did myself.

I have been much pleased in reading the memoirs of Jane Taylor. I am sure she was one whom you would have approved and loved while on Earth and one in Heaven among the blessed and redeemed ones with whom we hope to spend a glorious Eternity. accept the little Vol. my dear Harriett from your friend, who while reading it often turned in thought to you as to it's kindred spirit, and felt that it would be pleasant to bring you acquainted.

My Love to all your Dear family, and ever believe me, most affectionately and truly yours,

Catha Few

Mrs. Murray
 Woodstock
 Doctor William Murray
 West River, Maryland
 Postmark—Fish kill Landing, Sept 27th

Weyland, Fishkill Landing, September 26

My dear Friend

With some solicitude I waited for the arrival of Mr. & Mrs. Jackson at Mount Pleasant, having heard through the medium of their friends that you were ill. At times I thought of writing, but not receiving a letter from you for a long time, I feared, and almost dreaded to address one to you. I have had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Jackson only for a moment, but in that moment she communicated the welcome intelligence of your restoration to health, for which mercy I bless and thank the preserver of our lives, may He, our compassionate God, long continue you on earth for a comfort and solace to your children and friends. Perhaps my beloved friend would rather reverse the petition and say prepare me for a speedy and abundant entrance into the Kingdom of glory, the rest which remains for the people of God. Alas, indeed there is not much here to detain us, but

“Those doubts those gloomy doubts that rise between.

“Could we but stand where Moses stood”

“and view the landscape o’er

“Not deaths cold stream nor Jordans flood

“Could fright us from the shore _ _ _ _”

My Sister Maria writes that she fears you suffer a painful anxiety respecting Mr. Brice, is it so? How glad should I be to hear that he had returned to you in safety and prosperity. The sacrifice must be no less painful to his affectionate heart than to that of his dear Mothers Will you tell me what detains him so long, and what are his prospects of advantage; that they may be fully realized must be the wish of all who know him. We could not but flatter ourselves that we should have seen your dear Alexander this summer both at this place and Mt. Pleasant. He has I hope recovered his health tho we all should have been glad to have contributed to that event by our care and attention had he favored us by his company. I may truly say there is not country more beautiful, no air more salubrious. Should I ever meet with a good opportunity to go and to return, I still cherish the hope of making you a visit, as for Mr. Few ‘tis impossible to move him in that direction, and indeed I may add in any other since our location at The Rocks. It is a sweet place, but I still say, remains destitute of interest to me, it wants the charm of religious or even intellectual society, and glad indeed should I be to escape to Woodstock where my taste for both would be amply gratified, I have been led to renew my thoughts on this subject by the hope I had some months since of seeing your dear Son and feeling that if practicable I should like to have returned with him. Still I know not whether I could have accomplished it. Mr. Jackson says West River is healthy only

comparatively it compares not in that respect with our northern regions, altho it has the advantage of most parts of Maryland. Had this world been an abiding place, I think the divine goodness would have cast our lots together for our sakes and for the sake of our children, who from all I can hear have great similarity of taste and feeling, and you may say to your dear Maryann that I know I am paying both myself and them a great compliment and say also for me, with the most affectionate remembrance to her, that my fervent aspiration to God is that they may be all united to each other in the bonds of Christian love here, and trained by the various dispensations of his divine providence to them in this changing and transient scene, to dwell together where every bless feeling of our renewed and sanctified nature shall be forever perfected.

Frances has been suffering the usual anxiety of fond parents. This summer her children have both been sick, the little girl soon recovered but her William was long ill with the Dysentery, he is now quite restored to health, and we are making her a short visit. I think we shall return to the Rocks next week, and remain two or three weeks longer before we take up our Winter residence at Park Place ___ Mary, who has become a great traveller, has made a visit to Quebec this summer, taking in her route the Falls of Niagara. She has returned delighted with her tour, traveling in all I think 1500 miles. She was absent from us however but 5 weeks, such is the expeditions made of traveling through means of steamboats and canals (?) pursue their way by day and by night with little (?in?) It would seem impossible that from New York to the City of Montreal in Canada, a distance of nearly 400 miles is now accomplished by travelers in 4 days. What would our ancestors have said at such a revelation of wonder? and what a day of enterprise do we live in. Matilda and myself have remained at home, now and then enjoying visitors from New York, but passing in general a quiet summer in the enjoyment of family mercies. Frances bids me give her dear Mrs. Murray her best love and tell her it has distressed her to hear that she has been ill. ___ Mary and Matilda have gone to Newburgh on a short visit but I can say truly we all unite in affectionate love to my dear friend and to her Husband and Children. Believe me yours as ever,

Catha Few

*year-1826 ?

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To Mrs. Catharine Few
Sing Sing
Mount Pleasant
West Chester County, New York
Postmark - West River, Sept. 29th

West River, Sept 28, 1826

You are kinder to me my beloved Friend than I deserve, and I felt the full force of self reproach when your last welcome letter came to hand. I had determined many times to write you, and had been prevented by one circumstance or another, but when my dear Brice arrived I immediately resolved I would communicate the glad tidings to you, as to a friend, whom I knew, most kindly participates in all my joys and sorrows, but when he told me of his intention

of going on to New York (and from thence to Boston), saying at the same time "Mother you must write to your friend Mrs. Few, for I am determined to call and see her". I thought most assuredly I will write. but, the opportunity by which I was to have forwarded my letter to him in Baltimore did not occur, as I expected, and I was disappointed, as afterwards I found he was, in his intention of seeing you. There seems something like a fatality attending the intercourse between our families and we all regret it very much but we are obliged to submit to circumstances. It would have been a much pleasanter trip to Alexander to have accepted your kind invitation to the Rocks, than going to Bedford, but his case became so serious, and he was so much urged by all his friends who had tried those waters to go immediately on, that he could not consult his own inclination. I am however happy to say the result of his visit has been most favorable four weeks at the Springs has wrought a most wonderful change, both in his looks and feelings, and I trust will eventually make a cure of him.

You are very kind my dear friend in wishing for the society of my children, nothing could be more flattering to them, or more gratifying, could they accept of your friendly invitation, but under existing circumstances, it is next to impossible for them to leave home with any degree of convenience. Indeed they are so essential to their father and mother's comfort and so seldom leave us that we feel lost without them. Yet we are not so selfish as to wish to deprive them of the pleasure of going about amongst their friends, but they will not leave us, but on a case of absolute necessity. Since my health has become infirm, I cannot prevail on Mary to stay from me a night, unless in the case of attending a sick person. My dear James has returned in most excellent health with the same warm affectionate heart, and the same devoted son he ever has been. He has never been a single day confined by indisposition since he went to the Cape, which is a most favorable circumstance, as it seems his business will still require that he should make frequent visits there though, he says, never to stay as long again as he had done. It is grievous to me that he should go at all particularly as the state of society is such, that it is an entire sacrifice of his time I hope and pray the good providence of God may point out some way for his arrangement of his affairs that will allow him to stay amongst his friends, who so much desire to have him, and whom he loved so much. The status of religion is at a terrible ebb there, indeed it can scarcely be called a Christian Country. They have not even the form. no church but the Catholic, and that the lowest and most superstitious and ignorant in the whole world no missionary I believe has ever ventured amongst them, and they are very little better than Hottentots, except the few foreigners who go there for the purpose of trade James is heartily tired of them.

Brice called on your relation Mr. Rogers (an old acquaintance of his) of whom he learned that you were all well, and also that Mr. Christie had very politely been in quest of him, hearing he was in N.Y. and had left an invitation for him to come to his house on his return from Boston but his business would not allow him to accept it I wish he could have done it, as I should have liked very much a particular account of dear Frances and her precious little ones, and

also that he should see the Country and elegant situations on the celebrated heights of the Hudson. The time may come I hope when he will be more the master of his own movements, when I am sure it will give him great pleasure to visit you all.

I am sorry to hear My dear kind friend Mrs. Nicholson's health is in so declining a state, but at her advanced age what else can we expect she is exactly the age that my blessed mother was, when she entered into rest, she maintained her faculties to a surprising degree to the last, indeed I have seen persons of 70 who showed much stronger marks of imbecility than she did but oh! the longest life is short, and there is a long eternity of blessedness to compensate for any deprivations they may suffer in this world who have their treasure laid up at Gods right hand.

I can't tell you My dear Friend how much obliged to you we all are for the charming Book you sent me. Jane Taylor is indeed an acquaintance worth making, I admire her much, and Doctor Murray and MaryAnn have both most cordially participated in the pleasure I have received in the perusal of her life. Dr. M. is very kind to us in reading for us while we set at work, and yesterday we had quite a feast. I have read several productions of Jane Taylors, all which have been of a serious cast, and very interesting but her character I never knew before and now I shall prize everything of her writing I meet with I feel a great sympathy with the constitutional despondency that marked her life, and draw (?) from so good a person as she was, having felt the same weakness that (?) me down to the very earth but this, like many other dispensations of Divine Providence we are to submit to we know not now why it is permitted, but we shall know hereafter.

I am a letter in debt to my dear Frances I must by you to say everything that is kind and affectionate for me to her, and that will do as well as a letter. I very often think of you all and should dearly love an intercourse nearer than letters can afford, but as that cannot be, I must submit. My grandson Willie* I hope will not forget the claim I have on him Harriett Murray,* I understand, is a most captivating sweet creature, but I have not seen her for the last fifteen months. I am now in the anticipation of another grandchild in a few weeks, which is always a time of anxiety to me. Give my kindest love to my dear Mary Few, and tell her I appreciate every post script she writes me and I beg she will not forget me. Be pleased to give my love also to Matilda. I hope she will not visit Maryland again without coming to West River. We shall feel ourselves affronted if she does. My husband and daughter desire to be presented to you and yours most affectionately Mary loves you all like near relations

I have not room to say more than Adieu—God bless you my very dear friend I am with unalterable affection yrs. ever,

H Murray

*Willie—Catharine's grandson

*Harriett Murray—Harriett's granddaughter

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York, April 6, 1827

My dear friend

Were I disposed to apologize I might enumerate many things that have prevented me from writing to you but I cannot excuse myself. It is true at the breaking up of the Ice in our river we have generally visitors and friends who stay with me and occupy some of my time and thoughts but of the latter few more than yourself, and my indolence will form a thousand excuses among the most prevailing is "you will have more leisure to morrow or next week, and at best your letters are but (?) of incident, and of thought and feeling you will have more time to indulge without interruption" Thus say I to myself, and in the meantime days follows day till months are past and my beloved friend neglected: and alas, this is but too just a picture of the waste of time, which heedless of my delay is rapidly bearing me on to Eternity. O what gratitude is due to him with whom salvation is a finished work. yet how desirable to testify our love to our Redeemer, by a life of activity and usefulness in his most honorable and blessed service.

I have had Frances her Husband and children staying with me for the three last weeks. She left us a few days since. We talked often of yourself and your

[there is a missing part of this letter]

Bible all the discoveries of Philosophy confirm the Christian. Thee knows that he has not embraced a cunningly devised fable. His own experience and the researches of others respond to this great truth. "It is a light shining in a dark place" God grant my beloved friend that it may shine brighter and brighter on our souls till we behold the perfect day. I have my gloomy seasons too—yours, you say is constitutional, I think it must be so—mine are discouragements of a more disheartening kind "Temptations every where annoy" but I (??) that notwithstanding all, we are on the sure founding The Rock of ages May he forever bless you prays your affectionate friend,

Catha Few

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Mrs. Dr. William Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Oct 25

New York, October 22 1827

My beloved friend

I know not what way to address you. I cannot doubt that a paragraph which met my eye in a Newspaper a few days since, conveying intelligence from Haiti and calculated to rend your maternal heart, is but too true. I fear it must be so and as I have thought of you day and night since, I can no longer forbear to express my deep sense of this most afflicting providence. May God support you

my precious friend your covenant God who has promised that in six troubles he will be with you and in the seventh never forsake you" Here we cannot stay, here we have not abiding place, and Jehovahs infinite wisdom has appointed the bounds of our habitation. He removes his creatures from this world of sin and sorrow , at that place, and at that time which is best for them, our separation from our beloved ones cannot be long I have been sadly occupied in looking back at the sorrowful events which were attendant on the birth of your dear lamented Son and the many afflictions which have marked your early days. They have passed away as a vision of the night* and so my loved Harriett will all present occurrences, however dark, however inscrutable, but what we know not now, we shall know hereafter "God is his own interpreter", in the light of Eternity all will be made plain and the redeemed of the Lord shall forever see cause to wonder and adore thus may we comfort one another, his holy word authorizes us so to do. Tho well I know 'tis himself alone can bind up the broken heart of his afflicted ones. Yet as a poor creature that has been sorely tried, tossed to and fro in the day of adversity, let me admonish you my dear, dear friend, suffer not your mind to be tormented with any doubts, with any temptations pray that you may be shielded from a conflict so severe, so unavailing Of the circumstances of which have attended this sad event I know nothing but this I do know, your dear departed, had been taught from his infancy to look unto Jesus in every extremity And that gracious ear is ever open. He hears the feeblest cry.

If you cannot write to me will not your Mary Ann or Alexander drop me a few lines With my sympathizing remembrance to my dear afflicted young friends let me request one of them to write to me when this has been received. I long much to hear from you.

It is just 4 months this day since I had fallen down strained the muscles and broke the small bones of my ankle it has been a very severe hurt. I can now only walk with a cane from room to room. We have returned to our residence in the City.

May the God of all grace and consolation be with you my beloved friend. I need not add with what love and sympathy my children and family desire to be remembered to you and yours, I am your ever affectionate,

Catha Few

Mr. J. E. Brice, the son of Mrs. Murray by her first marriage died 1827 at Haiti, his father Mr. Edmund Brice died 1785 when the son was 4 weeks old.
[The above note was written in pencil, probably by Frances Few Chrystie]

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Note in pencil: This letter is misplaced, it should be read after the following one
 Mrs. Doctor William Murray
 Woodstock, West River, Maryland
 Postmark New York, May 1

New York, May 1, 1828

My dear friend

You have now arrived at your peaceful home and I trust your afflicted heart is by this time calmed into a tranquil resignation to the divine will. Ah, did we know all could we see the end from the beginning with what sincerity should we say "let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". The dealings of our heavenly Father are in perfect love to his people. He afflicts not willingly There is a need be for all his wise allotment; viewing him in the abstract as the just and holy one, we may well tremble and hide our guilty heads; but to us He has revealed himself as "The Lord, The Lord gracious and merciful". "He hath loved us with an everlasting love". "He will wipe away all tears from our eyes". He came "to bind up the broken heart" and no sweet expression of love, compassion, and tenderness has he withheld from his people and you my precious friend may gather them up. They are fragments scattered throughout his blessed word for our support in the dark and cloudy day of temptation and suffering which we must needs endure in our way to the promised rest. and my beloved friend our journey is almost over. Let us take courage, and comfort one another if we should arrive even to the threescore years and ten, the distance is short to us and then together we shall praise him and most for the severe. I remember your own quotation in a letter to me many years since "Good when he gives supremely good" "Nor less when he denies"(?) and we shall find it so. At present let us plead "Lord increase our faith". "We do believe help our unbelief". I sometimes feel as if I held repeated conversations with you and then regret that it is all visionary but I comfort myself that it will not be always thus. We shall unite with the thousands that have gone before with the beloved ones whose departure once desolated our afflicted hearts with each other who had been so long separated, we shall unite, we shall sing the song of triumph "He hath loved us," unto Him be all the glory.

I believe that I wrote to you that we had lived the last two winters very retired, and have had nothing to do with the gay and dissipated world that surrounds us. We have found our time pass more pleasant certainly and I hope more profitable than in former years. Ah, I trust we shall yet both say dear Harriett "Here am I and the Children thou hast given me O Lord".

Give my love to your dear family. Mary Ann and Alexander, I have their friend Frances with me, her husband and herself, I humbly hope, are both travelers to the same holy hill. Mary is often an example to me, she has devoted herself to the best of all masters and with scarcely any change, in the view of others, I behold with inexpressible gratitude to the Lord, that He is perfecting the good work in her soul altho it is probable that she would not be pleased that I should make so favorable a report of her even to my friend and we need to be jealous of each other and of ourselves.

Matilda is cheerful and satisfied with the quiet of home. She is not in good health, but I pray that the Lord will make all her disappointments and sicknesses to work together for her everlasting good. Mr. Few like your good husband delights himself in serious books or rather religious books which together with the news of the day constitutes all his reading. I have been able to attend public worship this winter, but once on the Sabbath and that in a carriage. My lameness still continues, but I think it is gradually getting better.

My dear Mother, whom you so often kindly enquire of is very feeble, all that was intellectual still remains, but she is nearly blind and very deaf still patient and resigned waiting till her change comes.

Little Willie with his mother has been staying with us for some time past. Last evening his father arrived with his little Sister. The little creatures were delighted to see each other and when they went to bed Willie called his Mother to him and said Mother you know Harriett Woodward is my Wife, but I think I would rather have Mary if you will. She is a dear little thing and I do love her. So, my dear you see we talk and think about you and yours and I would be truly glad if the sweet Harriett should never have a more formidable rival than little Mary. May the blessing of our covenant God rest upon them all.

None of the family know that I am writing to you or I am sure they would affectionately unite in love to you. Remember me with respect and affection to Doctor Murray and believe me yours as ever, most truly, my beloved friend,

Cath Few

Do you know any thing of Mrs. Commodore Murray. When I again have the happiness of hearing from you please to mention her, and give my love to her if she is in your neighborhood.

MSA SC 2301-2-34

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, N.Y.
Postmark June 20, 1828

June 19, 1828

I will not attempt to apologize to you, My beloved Friend, for my long silence. You will not I am sure attribute it to my want of affection, of that I am not capable; but it seems as if sorrow had cast such a blight over all my faculties that I am not equal to the least exertion of either body or mind, and although I have been urged by my love for you and a sense of gratitude for the several dear letters you have lately favoured me with (and the soothing sympathy you have expressed in them) to write, I have been unable to get myself to do it. My state of mind has been such that I could not attempt to communicate my thoughts or feelings without causing an excitement too painful to bear, more especially in addressing you, my dear Friend, who are tenderly interested for me, and can better, than most other, judge how sore a bereavement I have sustained. The bitter and most aggravating circumstances I forbear to relate, because I find it harrows my heart almost to breaking. But I feel that it is not for a worm like myself to say to the Lord of the whole earth what doest thou? I strive earnestly to submit to his blessed will, and draw my consolation from the promises of

his holy word. But alas! the natural despondency of my constitution with such a weight of affliction added, presses me down so that I can in no wise lift up my heart to even hope that these promises are for me. Oh! if these trials do but tend to purify the soul; then I shall experience tis good for me that I have been afflicted, and all will be well if I am made a partaker of his holiness.

My health still continues very delicate, but I am a wonder to myself that I am as well as I am. God has mercifully spared me yet many blessings, particularly, the most affectionate and attentive Husband and children I am seriously afraid that my poor Mary will injure herself by her continual anxiety and watching over me. I cannot prevail on her to leave me even to visit a neighbour for a day. She has grown very thin and looks miserably. We very often talk of you and your dear children, and wish it were so that we could enjoy your society. We have a few friends around us in whom our hearts are interested and who express affectionate sympathy for us; but we mix very little in society of any kind, particularly at this time. I sincerely rejoice with you that dear Mary Few has chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her. May she enjoy all the happiness that a full surrender of her heart to God can afford her; and then she will experience how poor in comparison everything is that this world has to give.

Mrs. Comd. Murray has been for some weeks past in our heighborhood. I delivered your message to her, which seemed very gratifying to her. She says the recollection of the times you have passed together is very pleasing to her. She shall never forget them, nor cease to feel a sincere attachment for both you and your dear Mother. She desired me to remember her to you in the most affectionate manner. Mrs. Murray's health is very delicate indeed. She still has a cough, has grown very thin and looks quite ill, her views seem extended far beyond this scene of things.

I have not written so much for many months and find I cannot enlarge. My Husband and Mary both desired me to give their best love to you and your daughter, not forgetting dear Frances. When you see your Mamma assure her of my love.

I am my ever dear Friend, Unalterably yrs with true affection,

H. Murray

*James Edmund Brice,(best of sons) died Aug. 11, 1827 in Haiti. Harriette must be referring to this bereavement.

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
Woodstock, West River, Md.

N York, Park Place, October 1, 1828

M dear friend

It is a long while since I received your letter and I ought to have answered it long ago, but I have availed myself of the indulgence which I knew you would extend to me at this time. No exertion seems more painful than writing after the agitations of sorrow and the anguish of bereavement this you know yet it

is time now to thank my beloved friend for the kindness of her sympathy and the continuance of her love to a poor unworthy creature. We have returned to our sad and desolate home at first it was inexpressibly sad and is still solemn indeed, every object, every article of furniture every thing we rested our eyes upon spoke to us of the loss we had sustained "Gone and left it all behind". This was the voice that pursued and still pursues me wheresoever I turn. But I have a good hope that he has entered into that City which hath foundations with this we comfort ourselves. Feeling continually that here I have no abiding City and that the time is short, I pray that I may be ready also, knowing that our separation cannot be very long and soon very soon shall there be a glorious meeting of those who have died in the Lord O to secure that important result to die in the Lord May he be pleased to increase our faith We have no merit of our own, all our salvation is in Christ and we are not straightened in him The lord was very gracious to us in our time of need and tho I cannot look back on my various exercises in the hour of sorrow with any complacency, and taking a still farther retrospect (even through the long period of our married life) I feel deeply humbled and self abased yet hold, fast my confidence and bless the Lord for his condescending and long suffering mercy that he has not suffered me to be tempted above what I am able to bear.

The rod is still held over us. My Sister, * the youngest among us and the Benjamin of her aged Parent is very seriously ill in Albany where she resides. It has been so for several weeks her life is a most valuable one to her dear children My Frances had just left her and returned to her home at Fishkill and I have this hour received a letter from her speaking of her Aunt she says "She is in the hands of God, he knows what is best for her and her children, in this world there is truly but little worth living for and it is all passing away. I was all anxiety about her while I was with her but as I sat in the steamboat yesterday I felt what a changing dying scene it is and how much better it would be to say "Thy will be done" I trust my F feels the benefit of sanctified affliction.

In this season of sickness I hope you and your dear family have been preserved in health. Remember me most affectionately to them. May the Lord comfort and bless you all, and cheer our poor sorrowful hearts with the blessed hope of a reunion to those beloved ones, who have gone, and entered before on that blessed rest where there shall be no more death and where there is fullness of joy.

I am yours my beloved friend Most truly,

Catharine Few

*Sister : Jehoiadden Nicholson Chrystie (Mrs. James Chrystie)

*Col Few died at Fishkill 16 of July 1828 (this note was written in pencil by Frances Chrystie)

Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

N York, Park Place, December 9 1828

My dear friend

You have not written to me very lately and I want much to know how you are, how you are passing this winter, whether you are enjoying the repose of your retirement at Woodstock and possessing that peace of God which passeth all understanding. After the agitating scenes of distress which we have to pass through when death invades our dwellings, and rends our hearts nothing I think so calms the Christians mind as when time and meditation has had its perfect work and we are permitted without excitement, in the quietness of solitude to meditate on the perfections of God and to review the way in which he has led us all has been necessary for us, and all will in the end work for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Yes my dear it will be so and I hope you have surmounted the depression which you tell me besets you, so far as to believe this truth rejoice in the assurance of it, which your Lord has given you and take the comfort of it. How is your health, have you passed the autumn without the sickness which is usual in your country and which has severely visited ours in many parts in a most uncommon manner. It seem so long since I have heard any particulars of your dear family and their domestic arrangements that I hope you will indulge me soon and write particularly. My thoughts and time have been a great deal occupied in business and circumstances, which at first was exceedingly distressing, but has now become more familiar to me, and I turn my thoughts to you and yours my dear friend with their usual and indeed increased interest and long to hear from you.

A dark cloud still hangs over us and we are uncertain what will be the issue of the protracted illness of my dear Sister Chrystie. It is 4 months since she took to her bed and her symptoms now appear to be those of a confirmed consumption. Still there are circumstances that encourage us to hope her valuable life may still be spared. Her mind is calm, and her hopes are fixed on the sure foundation. She has had many and severe trials which I trust has led her to look above this world for a resting place for her Spirit, but O how great loss would her removal prove, at least to our short sighted view as it respects her dear Children, who are an interesting family, consisting of 4 Boys under the discipline of an austere and rigid Father* Once and perhaps still, an eminent Saint and Minister of the Gospel but who under mistaken views left the Church he was in communion with, and joined a Sect of Presbyterians called Covenanters, gloomy, bigoted and intolerant. This has had a sad effect on his family and indeed has separated him from all his friends who are not of his own denomination. Our dear Adden* has been the sufferer but the Lord knows in what way to prepare us for himself. "He bringeth the blind by a way they know not". My dear Mother is deeply affected by this visitation and trembles with anxious solicitude, but I trust is enabled to say "Thy will be done".

Frances and her family spend the winter with me, her health is not very good. She looks pale and is very thin. She tells me that it is very lately that she has

written to you and with affectionate love begs to be remembered to you and also to your dear Mary. I never write to you or speak of you and yours but the first impulse is to regret our long separation and the distance that divides us, more especially as there is so much cordiality in the love of our children to each other and such similarity of taste and pursuits. I check myself, however, thinking that the time is short and I humbly hope our heaven will receive us all and reunite us to those who have entered (?)

*“One army of the living God
At his command we bow
Part of the Host have crossed the flood
And part are crossing now”*

May our blessed Lord and Savior bestow on my beloved friend all grace and consolation is the sincere prayer of her affectionate friend ____ ____

Catharine Few

*Father: James Chrystie (older brother of Albert Chrystie)

*Adden: nickname for Jehoiadden

MSA SC 2301-2-35

Must be referring to this bereavement.

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—West River, May 15th 1829

May 14, 1829

I had become very uneasy, My beloved Friend, at not hearing from you. My fears suggesting the melancholy cause of your silence, in which event, my heart most truly sympathizes with you, as with those of her family to whom she was so deservedly dear. For although I had not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with your precious Sister*, I have heard enough of her character to convince me that her death must be a sore bereavement to her family and friends. Indeed such instances of mortality, so young, so useful, so much beloved, claims more than a common interest in all who have heard of her. But this is the tenure on which we hold our dearest treasures in earthen vessels. Blessed are they who are enabled to resign them, when called for, with a holy submission, and to view such dispensations as directed by the hand of unerring wisdom, love and mercy Alas! I know how apt our hearts are to cling to those dear ties, and how incapable, without divine assistance we are to surrender our own wills. I am truly glad to hear you have the charge of one of the dear Boys. I trust he will be as sure a blessing and comfort to you, as I know you will be to him an affectionate and tender Mother.

And now my dearest Friend, what can I say in return to you for the affectionate interest and solicitude you have always evinced for me and my family. I have not words to express half what I feel for your kindness. Your heart which is acquainted with all the better feelings can better conceive that I can describe how much I appreciate your friendship and how grateful I am for your liberality to me. The Note came safe to hand, which is indeed a valuable acqui-

sition to me on many accounts. More especially as it will enable me to follow the advice of my physicians who all urge me to leave home, as they think the change of air and scene will be more conducive to my health than any other means I can use. I mean to accompany Dr. Murray to Chester Town, to visit his aged (and only) Sister* whom we have not seen for several years, and who expresses a great desire to see us. After going through the circle of his relations for a few weeks, we shall return and if my health is not improved, it is probable (God willing) I shall try the use of the Bedford Springs; but this I trust will not be necessary. For few things could be proposed more uncongenial to my feelings than a trip of that kind. To one who lives so retired a life as I do, the very thought of mixing with such a concourse of people, all strangers, is distressing to me.

I wrote to our dear Frances a few weeks ago, but I have not heard from her since. I am glad to hear she spent the Winter with you, as I know it must have added to the pleasure of you all. You do not mention her health. I therefore hope it is better than when I last heard. I fear there is now less probability than ever of seeing any of your dear family in Maryland. Mrs. Montgomery's* removal from Balt. has lessened the attraction; but should they be induced to visit our State, I trust they will remember there are those at West River who love them sincerely, and who would be grieved not to see them. Our Country is now very pretty, nature is dressed in her most beautiful livery. I am sure you would admire it were you here. I do not entirely despair that one day or other I may hold you to my heart even under this humble roof. I sometimes try to realize it. It would be a pleasure almost amounting to pain; yet I should like to make trial of it.

My Mary Ann begs I will say something to you particularly for her, for you are one of those she loves, tho' she has never seen. She says she is sure you would not be able to distinguish the Mother from the daughter. She looks so old and broken, that is not literal, but she certainly is much changed and has grown very thin, In fact she confines herself so much to domestic affairs and suffers herself to look so much on the darkside of everything that she is quite care worn. She desires me to offer her affectionate love to you, also dear Mary and Matilda.

I am thankful to say, although our prospects have been gloomy, my mind has never been oppressed with fear of what might happen, respecting pecuniary affairs. I have always been enabled to look up with confidence to my God, that I should never want what is necessary for life and Godliness. Indeed everything in this world seems passing so quickly away, that there is nothing permanent enough to fix our hopes and desires on but what has a reference to Eternity.

I have written until it is too dark to enlarge. I must bid you adieu for the present my dear Friend.

Believe me to be most gratefully and Unalterably your affectionate,

H. Murray

*Sister—Hannah Nicholston (Mrs. Albert Gallatin)

*Sister—Dr. Murray's sister Elizabeth—married to John Thompson of Queen Anne County. In 1829 she was 85 years old. She lived to be 97.

Mrs. Montgomery—Maria Nicholson (Mrs.. John Montgomery)

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River, near Annapolis, Maryland

Rhinebeck, 31 August 1829

My dear Friend

I rejoice that the experiment you have made has so much contributed to your better health and spirits. It is not only the pleasure you enjoyed while absent but I am sure that your "peaceful little home", as you call it, was the more lovely when you returned to enjoy it. We are so constituted that even age needs its excitements and without them we are in danger of degenerating into dullness and apathy. Dear old Mrs Thompson* how affecting, how interesting is your description of this venerable lady and how nearly resembling one whom I have before my eyes continually My dear Mother was 85 last Febry, I will not say that her faculties are almost as good as ever they were, they are entirely so, and she seems to me to be as susceptible of pleasure and pain as she ever was. In our recent afflictions, particularly in the occurrence of the last sad event, tho borne up in the first moments of distress almost to miracle, yet now the tears of anguish at every recollection of her beloved daughter stream down her venerable face and sighs deep as youth can give breath from her troubled heart.

With you my beloved friend I say "fain would my soul take a firmer hold on the Rock of Ages". What have we now to do but to gird up the loins of our mind and what is there but our own unbelief to prevent our preparing onward, looking and longing for the coming of our Lord but while I know this, I feel the weights that press me down to earth. It is not any anticipation of earthly good that binds me down, all such chimera's are gone. I no longer deceive myself, but where is that blessed experience which so many have attained to, who can say with the apostle "for me to live is Christ and to dies is gain".

I have been absent from the City since July, most of the time has been past at Fishkill with my dear Frances who is most pleasantly situated there. It is a genteel and social neighborhood. Their church is well attended and their clergyman a sensible and devoted Christian and who has reason for much encouragement by the accessions made to his church and by the increasing morality and seriousness of the neighborhood. there is also an excellent Academy where young men are pursuing their classical studies under the superintendence of 2 ministers who occasionally assist the stated clergyman. Albert is an Elder in the Church and exceedingly interested in all it concerns. Frances very much engaged in her Sunday School which she tells me is progressing delightfully and is constituted of children who are almost out of the pale of civilized society, and it is distinct from the school attached to the church. So I flatter myself that my dear Children are useful in their generation and this my dear friend give me unspeakable comfort.

Mrs Nicholson from Annapolis spent a week with us at Fishkill. She told me she had seen you a short time before she left Maryland. You are somewhat acquainted with this Cousin of mine, I wish she lived nearer to you, I cannot but hope that she is a sincere Christian and I know that she is a most amiable

woman. She was much delighted with her visit to us and charmed with the neighborhood and the country, it is indeed in a state of high cultivation and the scenery is grand beyond description I told her that I hoped you and her would meet again soon, you would talk of old friends and perhaps you might encourage her to pursue the narrow path that leads to life. We need to hold up each others hands. Mrs. Nicholson gave us a most interesting account of a young lady, Miss Mercer, in your neighborhood, who Mary says is an intimate friend of your dear daughter. How delightful to hear of such philanthropy such excellence and what an example of true dignity does she exhibit to her own sex. O that it were more generally imitated. How much wretchedness would the daughters of many families that we have known have escaped. and who can but lament that so many young persons attach such a value to fashionable and idle life. Willies little Harriett Woodward Murray, as he always calls her at full length, will understand (?) better. O what a blessing is a Christian education. I delivered your message to the young gentleman and after some time, perhaps days, I asked him if he remembered it. He told me yes, that his little wife was a good girl, going to school and learning her book nothing more William said I O yes and that she is very pretty.

I am now at Rhinebeck, spending a few days with a dear, sensible and most pious friend, Mrs. Garretson. She was a Miss Livingston and upwards of 30 years ago married a Methodist minister, a native of Maryland. We have been acquaintance from youth and for 20 years intimate friends, passing every year, more or less time, beneath each others roof. Her residence is 30 miles from Fishkill and tomorrow or next day I shall return there where I have left my Matilda. Mary is with me. We unite in love to you and yours my beloved friend.

Ever your affectionate,

C Few

*Mrs. Thompson- (Elizabeth Murray Thompson) Dr. Wm. Murray's older sister

MSA SC 2301-2-36

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York

Dec. 17th, 1829

I am ashamed my beloved Friend when I know how long it has been since I addressed a line to you; and how ungrateful it must appear to you, that your precious letter should have lain so long unanswered. Most frequent and affectionately have my thoughts visited you, and often have I determined to write, but circumstance have been such, that I could not. I do not plead the want of time, but events have occurred in my family, which has disqualified my poor shattered mind for communicating with my friends in a way satisfactory, either to them or myself. Early in the Autumn, Alexander's Wife presented us with a fine promising little daughter; an event I had looked forward to with great anxiety on the dear Mother's acct, whose health during her pregnancy had been very delicate. When the child was born, and the Mother appeared to be quite as well as could be expected, we thought the cloud had passed over;

and that with such an acquisition to our family we should be happier than before, and that we should have a dear little pet to play with, to enliven some of our dark hours. But it pleased God that it should be otherwise. The infant suddenly sickened, and died the ninth day. Though its stay was very short, it had twined very closely round its Mother's heart, and parting with it was a sore affliction to her. She became ill herself, and was confined to her room two months, a great sufferer with a gathered breast. She has at length nearly recovered her usual health, and I trust will be spared as a blessing to us. She is a most amiable excellent woman. Since Mary's recovery, Doctor Murray has had a very severe attack, attended by a most violent cough, which so prostrated his strength and debilitated him that I suffered great alarm on his account. I thank God his distressing symptoms have subsided, and I flatter myself he will be soon well. One who has been trained in the school of affliction as I have been, would, it should be supposed, have at least acquired some firmness of mind to meet trials of this kind but alas! I am the weakest of the weak, and faint under every chastisement. I am humbled, and ashamed before the Lord, and implore more strength, for of myself I can do nothing. I fear I am one of those who will go halting all my days.

Long ere this I suppose you have returned to your Town residence for the Winter. I want to know particularly how you and your dear daughters health have been this Autumn. There has been a great deal of sickness, but very few deaths in our neighbourhood. There has been very few cases of bilious fevers in our family; with the exception of Doctor Murray and Mary, we have been uncommonly well.

Since my return from the Eastern Shore, I have not been in Annapolis. I should have been much gratified to have seen Mrs. Nicholson* after her return from New York; that I might have asked her the numberless questions respecting you and yours which I wished to do. I should also be pleased to be better acquainted with her, Nothing draws my heart towards anyone so much as their being pious, and since her widow-hood, I have understood she has become a consistant Christian.

When I write to you my dear friend, I do it without any reserve, believing you will make due allowances for my incoherences and other defects. To any other than yourself this scrawl would need an apology. I have been very minute in stating the particulars of my family concerns; but your interest for them I am sure will excuse me. You cannot be too particular in telling me all about those who are dear to you. How is dear Frances? Will she spend the Winter with you? Tell Willie* his sweet little Harriette* has been very sick, but is now a little better. My William has a very sick family. He urges his Father and Mother to go to him this winter, but I cannot leave my dear cottage. My Mary Ann desires much love to you and your daughters. She is the same devoted daughter as ever and a great comfort to our old age.

Have you met with any new religious work lately? I have just read Mrs. Huntingtons life, with which I am much pleased. Have you read Erskine "On the freeness of the Gospel" I have a particular desire to know what you think of it.

I have written enough to tire you. Adieu my ever dear Friend, believe me to be always yours with true affection,

H. Murray

*Willie—Frances Few Chrystie's son

*Mrs. Nicholson—Catharine Few's relative

*Little Harriette—William and Maria Murray's daughter

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York, 1 March 1830

My dear & precious friend

I have but poorly requited your kind solicitude, not that I have been insensible to your request that I should write immediately on the receipt of your letter for I have vainly wished to sit down undisturbed and tell you how much I thank you but I will suffer myself no longer to be put off I was not sensible that so long time had elapsed since I had written to you. The winter has passed I know not how only this much I can say. I am humbled at the recollection of my unprofitable life and misimprovement of precious time. you have been afflicted with watchings and anxieties your husband and your children have been visited with sickness and bereavement, but the Lord has spared them to you all I hope, except the little stranger "who only tasted of life's bitter cup" no cause for sorrow if rightly viewed but a young mother feels keenly a stroke like this. Doctor Murray you say was again restored to the family circle. I rejoice with you my dear friend. O that by all our chastisements and all our discipline in this world, we may at last be fitted to join the blest circle above, embracing in one unbroken union all whom we have loved on earth ah! if we could keep this end in view knowing that the things seen are temporal how willingly should we acquiesce in the disposal of our heavenly Father come what may. The time is short. The hand that directs, wise and gracious, knowing the end from the beginning but we are rebellious children.

Frances has been spending the Winter at Fishkill to which there is no access but through the Highlands, a rough journey of 60 miles. The Ice is now giving way and we hear the sound of the steam boat bells again at our wharves. I hope I shall soon see her. She writes in very good spirits and I hope has been not unprofitably occupied. She says she has a Bible Class of young ones who meet at her house once a week and a Sunday School that she attends, which with the education of her children seems fully to engage her attention.

It is happy for us my dear friend that our children are not dependent on the excitement that fashion and company gives for their enjoyment, and it seems among the perverse things of this world that we who think and feel so much alike and who have transmitted the same inheritance of thought and feeling to our families should have been separated so wide asunder even relations do not supply the place of such associations for it is the sympathy of mind that forms the sweetest bond of union. Mary and Matilda draw a small circle of friends round them and in occupation are engaged much in the same way as their Sis-

ter at Fishkill. Matilda is delicate in health and inclines to disease on her chest to which our climate particularly disposes. I have felt a little, but I hope not too sensibly, some derangement in our pecuniary affairs. The failure of a Bank in Jersey and the breaking of a Manufacturing Company in the same place has materially lessened the abundance which we possessed. Still we have enough and more than enough should we be so unhappy as to misuse the bounty of Divine Providence, which is still richly poured around us. It is a chequered scene and godliness alone is great gain with contentment.

Our press teems with new publications, some of them are excellent, and I often wish I could pass them over to you when we have read them. Mrs. Hutchinson Memoirs and Erskins last work on "The Freeness of the Gospel" is among our collection. I will not tell your what I think of it, only that in the winding up of the subject I was constrained to say tho much of it is devout and sweet and the talents and merit of the author unquestionably great, yet the subject remained as mysterious as ever. Since that I have seen it reviewed in the Christian Observer, which with me is a standard work, they are not severe, but tender to "The justly respected author" tho "no vain notions of mans wisdom, no theories of even the most brilliant imagination can solve the difficulty or may be permitted to if they could". This is their view and their language.

Remember us my most dear friend to all your family circle, God grant that you may all long be spared for a blessing to each other. In affectionate love to you and yours, we all sincerely unite.

Ever thine,

Catharine Few

The above letter is in answer to Harriett's letter dated Dec. 17, 1829 (letter # 34 P. 57)

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, May 17

New York, 17 May 1830

My ever dear friend

Your letter tho gratifying was humbling to me, I cannot but feel that I am unworthy of the kind sollicitude that you express. My Sister Montgomery, while writing to Mrs. Nicholson, heard a passing conversation on the subject of a visit to Maryland, conversations which often recur, for there are moments when I feel as if I could surmount every barrier, she wrote to our cousin and why she did so I know not, that we had determined to set out this month. Dear Mrs. Nicholson and you my dear friend, in consequence of this communication have indeed affected me by your tender and affectionate invitations. Still, I am no nearer my visit than I have been. and should I ever accomplish it, every desire I have to enjoy the society that Maryland affords would my beloved friend I know I should meet all that is congenial, much that would say to me prepare to dwell with them in heaven in "the City that hath foundation" I do not give up the thought of seeing you even in this world, yet it passes over me more as a pleasing dream than any thing real.

I have had a visit from Francis Scott Key of Georgetown since I last wrote to you, it was in all respects a most agreeable one, he talked with me much of you, of your dear family, of your blessed Mother and indeed politely offered to convey me to you, if I would take him as my escort, but you know not how I feel, and yet perhaps you do, ruminating on what has past, inactivity of mind and body as to present and future exertions, and compelled only by duty to go forward. I believe these are natural consequences as we approach the boundary of human life. It is truly a becoming period for reflection and happy for us if as we descend into the valley and shadow of death our hearts are comforted and cheered by the anticipations of an eternal day. I have often admired the sublimity of that beautiful passage in the prophet Isaiah 60 Chapter 19th & 20 verses. I hope my beloved friend you do repel the gloom which you tell me is constitutional with you and enters so deeply in your religious exercises. I think we sometimes witness sad consequences from this mental depression, and it is one of the dark dispensations that we so often see real christians subjects of it. I believe every thing is to be obtained by prayer, and it can be the only remedy in this case, unhappily it often brings with it an indisposition for this gracious exercise, but let us remember "as a Father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth those that fear him".

Tell your dear Maryanne she must never think that "Frances has given her up" that cannot be, her attachment to you and yours is most sincere and permanent and the visit that she made you at West River has impressed a respectful, affectionate and indelible impression on her heart, nothing she talks of with more pleasure and never without regret that our lots were cast so distant. I have seen her but for a few days since last November. I have been contemplating making her visit for some weeks back, but business and other circumstances have prevented me. We shall not as a family leave town this Summer, tho some of us will be occasionally absent, yet our house here will not be deserted. I mention this because I should be so much pleased to see any of your dear family or friends here, who may be traveling for health or pleasure. If Maryanne could come to us we would take her under our charge and soon accompany and convey her to Frances, who would quickly free herself from all household interruptions and with her friend drive around one of the most beautiful and delightful countries in the world. The mountains of Fishkill are celebrated and the Hudson river, with the scenery on its bank are inimitably fine.

I beg you my dear friend to remember me most affectionately to Doctor Murray. I hope that he has quite recovered from the effects of his late illness, may it be among the all things to him that shall work together for his eternal good.

I should not do justice to my dear Mary while mentioning the sweet remembrance that Frances has of her visit to you; did I not say that she loves you all and we all unite in affection to yourself and dear family.

Yrs My beloved friend,

Catharine Few

I shall make an effort to send you by Mrs. J. Gallatin very interesting life of Doctor Payson.

MSA SC 2301-2-37

[letter torn]

June 24, 1830?

Mrs. Frances Chrystie

With much pleasure I acknowledge the rect. of your last letter my dearest Frances, for which I beg you to accept my best thanks. It came so much sooner than I expected, that I could scarcely believe my own eyes that it was indeed from you. In the first place let me offer you my sincere congratulations on your acquisition of a dear little daughter, which happy event I had never heard of till announced in your letter, and I feel half affronted that two months should have elapsed without my being informed of it; as you must know the interest I have in all your concerns, particularly one so important. I am truly rejoiced to hear that the little lady has safely arrived, and I pray that she may crown the fondest wishes of her parents and be indeed a blessing to you both. You do not tell me her name, which I have a curiosity to know. I shall feel acquainted with her as soon as I am informed. As to my Grandson (elect), I think I should know him if I were to see him, without being introduced, having formed an exact idea of what kind of child he is. You must tell him I have now got his sweetheart with me, who is in my eyes one the loveliest creatures, both in temper and feature I ever saw of her age. What I would give to see them together!

Nothing could be more gratifying my dear Frances than the friendly invitation you and Mr. Chrystie have given my Son*, and no trip could be proposed that would give him more pleasure or do him more good. Most heartily do we wish it were in his power to accept of it; but necessity compels him to stay at home. He has no manager on the Farm but himself, and so much of our family comfort depends upon his exertions, that he thinks it would be a break of duty to neglect his post at a season too when his presence is necessary.....feels unwilling to give up the idea of visiting you, he comforts himself with the hope that there may come a time when he shall be able to accomplish a jaunt that accords so entirely with his wishes. Of this you may be sure, you will see him if it is ever in his power. He desires his best love, with many thanks for the kind attention you have shewn him.

The state of mind you describe my beloved Frances though not pleasant, may be salutary, you are not the first I have heard acknowledge, that amidst every gift that Providence could bestow (as it respected temporal blessings) they have felt a void the world could not fill, indeed those feelings are peculiar to those who have nothing to wish for in this world. But be the cause what it may, the effect is blessed, if it turns our hearts, with full purpose, to seek that happiness which God alone can give, and which we know he is willing to bestow on those who diligently seek him. The only danger attending this state, (to a mind at all addicted to melancholy) is not receiving the bounty of Providence with the thankfulness that is due, for temporal blessing, and having gloomy desponding thought respecting religion. This I trust you will be preserved from. I well know how much it embitters life, and I have suffered much from it. A great deal of our comfort depends upon natural constitution. Religion changes our hearts but not our constitutions, and the mind is so con-

nected with the body, that it is often pressed down by it. May you My Dear be blessed with the sense of the love and goodness of God, that will enable you to say from happy experience, His ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths peace.

William Murray brought his family down to stay with us a few weeks about ten days ago. I have stolen away from Maria* and the children to scratch these few hasty incoherent lines to you, which I hope you'll excuse. Mary sends a great deal of love and congratulations to you. She is much engrossed with the children who are great pets with her.

Have you not suffered much with heat? The weather has been uncommonly..... us. We all unite in begging to be presented to Mr. Chrystie in the most favourable terms. When you go to The Rocks give much love to your dear Mother.

I remain as Ever your truly affectionate,

H. Murray

I do not know whether you are acquainted with Mrs. Steele (Mrs. Murray's daughter of Annapolis) but her severe affliction seems to interest all who have heard of her. Her lovely daughter Isabella, who has been an idol in her family and beloved by all who know her, is on the verge of the grave, taken off by the most rapid consumption I ever heard of. How do we hold our treasures in earthen Nepels by a very frail tenure.

*Son- Alexander

*Maria- Isabella Maria (Stirling) Murray, William Murray's wife

MSA SC 2301-2-38

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—Oct. 1st 1830

West River, September 30th 1830

It is a long long time since I heard from you, or since I have written to you, my beloved Friend; but as you generally spend the summer months in the country, I thought I would wait until your return to the City, (which I suppose is about this time) when I should sooner have a reply and now I feel quite impatient to know how you are, and beg you will gratify me by writing soon. This is a season of the year when one feels a greater anxiety on account of absent friends, as it is often a time of sickness and death; God grant you and yours may be exempt. I have great cause for thankfulness, that our own household have been very healthy. But I suffered a severe affliction in the death of a dear nephew (the eldest son of my beloved Sister Rogers), a man most deservedly esteemed and loved by all who knew him, whose life was of as much consequence to his family as any individual could possibly be; and whose death has occasioned a desolation of heart not to be described. He has left a widow with eight young children, and an aged Father, besides many who looked up to him as their earthly comfort, to deplore an irreparable loss. He had a very lingering illness, the symptoms of which admitted alternately of hope and despair, but which at length terminated on the brain. You can better conceive, than I can

describe, the scene of distress this bereavement has cast around his family and connections.

I have also cause of much sorrow in the death of one of my oldest and much loved friend, who died a few days since. We have been intimate from our childhood, and her many amiable qualities, and excellent disposition, together with her affectionate attachment to me, rendered her very dear to me, Dear creature! She has suffered much for several years with bad health, and the last interview I had with her, she was so much changed I scarcely knew her. We had been separated for two or three years, in which time she had suffered much from illness; but her heart had suffered no change towards me. Feeble as she was, she met me with all the warmth of affection she ever had done, and appeared delighted to see me. She was just about leaving home to visit her daughter, from which visit she never returned. She died very suddenly. The particulars of her death I have not yet heard; but her memory will be cherished by me as long as I live. I do not know whether you have any recollection of this friend of whom I speak. She was Miss Jennings* of Annapolis, who was a gay girl when you visited there. She afterwards married Mr. Carroll* of the same place, where they resided. She was left a widow about 18 years ago, since which period, she has spent the greatest part of her time with her daughters, who are married, but always kept her own house in Annapolis as her home. She has now I trust a better home "Eternal in the Heavens". I have heard, with great satisfaction, she expressed perfect resignation and willingness to depart.

And now, my dear Friend, let me enquire particularly how you are, and your dear children. When did you see our precious Frances and her sweet little ones? How is her health? Does she ever talk of her friends at West River, or wish to visit them again? With what joy should we greet you or yours if you can persuade yourselves to come thus far to see us. You sadly disappointed us all last Spring, but we will forgive you, if you will come to us as soon as you can. There is such facility in traveling now, that you would find, if you can but turn your back on home, you will be with us in a very little time. Mrs. Commodore Murray gets from Philadelphia to West River in a day and a half, and from New York I suppose, it would not be more than a day longer. I cannot give up the hope that you will try to surmount any difficulty that may lay in the way, for it would gratify your friends exceedingly, and I flatter myself it would give you pleasure also. Mary Ann sits by me, and begs to be affectionately presented to you, and your dear daughters more particularly Frances, whom she wishes to hear from very much.

Your sweet Cousin Fanny Nicholson paid a short visit to our neighbourhood this summer, she is a great favorite with all who know her, and I wish to be better acquainted with her myself. She came down on a wedding occasion. Kitty Murray* was married at her Sister Thomas's and Fanny was one of the attendants. As they all went off the next morning, there was no visiting among the neighbours.

My pen is so very bad and I am writing by candle light, I fear you will hardly be able to decipher this scrawl.

I must bid you adieu my beloved friend. Do let me hear from you as soon as you can make it convenient, and believe me always yours with true affection,

H. Murray

My husband is just come in, and request me to give his love to you.

- *Miss Jennings. – Ann Jennings, daughter of Attorney General Thomas Jennings, married Nicholas Maccubbin Carroll, brother of James Maccubbin Carroll, who married Sophia Gough, Harriette Woodward Murray's second cousin.
- *The Commodore's youngest daughter

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New York, 25 November 1830

[To Harriet Murray]

My dear friend

How shall I thank you for the affectionate interest you take in the welfare of me and mine, I ought to have written before and since I received your last letter about a week, my mind has been a good deal exercised in the intended voyage of my dear Matilda who means to pass the winter in Savannah. I thought she would have sailed this day but it is deferred until next week. It is a trial for me to part with her but I hope it will be useful to us both. I need more weaned-ness from creatures, more devotedness to God and more readiness to do and to suffer all His holy will. Why are we so faithless and unbelieving when all things around us show His power and wisdom, and the blessed word so often reiterates His love and compassion towards us but we see thro a glass darkly "what we know not how we shall know hereafter" and how very soon will the light of eternity break in upon us, when adoring, we shall acknowledge "He hath done all things well" who can help sympathize with that venerable and afflicted Saint bowed down under a weight of years and mourning over one bereavement after another but the consolations of his God are not small Dear Mr. Rogers like his divine Redeemer many sorrows have compassed him about but for these light afflictions, light when compared with endless loss, shall work out for him an eternal weight of glory. The promise remains sure. O that he may feel all the consolation that it is calculated to inspire and be enabled to rejoice even in tribulation.

I sent your letter to Frances. I know that she will feel self reproached, but I can truly answer for her that her delinquency has not been want of sincere love and respect, for in that she will never fail as long as the recollection of her visit to Woodstock remains. You say my dear that you feel such an unwillingness to leave home. I well understand you. I can give no greater proof of it, than that my reluctance has overcome my sincere desire to behold you once more in this world. How much have I to say to you of conflicts within and without, tho the latter are comparatively small. My dear Matilda leaves us this winter to avoid the rigor of our climate. She has a complaint on her chest, which tho it does not amount to illness we hope a southern winter may remove. Our family is increased by the addition of two sons of my dear Sister Chrystie who are at college and a grand niece, a girl of 14 years, of Mr. Few who came to us a short time before his death, she is a destitute orphan. and it is a blessing that we are honored to contribute to the welfare of these interesting children. Still

I feel it to be a great charge and one that I could not have undertaken had it not have been marked out as an indispensable only by divine providence. My Mary will remain with her Mother and like your Mary is a great blessing to her parent May the Lord reward them both and bestow upon them the riches of his grace in large measure. Give our love to your dear Daughter. I cannot but love her. She has a double claim upon me, the child of my beloved friend, and from education and habit very much I fancy so at least, resembling my own but here a mothers love may mislead me.

You make an apology for your letter so neatly written that I might place it for a copy book. What shall I say for mine! why it is written by the light of a lamp, on bad paper and with poor pen but my friend will welcome it with all it faults, that is my comfort.

I am glad to hear you say that you have as a family been exempt from sickness this summer, and as you do not except yourself I may hope that your general health is better than it has been. Does Mr. Alexander Murray and family continue to reside with you. Remember us to all your fireside, to Doctor Murray with much respect and affection. My sister Montgomery who is at present with me, desires her love to you and you will believe me my ever dear friend,

Your affectionate,

Catha Few

MSA SC 2301-2-39

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—Dec. 10th, 1830

West River, Dec. 8th, 1830

I know my beloved Friend you will sympathize with me and the family of my dear William, in the severe affliction with which it has pleased God to visit us. Our darling little Harriette Woodward is no more! She died of four days illness of the scarlet fever; and the night her dear father returned from her funeral, he found his precious and only son had been seized with the same disease, and he also expired on the fourth day. I need not tell you how heart rending this event has been to us all. The sweet little girl had entered her seventh year, and her brother was just four years old, but this chastisement has been mixed with mercy and consolation to me. The dear parents have both been wonderfully supported, and enabled to resign their children with perfect resignation to the Will of God with a true Christian spirit, and a firm belief that the Lord never needlessly afflicts his creatures, and with fervent prayers, that this dispensation may be sanctified to the furtherance of his good work in their souls. Poor Maria was in a situation which I feared would make it dangerous to her being in the eighth month of pregnancy; but it has pleased God to preserve her through her sore affliction, and I trust will make her the Mother of another dear child. I wish I could show you the letters my dear son has written to me upon the occasion. I am sure you would love him and adore the grace that had power to sustain him through such a trial.

I got your three welcome letters by the last week's mail, and am sorry that your dear Matilda's health should make it necessary to go to the South this Winter. I trust divine mercy will restore her to perfect health and grant you a happy meeting at the time appointed. According to custom, I have put off writing till a late hour by candlelight, but as tomorrow is post day, I would not defer writing another week. My husband desires to be remembered to you in the most acceptable terms, and Mary Ann charged me to give her affectionate love to you. She feels flattered that you should associate the idea of her with that of your dear Mary. She says she is afraid, perhaps, you would not think so favourable of her if you knew her; but I am sure you would. In justice to her, I must say she is the best of daughters, and a great blessing to both her parents.

My dear Alexander and his wife* are living with us. Indeed, I do not know how we could live without them. She is a most amiable interesting woman and is a daughter indeed to us. I want you to see my family and know them. Then I could tell you many things respecting them that would not do to write about.

Please to give my best love to your dear Mary. Tell her I have not forgotten her, tho' I fear she has me. To your dear and venerable Mother and also Mrs. Montgomery I beg you to make my love acceptable.

Good night my ever dear Friend, Believe me yours with unalterable affection,

H. Murray

* wife—Mary Young Addison, daughter of Rev. Walter Dulany Addison and Elizabeth Hesselious Addison.

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River, Maryland

New York, 16 December 1830

My most dear friend

Sympathy is a feeble word to convey to you my feelings at the sad tidings which your letter communicated. Sweet Babes they have been early removed from a sinful and sorrowful world. They are gone to be ever with the Lord. May their afflicted parents be enabled to rejoice even in tribulation, severe indeed is the stroke, and He only that wounds can heal. I pray that you may have that faith in living exercise, that looks at things unseen, that endures seeing him that is invisible.

You tell me my dear friend that your children are greatly supported by divine grace. O how often does the Lord communicate a sacredness and elevation to his people in times of their deep distress. May He continue with them to bless them with his gracious presence, and hereafter may they be enabled to record with the multitudes of the redeemed in heaven and earth "that it is good for them that they have been afflicted". How near is the eternal world brought to us when by painful experience we are laid low, confessing, and feeling what shadows we are, then does the Lord often graciously make us to behold that ladder that Jacob saw, angels ascending and descending, consoling and supporting his afflicted ones, ministering to those who shall be heirs of salvation. I

have seen this more than once, this heavenly calm resting upon the soul and nothing then so much dreaded as the rude breath of the World to disturb and interrupt the repose and solemnity of the Believer's Spirit. The light of eternity will soon break in upon us. Then we shall know the whys and the wherefores. We shall no longer see thro' a glass darkly! Then, we with our beloved ones, who are only gone before, shall praise him for all that is past, and adore the wisdom and the love of every dispensation.

At present my Spirit is in heaviness, respecting my dear Matilda. I wrote to you that she had sailed on the 1st day of this Month. On the 5th, as you will have heard, was the commencement of a most violent gale, and every paper brings to us news of distress and loss to the poor mariner. We have reason to fear that my dear daughter was exposed to its fury. It will be some time before we can hear from her. The gale was most violent off the coast of Maryland and Virginia. How far it extended we know not. My consolation is that I have reason to trust that she has made the eternal God her refuge and knew where to look in time of trouble. but still I must feel very anxious until I hear farther.

May God bless you my beloved friend. Mary and myself unite in sympathy, and affection, and prayers, with you and your dear family. I am my dear Harriett, for so I must call you still, your ever affectionate.

Catharine Few

MSA SC 2301-2-40

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—Jan. 21, 1831

January 20th 1831

Many thanks to you, my much loved Friend, for your letter of tender condolence and sympathy. Nothing can be of such comfort in the times of affliction (next to divine support) as an assurance of an interest in the hearts of those we love, and who love God. We have suffered severely in our late bereavements, together with the illness of my dear William and family, but there has been much blended with the chastisement. God was pleased under the rod, not to withhold the blessing of the staff. My children seemed to have so deep a conviction of the goodness and wisdom of God in his dispensations, to his creatures, and their utter inability to judge what was best for them, that they yielded to his divine Will, with a resignation and submission that seldom occurs, though not without the anguish of heart that parents must feel under such a calamity.

I felt sincere concern at the anxiety you were suffering, when you last wrote, on account of your dear Matilda and we have ever since been searching our newspapers every week, for tidings of the Florian, but without success. I hope and trust; however, that your heart has been set at rest on that subject long since; and that your information respecting your dear daughter has been such as you could wish. This inclement Winter must make you glad that she has got to warmer climate. The frost here has been uncommonly severe, and such a snow as fell on Friday, Saturday and Sunday last, has not been seen in this part

of the world for more than half a century. As you are so much farther North than we are, I suppose you have had it in proportion.

The kind interest you expressed in your last for my dear William, induced me to send your letter on to him, knowing how soothing to a wounded heart such sympathy would be. He was indeed very much gratified, and both Maria and himself requested me to return their grateful acknowledgements to you, and to mention them in the most acceptable terms to you.

I got a letter from my dear Frances the other day, which gave me sincere pleasure. Indeed the subscription I greeted like the countenance of an old friend. If I could give her half as much pleasure by my letters, I should not be backward in addressing them to her. If you have an opportunity, do give my affectionate love to her, and tell her when this rigid frost relents a little, I shall be mindful of my debt to her.

My husband and Mary Ann desire me to make their love acceptable to you. My daughter says, of all people in the world she wishes to see you. She said the other day, though she has not seen her Brother for eighteen months, and loves him dearly, she had rather see you than him. When will you gratify us? Can't you and our dear Mary Few meet Matilda thus far on her return? Then you will give pleasure to a great many. Think of it I beg.

My fingers are very stiff and cold. I must bid you farewell for this time my dear dear Friend. Do let me hear from you soon. I am anxious to hear from Matilda. Believe me with unalterable affection ever yours,

H. Murray

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New York, 10 February 1831

[To Harriet Murray]

My dear friend

Your kind solicitude for my Matilda ought to have been attended to "ere this, when I closed my last letter to you, was the commencement of the most depressing anxiety on her account. After having been out 16 days we heard the vessel had not arrived and great fears were entertained for her safety as it was deduced to a certainty that she had encountered a most tremendous storm, but on the 18th day she appeared in Savannah river, with torn sails and every appearance of maritime distress. Our friends there immediately wrote to us that the Felorian was in sight, and the next post brought us a letter from our poor wanderer. They were in great danger and suffered much, but my dear daughter gratified me much by saying "I expected a watery grave but felt composed, awaiting the will of my heavenly Father knowing that I had humbly committed myself to Him". Her health is good, indeed her indisposition was trifling when she left us, if the slightest pain in the chest can be called so, when exposed to so vigorous a climate as this. We are now enveloped in hills of snow and ice and it is many weeks since the bare earth has been seen in our streets, and the depth of snow with the unevenness of the surface takes from the pleasure of riding and indeed renders it unsafe as well as unpleasant. My pleasures lay chiefly in my own family at all times, but I regret most that it

separates me from dear Mother more than I could wish. She is very feeble and often very much indisposed. Ah my dear who can look at old age, extreme old age and desire to have life extended to its utmost bounds. "Let me die the death of the righteous" that is all, let this be the sum total of our desires, and in this view how much is there to console and allay the agony of a bereaved parent's heart, they (our little ones) have entered the haven before the storm arose but peaceful submission to the will of God is the gift of his own spirit and your dear afflicted children have been enabled and privileged to witness to older christians the power of his all sufficient grace let us praise him for it. Has Mrs. Wm Murray* been confined since the loss of her sweet children and is she doing well. Has Mrs. Alexander Murray* who I think you wrote me was still living with you, an infant, you must write me in detail that I may have some acquaintance with all yours.

What in the reading way has engaged your family circle these long winter evenings. I seldom read any thing new that is worth any thing that I don't wish I could convey it to your fireside. Frances was engaged with Professor Milmans History of the Jews, she found it very entertaining, but after closing the Book, its reminiscences were unpleasant to her mind, she could scarcely tell why it is decidedly unfriendly to spiritual views of divine truth and is severely criticized as such by the Christian Observer Have you seen it?

Remember me affectionately my dear friend to Doctor Murray and all your family circle. May God bless you all is the sincere desire of yours most truly and tenderly.

Catharine Few

If I do not mention Mary's love it is that she is not at home to charge me with it.

*Mrs. Wm. Murray (Isabella Maria Stirling) lost 2 children to Scarlet Fever, see Harriett's letter dated Dec 10th 1830 (#37 p.62)

*Mrs. Alexander Murray (Mary Young Addison)

MSA SC 2301-2-41

Mrs. Frances Chrystie
care of Albert Chrystie, Esq.
Fishkill Post Office
North River, New York
Postmark—Annapolis, March 11, 1831

Annapolis, March 2nd, 1831

I thank you very sincerely, My beloved Frances, for your last affectionate letter. I acknowledge you have very little inducement to keep up a correspondence with me; yet it gave me so much pleasure to have a proof, from under your own hand, that I am remembered by you that I am unwilling to forego it. Certain I am I never received a letter from you that I did not answer, there must have been some mischance in my getting yours, or you mine, for I never forget favours of that kind.

Your letter found us suffering under the bereavement of our precious children. A selfish grief it may truly be said, when we view the event in the light

of eternity; but there are feelings that are hard to separate between a proper resignation to the Will of God, and the breaking of those tender ties so closely "twisted with the fibres of the heart", and which I believe His own Hand has planted there. I own I felt much, but I hope I had no rebellious thought respecting the dispensation. The parents lay much upon my heart, and I suffered as much for them as for myself. Such a blow seldom occurs two lovely children* carried to the grave in four days and at a most interesting age; but the mercy of the Lord sustained and supported them beyond anything I had an idea of. Since that severe period of trial, it has pleased the Almighty to bless them with another Son, and has restored the other two children to health, and they say, the poor Mothers spirits have somewhat revived, having her mind occupied by the care of her infant, which I understand is a very promising one.

I had a letter from your beloved Mother a few days since, wherein she informs me that her anxiety on Matilda's account is relieved, at which I most sincerely rejoice. And I trust she will be restored to her in perfect health. The account you give of your dear Mother gives me heart-felt pleasure. I know no reason why she should not come to Maryland again; if she would only make up her mind it could certainly be done. I was so much disappointed at her not coming last Spring, that I will not promise myself again without having a good foundation for my hope. I proposed that she should come as far as this, to meet Matilda on her return (who I take it for granted will return by land) but she has passed over that part of my letter in silence, therefore I suppose, she has not taken it into consideration.

Do you never think of visiting your friends at West River again my dear Frances? You can't think how much it would gratify us all, to see you under our humble roof once more. Mary Ann and myself very very often talk over the pleasant days we passed together. Now I have another Mary to introduce you to, whom I am sure you would approve of if you knew her. What have you been doing this cold confining winter? I suppose reading a great deal. Mary Ann has borrowed all she could lay her hands on, but as there were few new books, she has been obliged to have recourse to those she has read before. She is longing for something new. We have been much pleased with the 'Religious Magazine', which is an excellent work, and has much well chosen matter in it, but we have got through them. The "Christian Observer", for the last two or three years has not been in circulation here. I am longing to see some of the new religious publications I see advertised, particularly one highly recommended "Iays Morning Meditations" for every day in the year. Have you read it, and what do you think of it? In our very retired situation, where we have the privilege of attending public worship but seldom, a good book is particularly valuable.

The Spring seems to be advancing delightfully, the breaking up of the frost has not been attended by a sudden thaw, nor those strong southerly winds, which to me are so distressing. Mary Ann has become busy in her garden; yesterday had her peas planted, and was much pleased to find the ground was entirely clear of frost and in good order for them. I suppose it is not quite the case with you yet.

I can't tell you how much I wish to see you, and to be introduced to Mr. Chrystie, and to hold your dear children to my heart tho' I think it would

affect me much to see Willie his sweet lovely Harriette is gone She was truly beautiful. There was something very remarkable in some of her expressions a day or two before she was taken ill. It seemed as if she had a presentiment of the event, and said she was not afraid to die.

I must bid you Adieu My beloved Frances. Doctor M. and Mary Ann join me in love. May every blessing attend you and yours.

With unalterable affection, Believe Me Ever Yours attached,

H. Murray

*two lovely children—William and Maria Murray's children

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River, Maryland

New York, 18 June 1831

My most dear friend,

Our correspondence is often interrupted as age increases. I suppose it will be so more frequently in the vigor of life, pleasures and duties are entered upon with more energy and greater alacrity, but now I find when I write to you I must be uninterrupted. I must think of you as well as scribble to you, and intrusion puts me out of humor and I put off for tomorrow what ought to be done today, and O, how unfriendly are the occupations of a large City to almost every mental enjoyment. The coming and going of visitors, the business and bustle of other things confuses minds more fitted for active life, and how then shall I escape an influence so unfriendly.

The day of rest is sweet and that indeed we do enjoy. Our Ministry is among the best. And lately there has been an early attention in our churches to religion, numbers of persons, particularly among the young, have numbered themselves among the profiting people of God and we have reason to hope are of such as shall be saved.

I lament my beloved friend that you are so often deprived of the public ordinances of divine worship. It is animating and encouraging to unite with our fellow Christians, to go up to the house of God in company to draw water, the water of life, out of the wells of salvation, but our Great Teacher knows what is best for us and he can and will supply our every want. Soon I trust we shall join in the full chorus above, soon it must be, in the course of nature. Nevertheless, I trust you will be many years spared to your dear family, and your dear Mary's solicitude not to be in vain. O may our dear children feel that our union to the Lord Jesus and that we and they are one in Him.

Now let me tell my dear friend that I have my Matilda home again, much improved in health. this is a dispensation of much mercy, for her peril in her voyage out was indescribably great and many, many were exposed to the same tempest that never returned to recount the dangers of the voyage for it was that which passed them over into the Ocean of Eternity. And my friends here were preparing me by their kind attention, to apprehend what some feared to be inevitable.

I am grieved to see the last accounts from Liberia. Alas what mortality has prevailed among the poor ill fated emigrants. It is to be feared that with all the sanguine hopes of the philanthropists who so ardently have engaged in the noble enterprise, that the climate will present an insuperable barrier. But may not the long wished for discovery of the source of the Niger, now accomplished, be the means in the hand of divine Providence of providing for the Africans a place in the interior more congenial to the health of human beings transplanted from this land.

Mary left me this day on a visit to her Sister at Fishkill. She is to me what your Mary is to you, a dear affectionate daughter. May it please God to bless them both, that they may receive a reward of grace for their filial tenderness, for unworthy as our best services are, there are many promises to those who obey the commands of God.

You wrote in your last that Mrs. A Murray was near her confinement. I hope it is happily over by this time. Remember me affectionately to all your dear family and believe me my beloved friend yours most truly,

Catharine Few

I have stumbled on poor paper again, my ream is not exhausted, but I will try to remember it is not worthy to be called "letter paper" and spare you in future from receiving such a blotted affair.

See letter from Harriett dated March 11, 1811- letter #39 p. 64, written to Mrs. Frances Chrystie

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York, 8th October 1831

My dear Friend

Day after day have I been expecting a letter from you. I hope nothing particular has prevented your writing. It is a melancholy season of the year as it respects sickness and death, but I hope you and yours have been preserved in life and health.

I passed six weeks of the summer months at Fishkill and enjoyed myself very much in the family of our dear Frances. It seems a vain thing for us to talk about visiting, but I know you would be delighted with Weygand, the sweet spot where Mr. Christie resides. The mountains of Fishkill which are scarcely second to any in our Country and which are more beautiful tho not so lofty as the Mountains of Katskill (so much celebrated) are within 2 miles of his house and the beautiful Hudson river, bearing on its bosom steam boats, canal boats etc,etc, innumerable, forms the boundary on the West of his Farm, which is in a state of high cultivation. These are external beauties but how gratified would my dear Frances have been to have welcomed her beloved friends from West River, and, in this world, to have renewed an intercourse which she found so sweet and refreshing and which she had under their own roof the privilege of once enjoying. We talk of you and yours when together, as if we had spent our

lives with you, and instead of the youthful recollections of my beloved friend which I before had. (Since her visit to you) I call you to my mind with your family and children around you and seem in the midst of the blessed circle happy in the love of each other and in the enjoyment of that congeniality of disposition and purpose which with the blessing of God forms the sweet basis of earthly felicity for the same blessings I hope I am not ungrateful and I trust we both extend our views and hopes to that better rest, so that full enjoyment where love, in its purest holiest exercise forever reigns. What is before us of our future inheritance we know not, I long to have a firmer hold on future happiness, or in other words, to feel that I have my affections fixed on things above, my mind has sobered down as to earthly expectations, but to anticipate, in the assurance of hope that which it "hath not entered the heart of man to conceive" but, which relying on the word of our God, it is the privilege of Christians to enjoy, or to look and wait for This is that peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Have you my dear friend suffered from fears of insurrection among the Negroes. I hope not. May you never be exposed to any thing so dreadful, as even the fear, which such events give rise to. What a dark cloud hangs over our country Masters and Servants are both to be pitied, and at present Divine Providence seems to point to no remedy but God may have ways and means, inscrutable to us, of deliverance Liberia as a missionary station seems invaluable but is as nothing or "as at drop in the bucket" towards freeing us from the horrors of an immense black population so threatening to us.

I hope I shall hear soon from you. Your excellent Brother, Mr. Philip Rogers,* I have seen by the papers (for I have had no letter from you since the death of Doctor Debutts) is again visited by severe affliction. Dear aged saint, he will soon be relieved according to the course of nature from this scene of suffering and then will he know the whys and the wherefores till then I hope he will be supported by the consolations of God and enabled to bow in quiet submission to his sovereign will.

I desire my beloved friend to be remembered very affectionately to all your dear family. Mary begs to give her love to yourself and your dear daughter. I am (?torn?) Dear Harriett (for so I must still call you) , yours (?torn?)

Catharine Few

My dear Mother continues to languish along, tho now it is a weary pilgrimage, she has almost totally lost her sight, and her hearing is very bad but blessed be God her mind is as sound I think as ever tho of course has lost much of its animation from things around but on religious subjects converses with all her former intelligence and interest. Matilda spends the day with her or would most cordially unite in love to you all.

I fear my letters will at last get to be unintelligible, mistakes abound more and more.

*Philip Rogers—Harriett's brother-in-law, (married Rebecca Woodward, who died Oct 14,1818)

Mrs. Catharine Few
Postmark—West River, Nov 11, 1831

Nov. 8th, 1831

You are....kind to me, my beloved Friend, and I thank you a thousand times for your precious letter, which gave more pleasure than I can express. At the same time I feel ashamed that I should have been so long without writing to you; but so it is, to my own cost I have to lament that "I leave undone what I ought to do". There are few things in the world that rejoices me so much as the recd. of a letter from you, and the first impulse, when I receive one, is to answer it immediately; but I check my zeal, by thinking perhaps you'll tire your friend, you had better wait a few weeks, when she will be better pleased to hear from you, and by degrees I neglect it too long. I really was about to write to you just as your last favour came to hand. For as you observe, it is a season of the year when there is much sickness and death, and I feel a peculiar interest in the welfare of all whom I hold dear. I thank God that I have heard such good tidings of you and yours, and that it is in my power to inform you that me and mine have also been the subjects of Divine Mercy. Our lives have been spared, and we are in as good health as we generally are. For myself, I can say, better than usual. I have not had a bilious attack this autumn, and I think, less of that gloom which you have so often heard me complain of. This I feel is a great mercy; for it seemed to unfit me for the enjoyment of both worlds. The languor of declining life, without disease, seems as much as a mind as weak as mine is able to contend with; but I have a full conviction that whatever the Lord orders for me is best, and I confide in his goodness, that his almighty hand will sustain me under every dispensation his wisdom sees fit to direct of my self I am nothing, and can do nothing

How delightful would it have been to me to have been with you when you were visiting our dear Frances. I have heard much of the beauties of the scenery on the North River and the view of the Hudson, etc. etc., but I had rather have seen you and your dear daughter and the children than all the prospects that could be presented to me; and yet I am not insensible to the beauties of nature. But I want to see you all more than anything in the world. And why can't you come amongst us? You know not half the pleasure you would give.

The insurrection, which has been represented in such an exaggerated point of view, I am happy to tell you, has never given me one minutes uneasiness, as it respects our own situation. We own very few of that unhappy race*, but those who are our servants are also our attached friends, and I should as soon expect any neighbour I have would do me a serious injury as that either of them would. I feel a sincere regard for every one of them, and do them all the good I can, and I have not the least apprehension of their doing or wishing me or mine any injury. Heaven I hope will point out some means for their relief; for in many many thousand instance they are a sorely oppressed people. And there are many who possess them, I believe, who would be glad to dispose of them if there was any way of doing it, so that their situation might be bettered. But as yet, nothing has been pointed out. In our own particular neighbourhood they at present appear as happy and quiet as ever they were. There are great

complaints made by many members of our community, of the inflammatory horrid publications that are issued from the North, calculated to create discontent and breed insurrections, which ought to be sought out and suppressed, but I have seen none of them. I trust they will be over ruled.

You kindly inquire after my dear family, the interest you take in them is very gratifying to me. It is with pleasure I can tell you that Doctor Murray enjoys excellent health, and altho' several years past that age, wherein the Psalmist says, life is but labour and sorrow, is still enjoying everything around him as much as for years past. He has indeed the blessings of the most dutiful, affectionate, and attentive children, which in the decline of life, you know, is the greatest support, and what is still better he draws his comfort from a higher source. These circumstances, together with a happy, even natural temper, makes old age sit easy on him. My dear Mary Ann (who is everything a daughter can be to a mother) is at present in Balt. She was with much difficulty prevailed on to go. She has not been to see her brother for more than three years, but Elizabeth Stirling's (Maria Murray's sister) wedding coming on about this time, and Mary Ann's attendance being insisted on, she consented at length to go. The wedding takes place on Thursday next, the 10th after which I expect my daughter will not tarry long in Balt.

My other dear Mary (Alexander's wife) has been what she deems unfortunate, in losing another little daughter. It was a premature birth and only lived 24 hours. It happened when I was on my visit last spring to my Son. Dear creature, she grieved a good deal about it. But she has now an expectation of another, and she flatters herself she may yet be a mother. Her husband is a great comfort to all of us. I have much to be thankful for. We all are striving to serve the same Master. I believe Alexander is a truly religious man.

My darling friend I write but seldom, but I fear I tire you by being so minute in my details. But this is the way I always treat those I love. Give much love to your dear children. Tell Frances I will certainly write to her ere long. My family join in love and best wishes.

I am my dear dear Friend While life lasts, your truly Affectionate,

H. Murray

please to write to me soon

*unhappy race—The 1830 census shows there were 19 slaves living at Woodstock—15 male and 4 female.

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
William Murray, Esq.
Baltimore
politeness of Miss Gallatin

New York, 4 April, 1832

My dear Friend

Frances and myself have been comparing dates and we find that it is a long time since we have written to you and our letters remain unanswered. I hope

there has been nothing but the delays too common to both of us and to people in general of our age that has occasioned your silence. We have had the coldest and most sickly winter in New York that I have ever known, deaths, and many in the circle of our acquaintance, have been frequent this family have not been exempt from anxiety, My poor James Chrystie, sailed 3 weeks since for the West Indies in circumstances of threatening consumption. You may remember that I told you when we lost his dear Mother,* I had taken her Son and was educating him at Columbia College in this City, he graduated one year since This winter he took a violent cold which has fallen on his Breast and when he left us there was much to fear respecting the event. His brother has gone with him to St. Thomas and we trust if it please God it may prove salutary but it is a most fearful disease and in this severe climate many are its victims but we must learn to submit to the will of the Lord and if the heart has been led to embrace that wisdom which teaches us "so to number our days", we shall have answered the great purpose of living. Still, few things are more touching and more affecting than to see the premature decay of youth, and the elasticity and vigor of manhood brought low by slow and wasting disease. Old age also is an affecting sight, extreme old age is not to be desired and I now never visit my dear Mother, but I return deeply sensible of the afflictions and privations of an extended length of days. Ah, what cause shall we have to rejoice in God, to rejoice when we drop this clod of dust, then we shall acknowledge, altho clouds and darkness have been around his throne, he hath done all things well. Our light afflictions which were but for a moment, and which were grievous, "O how grievous"! ___ were all wisely ordered, in time and circumstances. They pierced our hearts, but they have worked out for his people an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

My niece, Miss Gallatin, leaves for Baltimore tomorrow morning. I send by her to my dear MaryAnn, an Annual, containing some very beautiful engravings, superior to the general style of those publications. and more free from the exceeding nonsense that some of them are marked for remember me very affectionately to her and beg her acceptance.

Frances has gone to spend the day with her Grandmama, we all unite in love to yourself and your dear family. May it please God to bless you and grant you my beloved friend the abiding influences and consolations of his Divine Spirit is the prayer of your ever affectionate and sincere friend.

Catharine Few

*Mother:—Jehoiadden Nicholson Chrystie

MSA SC 2301-2-43

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York

April 21, 1832

I have been anxiously expecting a letter from you, My beloved Friend, post after post, for months past, and I am now so uneasy at not hearing from you, that I have determined to wait no longer. We have passed through a long cold winter since I have had any tidings of you, and there has been so much of

influenza, and other complaints prevailing through the different states, that I have been afraid perhaps sickness might have prevented your writing. I hope and trust not. I am happy to have it in my power to tell you, that Divine Mercy has preserved me and mine to the present period, and that (except a few of the servants), our family has been exempt from an epidemic which has caused much suffering amongst many of our neighbours. My bilious habit, subject me to frequent indisposition and great depression of spirits, but I feel I have much to be thankful for, that I have not violent attacks, and though I am disqualified for enjoyment, I am scarcely ever a day confined to my bed.

As you kindly participate in my pains and pleasures, I must inform you that we have had an agreeable acquisition to our family lately. Alexander's Wife presented him with a very nice little daughter on the 12th of March, and both Mother and child are doing as well as we could wish. It is a matter of great joy to the parents, having lost two before, and I may add a source of much anxiety to the Mother, who is ever watching every look and movement lest something should be the matter with it. Today the dear little creature was baptized and received the name of "Elizabeth Hesselius" after her mother's Mother*. Our pious excellent Minister made a solemn dedication of her to the Lord, which I trust will be ratified in heaven.

I want to know everything about you and yours, do gratify me as soon as you can by writing. How has your dear Mother borne the inclemency of the last winter? People so far advance in years, it is difficult to guard against the changes we are subject to in our climate. Doctor Murray is extremely susceptible to cold, and altho his health is very good, he requires a great deal of attention to keep him comfortably warm. He will complete his 80th year the 12th of July, as I did my 70th on the 22nd of March. How is my dear Frances? I have not had a letter from her for a long long time; but I acknowledge I do not deserve one. Nevertheless I love her sincerely, and am much interested in all that concerns her. E're long I suppose you will be about making a visit up the North River. The spring hitherto, has been uncommonly backward, more so than I remember it to have been for many years, but we have reason to expect pleasant weather soon, when the scenery of that country is so beautiful, that all those who can will wish to enjoy it.

April 23d I had written thus far, my beloved Friend, when you thrice welcome letter was put into my hand, for which I thank you a thousand times. I am sorry to find you did not receive my last letter, not that you have lost much by it, but because I would not appear ungrateful for your kind remembrance of me, every instance of which gives me the sincerest pleasure. Dear Frances's letter, I acknowledge, I did not answer, not that I did not highly appreciate such a proof of her regard, and read it over and over again with affection and pleasing recollections of her; but the truth is I am become so spiritless and stupid, that I think it is impossible anyone, (except a dear long standing friend such as yourself) could receive any gratification from my epistolary communications, and therefore would not tax her. Should she be with you when this gets to hand, say everything that is kind and affectionate to her for me. I shall always love her and rejoice in her welfare.

I sympathize with you, my dearest Friend, in the anxiety, I know, you must feel on account of your Nephew. These are events which greatly imbitters life, and although we have a full conviction that they are under the immediate direction of an all Wise all Merciful God, and that whatever he does is right, and we would not, if we could, take out of his hands our causes, still the mind suffers agony. I have often compared the feeling, to that of the amputation of a limb. We yield to it, because the Physician in whom we place the greatest confidence says it must be done; nevertheless we must in the operation endure torture. May God grant, your fears may not be realized, respecting the dear youth. If they should, may He sustain you under so severe a trial. I can enter deeply into your feelings.

The beautiful Annual you sent my Mary Ann came safe to hand. I cannot express to you how exceedingly gratified she is by your kind remembrance of her. She desires me to give, (with many thanks) her most affectionate love to you, and says there is but one thing that could have made it more valuable to her, which is that you would have written her name in it with your own dear hand. She very often repeats to me, that there is no one in the world she wishes to see so much as yourself, but fears were she to be so happy as to have an interview with you, it would lessen her in your opinion; as she thinks you have formed an idea of her that would not be realized. It is well to have an humble opinion of herself. I can only say for her, she is all that a dutiful affectionate daughter can be to me.

It is so dark I can write no more till I can get a candle. What have you been reading this winter? I have been very much pleased with the perusal of a work which I had often heard recommended highly by my dear Mother, and which I could never procure before, (being with us a very scarce book) "Jones on the figuration language of Scripture". If you have not read it, you have a great pleasure to come. I should like to know what you think of it. I have also been much pleased with some of Robert Hall's works.

My paper warns me it is time to conclude, but must first deliver a message from my Husband. He desires me to give his love to you, and begs to be affectionately remembered to your dear Mother. He says you must tell her that his Sister Thompson* is still living; and at the advanced age of 89, is enjoying pretty good health, and has the use of her faculties so as to take pleasure in the society of her family and friends. We all unite in much love to your dear daughters.

I remain my ever dear Friend unalterably yours with true affection.

H. Murray

*Sister Thompson—see note on letter #33, dated May 15, 1829

Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

Weygand, Fishkill Landing, 11 July 1832

My dear Friend

In this "day of rebuke" I know you will be desirous of hearing what has become of us and where our place of retreat is. As for the last, we know not where that can be found. It is only "under the shadow of the Almighty" and it seems to me as if the present dispensation is eminently calculated to teach that lesson.

I had determined to spend part of the summer at this place, but did not propose to leave the City quite so early, but as the sad scourge seems to be most among masses of people, and as it is desirable at any rate to be all together, that is my children and myself, the day, previous, to the first report of the Board of Health which we were assured would be issued, we made preparation for coming to this place. So far it continues healthy up here, and those, my Mother, Sisters, etc. whom we have left, have been preserved, and we wait in solemn expectation, day by day, trusting that the Lord in the midst of deserved wrath will remember mercy. Numbers have left the City, but many chose to remain where medical aid can be more promptly afforded. Still the poor City sits solitary and the hum of business is very much suspended . . . may the almighty grant that the people may learn righteousness had you witnessed as I have altho my walks were not extended to the vilest haunts, the profanation of the sacred day and other abominations you would not wonder that the hand of the Lord should be stretched out in judgment. We seemed to be fast hastening and following in the train of those European Cities where the threatenings of God have been utterly disregarded but still there are, there, many, many righteous and the Lord is "merciful, gracious, and long suffering" may he grant the Spirits gracious influence, that by this means appointed by himself a great moral change may be effected.

You will not wonder my dear Friend that the all absorbing subject of Cholera should engross me, still, my mind often wanders toward you and yours, may God preserve and bless you all that you may ever "dwell in the secret place of the Almighty and abide under the shadow of his wings." Your dear letter I have left in Town and therefore cannot answer it particularly.

I left my dear Mother very weak, declining fast but looking and longing for the coming of her Lord. It pained me to leave her at this time. My nephew has returned from the W.Indies, much improved in health altho I cannot say recovered altogether, he looks well but his cough continues.

How inadequate is the communication of letter writing to convey to dear friends what we desire to say pleasant and precious in many respects but thought cannot elicit thought conversation assists and communion and fellowship is enjoyed. imperfectly, even then and we will look for the full enjoyment in that blessed state where so many of our beloved ones have entered and where we hope to rejoice with them forever and ever.

Frances, Mary and Matilda all unite in love to the dear family circle at Woodstock.

Yours my beloved friend, Most sincerely,

Catha Few

Jane McWilliams noted: See report of colera epidemic in NYC July 1832, web page: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/15/science/15chol.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
Also a lot on other websites.

MSA SC 2301-2-44

Mrs. Catharine Few, care of Albert Chrystie, Esq
Weygand, Fishkill, Landing, New York
Postmark - Aug. 7th 1832

August 3, 1832

You judged rightly, my beloved Friend, in believing I was anxious to hear from you at this time of sore calamity and I should have written to you immediately on hearing the cholera had reached your City; but I was uncertain where to direct to you. I took it for granted you would go into the country, but did not know where you might think the safest situation. I am truly glad to hear you and your dear children are together; and I pray that you may all be protected by the Almighty hand on whom alone we can depend in time of trouble. I am extremely anxious to hear from you, and to know whether the dreadful malady has spread farther than the City. We know nothing but what is related in the newspapers; and so little does truth prevail, I hardly know whether what is published, is to be depended on. Therefore my dear Friend, I hope when you find it convenient you will gratify me by letting me hear from you. There has been some cases of the Cholera, I understand, in Phila.; and I am in constant dread of hearing it is in Balt. My heart holds a very dear interest in that place, and I cannot help feeling great anxiety for those whom I love who are there. Even if they should not fall victims to the disease themselves; they must necessarily be much distressed should the City be visited with such a scourge. All the comfort I have is, that it is in the hands of the Lord, who is unerring in Wisdom, and orders all things in heaven and on earth, and who I trust will bring good, out of the grievous dispensation.

The general health of our country is unusually good I think at this time... and in no instance, that I have heard of, has been fatal. Some have flattered themselves that it is the prevailing cholera in a very mild form, but this, I suspect, they rather wish than believe.

We have had Mrs. Com. Murray in our neighbourhood all this summer, and I am sorry to say she is in wretched health. She has been declining for the last two or three years, but last winter she had a very severe attack of the influenza which confined her entirely to her room for months. She was prevailed on by her children to come to West River, to try what the change of air would do for her; but I fear she has received little benefit. We always talk of you when we meet, and she requested me to remember her to you affectionately and to say she still regards you as one of her old friends. She was to have returned to Phila.

this month, but should the cholera prevail, I suppose she will protract her stay where she is.

I am thankful I can tell you, my dear friend, that we are all well. Our family, just now, is a small one; having only Dr. Murray, Mary Ann and myself in our circle. Alexander, with his wife and sweet little pet left us, this afternoon, to visit her Father* and friends on Potomac for some days. I am happy to say the child is healthy and promising, and I hope will compensate her Mother for the grief and pain she suffered in the loss of the two first.

How are your dear daughters? Say everything that is kind for me to them. Tell me all about Frances and her children. All that concerns them is interesting to me.

My daughter joins me in best love to you and yours, as does Dr. M. who bids me say, he is sorry that the physicians who have been successful, in any instance, of curing the cholera, have not been more particular in mentioning the means they made use of; as nothing at this time can be of more consequence to the public.

I.....sincerely on the better health of your Nephew.....all possible care of himself that the good.....I have heard of great effect from the use of the waters of the Sweet Springs (in Virginia) in breast complaints. They are highly recommended.

Adieu my ever dear Friend. May every blessing attend you and yours. I am always with true affection yours,

H. Murray

*This letter had a moon-shape piece of the letter torn from the letter; hence the missing words.

*Alexander Murray and wife, Mary Young(Addison)Murray with child, Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, visit Rev. Walter Dulany Addison, Oxon Hill Mansion.
See previous notes: letter #7–Dec. 10 1807 and letter #23–July 23, 1820

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Mrs. Doer William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

Weygand Fishkill, 11 August 1832

My dear friend

I have this morning received your letter, it contains one paragraph which induces me to answer it immediately accompanying my letter by a pamphlet for Doer Murray "Practical Observations on Cholera Asphyxia" by Doer Kirk of Edinburgh it has passed thro 2 editions in N York and is much thought of, experience having in our City, greatly, or rather entirely confirmed the observations respecting (? promonatory?) symptoms and it also contains much interesting matter respecting the awful scourge that seem progressing through the world. As for the cure of Cholera, so various are the theories so opposite and so unsuccessful the practice, that is not to be wondered that Physicians are inclined to be silent on the subject of remedies. Our City Board of Health have solicited the people "to abstain from the use of fruits, at other times whole-

some, but at the present time in the highest degree dangerous" vegetables are precluded also, and clothing in flannel much recommended. To guard against the malady seems the most that can be done. While many of our citizens have fled, many remain and that of the rich and respectable. We get letters from our friends there, calm, and composed and in truth as far as my information goes it has been the abominable and the imprudent that have fallen victims, altho this is by no means exclusive, for many valuable lives have been lost but when considered that it is in the midst of such an immense population, the deaths have been comparatively few of the sober and virtuous part of the community who are in easy circumstances. With respect to this neighborhood it remains healthy. There have been 2 cases, 1 death both recently from the City and not in the least degree affecting those who attended on them. 15 miles from us, the Village of Poughkeepsie, it rages, and in their county alms house its fatality has been appalling. I do not think from any thing that I have seen or heard that it has visited farm houses or isolated dwellings, it seems to delight in masses of people and ill ventilated dwellings still no one can feel themselves secure, it is indeed the Pestilence that walketh in darkness and is truly involved in deep Mystery but as you say my Dear Friend " it is in the hands of the Lord" and I trust we can both say This God is our God.

Weygand is on the banks of the great river that leads from Albany to New York, both places infected, Fishkill Landing, has therefore been avoided, those who have not friends here, choosing rather to go to the interior. In past summers the many advantages it possesses had caused it to be the favorite resort of our Citizens. Still the country is healthy and beautiful as ever.

Our little William and Mary have had the whooping cough, the last exceedingly severe, and even now she has someone sitting up every night. The danger is inflammation of the lungs. Her mother thinks her much better today. We see little company, our letters and news papers from the City and a delightful library form our most interesting occupation. I rejoice to hear that you and your dear family continue well, and that you have so sweet a little pet* to amuse and comfort you. "The generation of the righteous shall be blessed". May that gracious promise be abundantly realized in your house. My love to dear Mary Ann, I need not say that we all sincerely unite in love to you and yours.

The all absorbing topic of Cholera scarcely leaves me room to beg you most affectionately to remember me to Mrs. Com. Murray, it cannot be long before our generation shall have passed away but O my Sister my friend, shall we not meet, in happier circumstances, many whom we have known and loved on Earth, there where neither sun nor moon molest nor any pestilential vapor shall have a baneful influence.

Some one in writing to a friend makes use of the appellation "Sister of my Soul". Is it not an expressive sentence?

God forever bless you. Your Affectionate,

C Few

*little pet: granddaughter, Elizabeth Hesselius Murray b. March 12, 1832 see Harriett's letter# 41 p. 68, dated April 21, 1832 second paragraph.

MSA SC 2301-2-45

Mrs. Catharine Few
 Care of Albert Chrystie, Esq
 Wengand, Fishkill Landing, New York
Postmark—West River, Md.- Sept. 14, 1832

Sept 10th, 1832

Ever since the recd. of your last welcome letter I have determined from day to day to write to you, my ever dear friend; but indeed I have been in such a state of mind ever since the cholera broke out in Baltimore that I have been incapable of attending to anything as I ought. This must plead my excuse. My heart is always with you, and in all that concerns you I feel much interest. In the late event, of the removal of your sainted Mother, you have had my tenderest sympathy. Altho' you and all who loved her, have the strongest consolation in her death, (from the life she lived,) yet separation from those we hold so dear, must be severely felt, the breaking of such ties.

"Must wake the nerve where agonies are born" I have felt the same, and know how to feel for you. Nature under such trials will have her pangs; and, I should feel sorrow, but not to indulge it as those who have no hope. O, how much to be envied are those who have entered into their everlasting rest. Who, (as she did) has fought the good fight, kept the faith, and entered into the joy of their Lord. I want to know how long her pilgrimage on earth was, also some of the particulars of her last hours, and whether she had the perfect use of her mind to the last. How precious is every word uttered by a dying christian. How sacred the memory of the just.

I have a most perfect and pleasing recollection of her person as it was when I last saw her, as also the mildness of her manners and her kindness to me when I so often use to make visits to her house when she resided in Baltimore. It is many many years ago, but in retrospect is seems but a day. O, what a vapor is life! How rapid have events passed off since that time, and brought me from childhood to old age. God grant that on the final close, it may be found I have not lived in vain. A morbid melancholy so overshadows my mind at times, that I can realize nothing, as respects myself, but that I have come short in every duty and am truly an unprofitable servant.

I have been quite anxious to hear from the dear children in the hooping cough, ere this I trust the worst is over. It is a dreadful disease for a child, and what I am more afraid of for our little pet than any other.

We understand from the papers that the cholera is subsiding in you city. May God in Mercy stop the hand of the destroying Angel, and say it is enough. Its ravages has not, as yet, been in proportion in Baltimore to what it has been in some other Cities, but then have numbers been hurried into eternity and mostly of the most unprepared. This is awful, and keeps the community in continual horror and dread. I can't tell you what I have suffered on account of my dear William and my friends in that quarter. I thank God they have hitherto been exempt.

I have great cause for thankfulness, that our own family and our neighborhood, generally, are uncommonly healthy at this time; bilious complaints are not so prevalent as usual.

Mrs. Murray* was much gratified at your remembrance of her, and desired me to say everything for her expressive of affection. I think the last time I saw her (which was a few days ago) she appeared in better spirits, but she looks miserable, and is very weak and debilitated. As soon as Philadelphia is thought healthy she means to return home.

My husband desires to be presented to you in the most acceptable terms, and returns you many thanks for the Pamphlet, which he thinks a very good one, and very satisfactory.

My daughter, who loves you very much, desires me to present her affectionate love to you and your dear daughters.

Do my dearest Friend let me hear from you soon, your letters are a great comfort to me. My best love to dear Frances and her little ones, also to Mary and Matilda. When you see Mrs. Montgomery*, please to give my love to her.

I am always with sincerest affection, My dear Friend Ever yours,

H. Murray

*Mrs Murray—Mary Miller Murray (Mrs. Commodore Alexander Murray) Harriet's sister-in-law

*Mrs. Montgomery—Maria Nicholson Montgomery (Mrs. John Montgomery), Catharine's sister

MSA 2301-2-46

Mrs. Catharine Few
New York

Baltimore, Nov 1832

I am made quite unhappy, my beloved Friend by your long silence. I have been expecting to hear from you by every mail for many weeks, and can no longer forebear addressing you again and begging you to let me hear from you. If you should be prevented writing yourself by indisposition or any other circumstance, I entreat one of your dear daughters to relieve my suspense by letting me know how you are.

Mrs. John Murray (from your City) I understand is going on to New York the day after tomorrow. I expect to see her before she goes, and shall beg the favour of her to forward this to you; and request, if not inconvenient, to see you; as I think it will be a gratification to you to have some intelligence of me from a person who has lately been with me. I shall, I hope, from her to receive some information respecting yourself. By this time, I presume, you have returned to the City as we have heard, that all alarm on account of the cholera has subsided entirely in your part of the world. I have to thank God, that that fearful pestilence has bereaved me of no relation or friend (that I know of) and but one acquaintance. But I have suffered more anxiety than I can express and feel ashamed of my great weakness and want of confidence in God whose great mercy has not suffered my fears to be realized.

I left my dear little peaceful abode, a few days since to spend a few weeks with my dear William and his family. The delicate state of my health, and the fear of the epidemic, has prevented my coming up until the season is so far advanced that I fear I shall have to hurry home sooner than I would wish; for I cannot bear to think of being separated from MaryAnn all Winter, and I know she could not with any convenience come to me. I am thankful to say I left her with Alexander and his Wife and their precious Baby all in good health. I can't tell you what a source of amusement and pleasure the sweet little creature is to us all, but I remember she is a treasure in an earthen vessel. I am afraid of loving her too much.

How is my dear Frances and her sweet children. I have never heard of them since they had the whooping cough. Give my best love to her and your Mary and Matilda. I am writing at a very late hour by candlelight which must plead my excuse for this miserable scrawl.

Mr. Carroll (of Carrollton) finished his earthly career this day, after a pilgrimage of 95 years. He stood high in the estimation of his fellowmen, and is now gone to give an account of the deeds done in the body. There will be (it is expected) a great parade at his funeral. The Catholic's are fond of an occasion to display their ceremonies etc.etc. and as he has been both rich & great, they will have an opportunity of shewing what they can do.

I must bid you good night my ever dear Friend. Do let me hear from you as soon as you get this. Direct to me in Baltimore to the care of William H. Murray, East Baltimore Street and I shall get it in a very little time. Once more good night. May every blessing attend you & yours. As ever with true affection, I am yr.

H. Murray

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Mrs. Doctor Wm Murray
William H. Murray, Esq.
East Balto. St., Baltimore,

New York, Nov 21, 1832

My dear Friend

How shall I thank you for the affectionate solicitude for me and mine expressed in your letter of the 14th by our friend Mrs. Murray. I have indeed passed an anxious summer, a solemn season, O that it may not prove an unprofitable one and barren of improvement as many many others have been to me, in days past. I believe I wrote to you twice from Fishkill, where we were for three months and altho I was pleased by a merciful and gracious God to avert from our neighborhood and particular friends the direful visitation of Pestilence, we have had much that admonished us to "consider our ways" and to be humbled under the mighty hand of God. My dear Mother closed her earthly course and tho she departed full of faith and hope as "a shock of corn ready for the garner". Yet the most of us were far from her, my two widowed sisters received her parting breath, and strangers, or rather friends and

neighbors alone followed her to the house appointed for all, living____. James Chrystie who was with us at Weygand, was ill and confined to his bed many days, with a bleeding of the lungs and has been obliged since to go south for the Winter, in a very critical state of health: and our hearts have suffered anxiety for the safety of our dear little Mary, who, in consequence of most severe hooping cough still remains much indisposed with pain in her side and slight fevers at night. Frances left us, with the child, a week since and they have now fine weather to jaunt about with her before the winter sets in. The child is so sprightly in the day, and her appetite so good, that I cannot think we have much cause for apprehension._ Thus have we passed our summer. How minute in detailing sad events! how slight the impression of mercies received, of blessings enjoyed, but let us my beloved Harriett with united souls call upon them to forget not all His benefits, who crowneth our life with loving kindness and tender mercies, let us together say "what shall we render unto the Lord? I can render nothing but a heart prone to evil but looking to our Great Advocate and Mediator may we both be enabled to rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory and at least pray to be enabled to pay the tribute of an humble and grateful sense of his goodness.

Mr. Carrol has gone, as you observe, after a pilgrimage of 94 years, now, to give an account of the deeds done in the body. It was well to pay all the expression of respect to his remains that was in the power of his fellow citizens and perhaps justly his due as to the last of the venerated and patriotic band who signed at the risk of all that was dear and valued "The declaration of Independence" but O my Harriett we at least, who call ourselves "Christians" must feel and acknowledge that to be so in truth is the highest style of Man". He who possessed in life the humble and contrite spirit for them, we can truly say "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

I have had some very pleasant chat with Mrs. Murray, I had many things to ask her about and to all my questions, respecting you and yours, she answered with so much interest and affection for you all, that we cannot but love her for it. She has renewed my old desire of seeing, not only you, but all that belong to you the Doctor, William, MaryAnn, (?torn) to the sweet Babe at Woodstock and I assure you do not despair of accomplishing all this if it should please God to spare us all another year..

Mary Few has been on a short visit to Philadelphia, saw Mrs. Commodore Murray. She looks ill but from Mary's account possesses much of her old energy of feeling and expression. There was a political conflict on that day Jackson and Clay the election excited all that warmth of expression, which brought her back to my recollection as she was in former days. Mary was much pleased with her and speaks of her with admiration as religious and intelligent. The last we all knew but how improved must she be since to (torn??) that characteristic is added the traits of a sincere Christian.

My dear friend I am with sincere love to your dear family and tenderest affection to yourself. Yours truly,

Catha Few

You sometimes apologize to me for your letters when I can see no fault in them. What will you now think of mine? erasures blots etc.—but it must go, for I seldom do better—alas.

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River
care of William H. Murray, Esq.
Baltimore, Maryland

New York, March 8th 1833

My dear friend

I hope this winter has gone off pleasantly with you, & yours, health and peace and every blessing in the enjoyment of your dear family circle, it was at the commencement of the season past, that your last letter was handed me by our friend Mrs. Murray. I immediately answered it but have not heard from you since, nothing I flatter myself has prevented but an indisposition for writing which I too well, know increases with increasing years, yet is the heart not chilled tho the pen is slow for true it is that as the circle of friends of former years gradually decrease then the few that remain are more fondly cherished. Christians ought to look upwards, and onwards, with cheerful hearts and let us say with the Apostles "Lord increase our faith" for surely with heaven in view, heaven so near to the aged believer, we may rejoice but how do we cleave to earth, how often feel, dejected and alone, as if the ties that united us to our dear departed were for ever severed.

I have much reason to be thankful for the health that we have enjoyed this winter. Matilda has had much less pain in her breast and our domestic comfort has experienced no diminution indeed it abounds and I have reason to be thankful that home is to my dear daughters as well as to myself the seat of our greatest earthly happiness. We endeavor to draw round us friends that are serious and if somewhat intellectual and truly religious. I trust we all know how to estimate their society it is a great favor to be so situated. I am sometimes tempted to think that the estimate I have made of what would have rendered my children happy in married life has been a ban to such an event, and perhaps have abridged their enjoyments and their usefulness at least in the case of dear Matilda but these things are all under control of infinite wisdom and God is able to make disappointments as well as afflictions the means of attaining a peace that the world, at its best estate cannot give. Mary has chosen, under providence, her own lot, is a woman of great independence and dignity of character. It is a Parent that speaks dear Harriett, and that speaks to you who will not expose her weakness, and make all due allowance for a partiality so common. I do not, even yet, lose the hope that I may speak to you more freely, than a pen will admit, on past events but I dare not be sanguine, tho Mary often insists on our seeing Maryland once more.

Frances has been separated from us 4 months, and still the ice closes our river, but after the last week of severely cold weather, we are again visited with a temperature calm and pleasant, I shall make her a visit soon as possible. Her

little Mary has been confined to the house altogether this winter by some unpleasant symptoms left after a severe Hooping cough, she is much better, but it is thought best to prevent a too early exposure to cold and therefore the last of April is the time fixed for their return to the City.

You see what an egotist I have been—for this I will not take the blame, for often does my dear friend say to me "write to me all about yourself and your dear family"—Now I say the same, and in return I hope you will let me hear from you and them very soon.

I enclose for my dear Harriett to Mr William Murray \$100, I hope it will contribute to her comfort or amusement, perhaps another jaunt to the E. Shore if Doctr Murray's venerable Sister, and my Cousin Mrs. Thompson is still living.

Remember me affectionately to Doctr Murray to dear Maryanne, to Mr. A M. and family and believe me my beloved friend ever yours,

Catharine Few

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, July 5

New York, 4 July. 1833

My dear friend

I ought to have written to you before this, but felt consoled for my negligence by Mary's letter to our Maryann. Since I have arrived I have indulged myself in all the comforts of home and children, having returned with improved health and enjoying the recollection of past pleasures with thankfulness to our good and gracious Preserver, whose mercies are more in number than "the hairs of my head, or the sands on the sea shore"—none of my remembrances are more pleasant to me than the time spent with you and your dear family. God grant that religion, refinement, and content may continue to be the lot of you and yours. I have nothing more to desire for myself and all who are dear to me. I could almost have wished for Alexander's sake that not so much of future prosperity had seemed to depend on the growth and maturity of his Crop not yet gathered in, but the seasons, the rain and the sunshine, are all ordered by infinite wisdom and love, "good when he gives, supremely good, nor less when he denies". The wheat, we will hope, is safely housed, and the roses continue to bloom and be presented by our dear doctor as the daily tribute of love, while the little ones, Pretty Pol echoed at Grandmamas bidding, charms the assembled morning and evening group.

I scarcely saw Mrs. M* at Baltimore only at one short visit made her, and your little missee and her brother and sisters did not make their appearance. Tell Mary I looked at the portrait in the parlor and did not feel satisfied with it, but I could not tell why. Mrs Nicholson writes that you have made your visit to Annapolis since I left had my stay been longer I should have regretted that you had not, rather, have accompanied us, for we found Mr. and Mrs. Ridout had returned from their jaunt. We spent an evening at their house, and were

exceedingly pleased with all the family, the dear old gentleman not excepted, how delightful the bond of union between Christians friends at once an interest in each other which distance does not take away and a hope that beyond the passing scenes of time, we shall meet to perfect in each others society, pleasing in comparison, feeble enjoyed below.

We are now preparing for our summers residence, scarcely knowing where we are bound but most probably at some spot in Connecticut. Frances, Mr. C and the children go off tomorrow to prepare the way.

This is our national day of rejoicing and a noisy, senseless way of celebrating, it appears to me we make of it but quiet people will never be the majority in this world so we must submit to it with as much fortitude as our nerves will admit of. How calm and sweet and lovely are the bowers of Woodstock this day!!

And now my beloved friend I conclude not having said half I wished but desire to enumerate all your dear family my most affectionate remembrance to your good husband, and my cousin, forget not our dear MaryAnn, Mary Young, Alexander, sweet little pretty Pol all of whom with your dear self are most sincerely loved by Yrs most truly,

Catherine Few

*Mrs. M—Mrs. William H. Murray (Isabella Maria Stirling)- Harriett's daughter-in-law

ms03245b02f06 74 75 76

Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York. April 13, 1833

My dear Friend

You have left us in suspense respecting your dear daughter, I have been expecting to hear from you the result of the painful operation which has been performed. God grant that it may prove effectual, I trust that all apprehension is by this time removed and your dear suffering child restored to health and comfort; but do let me hear soon. "Whom the Lord loveth chasteneth", ah what experience have you had that "He careth for you", it has been a refiners fire and you will come forth as gold, doubt it not, you will see hereafter "the why and the wherefores". Eternity will unfold and you will yet praise him for all that is past. We know not how to call them light afflictions, but the blessed apostle who united time with eternity pronounces that they are so and what that weight of glory is, it cannot not enter into the heart of man to conceive. Let the anticipation of the heavenly rest abundantly support and cheer my beloved friend even to the end of her pilgrimage. Then shall there be "fullness of joy" and this thro Him who hath loved you and who has numbered the hairs of your head.

Frances' little Mary is not in good health tho we think she is mending. and by one of those sudden and unexpected moves of divine providence, they are to leave Fishkill for the present. Mr. Chrystie has sold his House, which he

considered, too large and too expensive an establishment for him to retain. He has however reserved a beautiful part of his Farm with a most eligible site for building another dwelling, but as this is future, I make no calculation on it and in her letter to me which I received yesterday she expresses much regret often casting her eyes, as she tells me, to the hills where their anticipated dwelling is intended to be, ending with this emphatic exclamation, "ah when shall I more permanently fix my eyes on the heavenly hills". This change has affected her very much, but I have the happiness to know that they will leave that neighborhood, which is one of the best in our state, respected and beloved by all that knew them. Where we shall spend the Summer I know not. The months of July and August are intensely warm in the City and we must avoid its debilitating effect, may we not only in word but in every deed "Commit our way unto the Lord".

God bless you my beloved friend, my most affectionate love to dear Mary Anne, let us hear from you very soon all here sympathize with you and yours whether in sorrow or in joy.

Our friend Mrs. J R Murray suffers much from an operation on her eyes, which is has been found necessary to perform and which in the first instance did not prove effectual to the removal of her disease.

Once more adieu, Yours most truly and affectionately,

Catharine Few

Note written in pencil : During the summer of 1833 in the 69th year of her age Mrs. Few, with her daughter Mary and a servant went to Maryland to visit this friend of her youth. The following letters were written after this interview

ms03245b02f06 71 72 73

Miss Matilda Few
10 Park Place
New York

Annapolis, June 3

My dear Matilda

I wrote you a very hurried letter from Baltimore at 4 o'clock in the morning just before preparing to leave for the Steam Boat to Annapolis (?H Darden?) accompanied us to the wharf and on board we were visited by Mr. Hindman who sat with us half awake until the Boat was off. On board we also found Mr. McIlvaine, who after the greatest attention during the passage left us at Annapolis to the care of Cousins Joseph and Edward who were waiting for us and conducted us to their Mothers dwelling, but I cannot describe to you the affection and tenderness with which we were received here. I have been affected almost tears at the humility and kindness of this most excellent of women. Surely one would say she who would sacrifice every thing to the happiness of others must be happy herself. I hope there is no cause to think otherwise.

We took a Carriage and spent the morning in riding round this City of departed splendor. It is still beautiful, we cannot say in its ruins, for it is in keeping, the houses and grounds still magnificent, tho the inhabitants who

once knew them know them no more, nor do their children. They are scattered every where and the Coaches with 4 & 6 horses harnessed to them, no longer roll through it solitary streets but it is yet inhabited by genteel and respectable, but not wealthy people. I went to see Mrs. (Harod?) and walked thro the elegant mansion of the Lloyds, poor Cousin Becky often repeating, "this was my Fathers, that my Mothers, here they slept, there, they walked etc and now I can sit in the middle of my little parlor and almost touch the walls with my hands" but no repining followed these remarks. Sadness for departed friends marked her countenance, but none, I truly believe for departed splendor.

We visited Mrs. Murray, 81 years old still elegant and intelligent, and tho weak in body, scarcely ever leaving her Chamber, yet glad to see her friends, and talking over past days with all the animation of former years. I reminded her that it was her who first powdered and curled my hair and sent me out in the gay world of Annapolis, a young lady prepare for what might follow.

It was some years after this event that I came from Philadelphia with Alexander Murray* and his young Bride and spent another gay season in this place and among other scenes of festive enjoyment at that large and still elegant mansion which I now have in my view The Government house and is occupied by the Governor while the Legislature is in session. Of that large company, many of them in youths gayest bloom, how few now remain, and those that do, myself among the number bending their way to the grave, and shortly to arrive at the destined end. May that end be peace. To them and to your Mother may it be the commencement of a better life, a reunion to friends who have gone before, who have departed in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who have entered upon that blessedness which eye hath not seen nor ear heard.

Mama has left her letter unfinished my dear Matilda and it gives me an opportunity to have a moments chat with you. This is a sweet place and we enjoy ourselves much in a quiet way. We left B. without regret tho nothing could (?) the kindness and attention of the N.s. I cannot think of them exactly as you do with the exception of their Mother. I think there is a great deal to like in all of them. thank you dearie for your kind solicitude about my health. I have been for some time past, and particularly since I left home in that doleful state not ill enough to complain, and yet not well enough to enjoy any thing, but Annapolis agrees with me wonderfully and for the last three days I have felt brighter than I have done for a long time. We were very glad to hear of you all from Mr. McIlvaine. I am sorry you had such bad weather in P. it extended to us in B. but as there is not a great deal there to interest, we were not so much concerned at it. we received your letters on our arrival at Annapolis, by this time I hope you are settled cozily in Park Place. I think we shall enjoy each other more than ever when we meet there. You have left a very good impression behind you here. Cousin Becky talks of you all continually. She seem just to have made acquaintance with Albert. and finds him so much more cheerful than when she saw him at home. Never did I see such an amiable being as she is. Mama wants her to return with us to N.Y. She is going with us to West River today. I do not know how long we shall remain there. Mama seems in no hurry. She has got quite into the spirit of traveling. and is to delighted with Annapolis that it would not take a great deal to persuade her to fix herself here.

Mama sends love to all. She intended writing to Aunt Maria from Baltimore, but some how or other felt too flurried to set about it. She will write on our return from West River. I hope Uncle Gallatin is better. Remember me to all we are on the wing with delightful weather. Do write soon and mention everyone.. direct to Annapolis.

Give our love to Frances and Albert. Love your affectionate,

Mary

Monday morning

* Alexander Murray, (Commodore Alexander Murray)
[The year this letter was written is missing.]

MSA SC 2301-2-47

Mrs. Frances Chrystie
care of Albert Chrystie, Esq.
Park Place, New York

West River, Md., Sept. 24th 1833

Had I known where to address a letter to you, my dearest Frances, your last acceptable favour should not have laid unanswered so long; but the last time your dear mother wrote to me, she informed me that you with Mr. Chrystie and the children had taken your departure from New York. Not knowing exactly where you would fix your summer residence, and that she meant to follow you in a short time, I wrote to her immediately; but, I believe, not in time for her to receive it before she left home; for I have never heard a word from any of your party since, until a few days ago, when we were rejoiced by the rect. of dear Mary's* letter to MaryAnn, informing us that you had returned from your excursion. I was very sorry to hear she brought the Ague Fever home with her. She could not have done worse if she had taken a trip to the South instead of the North. I am thankful to say we have had nothing of it here, and if Mary had spent the summer in Maryland, it is very likely she would have been more benefitted. I wish she might be induced to try it next summer. It would give great pleasure to all her friends here.

I am truly glad to hear my beloved friend (your Mother) has returned in such good health; I should like of all things to sit by her and hear her give an account of her travels. The glimpse I had of her this spring, makes me more anxious than ever for her society. You ask me respecting the change that had passed on her person since we saw each other before? As little as could possible be, in half a century, and much less than I expected; and I can say with much sincerity that my affection for her could not have been stronger. Time and absence had not the power to dissolve the union of heart formed at so early a period of our lives, and strengthened by thewhich is the strongest of all others. I beg you to use your influence to bring her amongst us again. She can accomplish the journey with so much ease and in so short a time, that she cannot plead that as an obstacle, and the pleasure she would give us is greater than I can express. You and Mr. Chrystie, you know, are under a promise to visit us, and we calculate on your being good as your word.

Your friends at Woodstock are pretty much in the state you saw them, only that our little pet has grown much larger, and has become a most interesting prattler. We are in the expectation every day, that her Mother will present us with an addition to her nursery. So you see our little lot is in a way to be well filled.

MaryAnn requests me to give her affectionate love to you, also to dear Mary, and tell her the shawl, she was so kind as to have dyed for her, came safe to hand. She is much pleased with it and thinks it very pretty. She intends writing to her very soon.

Give my best love to your dear Mother and tell her when time and inclination serve I hope she will write to me, for her letters are cordials to my heart. Our circle join in best respects to Mr. Chrystie, and kind love to your whole circle, not forgetting our friend Willie and his sister. Tell him I think as he does he will soon be able to take good care of himself, and all sufficient for taking a trip to see his West River friends, who will be much pleased to see him.

And now my dear Frances, I must bid you adieu for this time. I need not remind you, that your letters are always most acceptable and we wish to hear often from you.

I am with sincere affection Unalterably Yrs,

H.Murray

Sept. 19, 1833

Tell me how you are fixed for the Winter.

How is your Cousin Mr. Chrystie who was threatening.....breast complaint? We have heard that our friend Mary Sanford has an attack of the same kind and has been very ill. Can you tell us anything about her?

*Mary—Frances Chrystie's sister, Mary Few

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York, 4 October 1833

My most dear friend

I have been wandering "to and fro" ever since we parted at West River, and scarcely even now seem settled in my own quiet resting place. I have not been perfectly well lately, and as jaunting seems to be the order of the day, we talk of an excursion to Rhinebeck, about 90 miles up the North river to visit a dear old friend* before the winter closes in upon us, or at least before the cold blasts of November would render it unpleasant. The change of place and objects are doubtless favorable to the health and reviving to the spirits, but home is most of all desirable when age and infirm are increasing upon us. When I say this, I am reminded of my reluctance to encounter the difficulties of a journey South before I made the experiment, and the great enjoyment which was the result. This is true. It was a great enjoyment, and not to be forgotten, who Mary should fail to remind me of it. Your letter to Frances was very sat-

isfactory, to hear that you were all in the enjoyment of health after the heat of the southern summer, is very gratifying to us and we desire to unite with your dear family in thankfulness for it. Your next I hope will give us the pleasure of hearing that Mrs. M* has presented you with another little darling and happily over all perils and dangers.

We did not see Miss Mercer as she passed thro the City on her way home. We heard that she had been at New Port and was returning indisposed with Ague and fever. Perhaps it was that prevented her making us the promised visit. I hope she has recovered, if it was so. If there is any thing enviable in life, it is the individual who by her own example illustrates to her sex (alas so backward to learn) the dignity of philanthropic and personal exertions to ensure her own independence and promote the happiness of others. Had I a daughter to educate from home Miss Mercer would be the Lady, above all others, to whom I should most cheerfully confide her. It is a training for time and eternity.

I have spread my bedquilt twenty times (perhaps) before me, admiring and admiring but I did not know how to value the exquisite neatness and taste of my friend's needlework until I came to perform my own part. While in the country I attempted to make a border in addition, but when I came home and compared, I was dismayed at the difference and almost discouraged in prosecuting my part of the work; but I shall go on, and at least shall have the pleasure of being reminded of you at every turn.

Did I tell you how much I was pleased with the Ridout family in Annapolis. Your Niece* is a most interesting young woman*. I think your part of the Country is a privileged place, as it respects neighborhood. It certainly presents Society in a more interesting view than can be enjoyed in a large commercial City. Business is pursued so keenly, and fashion so devotedly, the end and aim of most, that the better feelings of our nature are blunted if not absorbed in the low standard imposed by vanity and selfishness. And there is but one class that rises in any great degree superior to its influence the meek, the humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, must feel the importance of a different spirit, they know how much there is within to keep them in their place, and how needful the admonition "Watch and pray" and this alone can keep them safe "Lead us not into temptation". We have almost arrived at the end of our journey, and may the Lord keep our children from "the evil that is in the world".

We have this morning received a letter from our Cousin Mrs. N* in Annapolis, she gives us hope that we shall see her soon in New York. I shall therefore defer my journey for the present to a future time. How do we wish that our dear Mary Ann could accompany her stay will not be long and this might be an inducement as I well know Mary's important and interesting duties at home, render her presence almost indispensable; but would you not spare her to us for a short time. What say your dear Maryanne? Can you not make the effort? Your friend Frances is living in a very agreeable part of the City and would be delighted to see you, but I have written so much about other things that I have no room to talk of her concerns. She, I daresay will write soon and tell you herself. Her little Mary has quite recovered.

Remember me most affectionately to the Doctor, to all your dear children, and believe me my dear friend to be most truly yours, now, as ever,

Catharine Few

- *Old friend: Mrs. Suckley—ancestor of the builder of the mansion Wilderstein
- *Mrs. M—Mary Young Addison Murray (Mrs. Alexander Murray)
- *Niece—Prudence Ridout (daughter of Mary Woodward, Harriett's sister)
- *Mrs N—Mrs. Nicholson

MSA SC 2301-2-48

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—Nov. 29, 1833

Nov. 28th 1833

I am grieved my beloved Friend on looking at the date of your last letter to find what a length of time has elapsed without any communication between us, and that from my silence, you might suspect me of neglect, but that cannot be. I have deferred writing from week to week expecting a letter either from Frances or Mary (both of whom are indebted a letter to our house) that I might be on a certainty whether you had returned from your excursion to Rhinebeck; for as I understood that Mrs. Nicholson had declined visiting New York, I took it for granted you had gone on to see your friend. Post after post I have been disappointed, and at length I am determined to wait no longer, but beg you to let me know how and where you are. My intercourse with you my dearest Friend, I can truly say, is one of the greatest pleasures I enjoy, and I should much oftener write to you, but am withheld from doing so by a consciousness that my recluse, monotonous life can afford little subject, except what I find in my own concerns; and even to those most dear to us, we would not pester with too frequent details of what for our sakes they would patiently read, but which could not afford them pleasure. Nevertheless, though these fits of unpleasant feelings come over at times, I never sit down to write to you; but every thought of the kind vanishes, and I feel such a full assurance of your affectionate interest for me and mine, that I want to tell you everything; and as that disposition is predominant at present, I am going to give you a circumstantial account of our family circle, and I know you will not charge me with egotism.

In the first place I have the pleasure of informing you that my husband's health is quite good, and the cough which generally attacks him at this season has not been near as troublesome as usual. Indeed we have been much favoured this Autumn, very few bilious fever and only one or two of the servants who have had it at all. My poor MaryAnn has been the most of an invalid of any of our (in-door) family. She was taken with a pain in her side, which at first we thought rheumatic, but proved an affection of the liver. She suffered a good deal with it for some days, and was obliged to take a great quantity of physic, but I am happy to say she is now in her usual health, and I flatter myself will have no return. She has been meditating a visit to her Brother for several months, which has been put off from week to week, until I believe she has finally postponed it to more convenient season, which I know not when will come; for she is so essential at home that she cannot be spared without

stopping some of the machinery in our domestic concerns. Her principal objection at present, is leaving her old infirm parents at this advanced season, when there is a probability that winter may set in and she should find difficulty in returning home. Although I wish her to go, we should feel lonely without her, for you know she is our right hand. I should miss her society more at this time. Mary Young* is very much confined to her own room with her two little ones who are both so young as to require her constant attention. She deserves great credit as a nurse to her son, who I think is a lovely, well thriving an infant as I ever saw at the age of two months. Mary's health I think has improved very much since she was a Mother, which I was very fearful would not be the case, as we were apprehensive she had a weak breast before she was married. Our "Pretty Poll" has become a most interesting sweet prattler.* I very often wish you could hear her talk. She speaks uncommonly plain for a child of only 20 months, and is very intelligent. It is hard to tell who she loves best, her Aunt Mary or her Mother; but she is a great pet with us all. I really feel ashamed at running on so much about my family; but I cannot omit mentioning my poor Alexander, he is I am happy to say well and deserves to be well spoken of by me, for he is one of the best of sons.*

You are I know interested for our dear Margaret Mercer.* Although we do not think she meets with all the encouragement she merits, yet I am glad to tell you, has a fuller school than we were afraid she would have when it commenced this fall; but I fear not to do much more for her than bear her expenses, which are very considerable. She was much gratified by your mention of her in your letter to me, and desired, when I wrote, to give her love to you, and say that nothing should have prevented her calling on you as she passed through New York on her return, but being extremely sick. I think she said she was not in the street at all whilst she was there. She is a most estimable woman and when we consider her education, manner of life, and the society with which she was surrounded; it is almost a miracle her mind should have become so deeply imbued with religion. She seems to have given up every selfish feeling, and is devoting herself entirely to doing good.

Tho' I have scribbled this unreasonably long letter, I feel as if I had said little to the purpose. It was a most excellent rule with the pious Hervey, never to write a letter without inserting one religious sentiment at least. And I have to take shame to myself for my failures in that and almost every other duty. But I have read much and thought much on that subject, my dear friend, since I saw you, and often have I wished for you by my side when I have been perusing the religious authors. Our "West River Library" (of which MaryAnn wrote to your Mary about) contains many excellent books, amongst others I have been much pleased with the works of Caroline Fry. If you have not read them, I am sure you'll be pleased with them. I read a letter book the other day written by Mr. Bedele, "Is it Well with Thee"; and I thought of dear Frances Chrystie. All young mothers ought to read it I think, also Caroline Fry on "Scripture Principles".

It is past eleven o'clock and you would think it is time for such an old body to be a bed, but I think I could write to you all night. But I must let my moderation be manifested (if it is not too late) and conclude by giving the love of

every member of our little circle to you and yours. Pray let me hear from you as soon and as often as you can.

I remain My ever dear Friend with sincerest affection Ever yrs.

H. Murray

MaryAnn requests me to ask how your friend is, who had a tumor in her breast. I think my poor child's mind seems easier on her own acct. than it was.

"Pretty Poll", Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, much later known as "Bet" to her half brothers and sister and "Aunt Bet to her nephews"

*Margaret Mercer opened her school at "Cedar Park in 1825, but moved it to Balto. in 1833, soon after then she moved it again to "Belmont" in Va., where it was quite successful until her death in 1846.

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Mrs. Dr. Murray, West River, Maryland

4 December 1833

My most dear Friend

You reproach yourself for not having written to me and happy am I always to hear from you and be assured that no details respecting your dear family circle can ever be uninteresting to me, and knowing this and knowing also our reciprocal feelings I should have mentioned long since, the approach of an important event that has recently taken place. My dear Matilda after a deliberation of 8 months has determined to unite her destinies with Mr. John C. Tillotson of this state. His mother, my particular friend, was the sister of Chancellor Livingston, and his first wife, who died in Savannah about 3 years since, was his cousin a granddaughter of the same gentleman. I will now tell you what he is in himself, handsome, elegant, in person and manners, 3 years older than Matilda, residing on an estate left him by his father, situated on the banks of the Hudson. His principles in the estimation of the (??) and all that know him honorable, and his character without reproach domestic in his habits and affectionate in his temper but all this leaves me not without great solicitude which often reaches to depression. He has six children, three little girls are her particular charge, the youngest about 3 years old and oh what a charge is it, what a responsibility what avenues to pain, what a change to her who has been our indulged one, whose presence seemed so necessary to our happiness; but I think not of myself, unite with me my beloved friend in prayers that she may be counseled and strengthened from above. I will add that I think him one of the most interesting of men and extremely devoted to her, but this does not quiet me altho at times I am almost reconciled "pray for us".

I will write again to you—but no more now I could not bear that another should communicate to you the first intelligence. My love to your dear circle Yrs. affectionately & truly,

Catha Few

My dear Aunt Murray

I intended writing to Mary Ann by this days mail, but Mama has anticipated me and as this has left a space I will just add a few lines to beg you to exercise your office of peace maker in my behalf, and to say to my dear Mary that I am grieved at having appeared negligent but I know she will excuse (tho she has never had a sister and cannot therefore so fully sympathize) when she knows the important event that has agitated us. We have been so united a family and so dependent upon each other that this separation is a sad break, but we have every reason to hope that Matilda's happiness will be increased. She is better fitted for the difficult station of Step Mother than any one I have known. She has Mr. Ts devoted affection and is received with the most flattering expressions of affections and confidence by every individual of his family so that she enters upon her new duties under the most favorable auspices with one solitary exception. He is not a Christian. This pained us greatly at first. and does still cause deep anxiety but we have much to hope. He has deeply felt the vanity of Worldly pursuits. He highly estimates Religion in others and the prayers of a pious Mother, are I hope recorded on high for him. Will you tell my dear Mary that it will give me the greatest pleasure to attend to any commission of hers in N. Y. and I have no doubt books may be purchased very cheap or at least much cheaper than in Annapolis I am ashamed to send this blotted, hurried letter my dear Aunt. Can you excuse it and will you make my remembrance acceptable to all the dear Ones at Woodstock.

Ever your affectionate

Mary Few

Tuesday Morning

ms03245b02f06 86 87 88

Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland

New York, 30th December 1833

My dear friend

Experience has taught me not to commit myself, even to you, and other dear ones, at the moment of excitement, knowing as I do, that I should be sure to say and do just what I ought not to say and do but in the late event, I had deferred writing to you, and could not bear that the first tidings of a conclusion so important should reach you thro strangers. Matilda was married on the 28th of last month and now strange to tell I am quite satisfied and more than satisfied with the union. There is I am sure in Mr. T_ great integrity of character and in domestic life he is excelled by none, and there appears to be devotedness of personal attachment on both sides. The three little girls which constitute her family, she had known and loved before she married, and the place of her residence she has been familiar with from her childhood but I felt that she had given up much and was entering on a great responsibility but in truth I believe that there was a consciousness in herself that she was fitted for the duties of the station she now fills and there are but few men more calculated to engage

the affections of a reserved and delicate woman; and such is my Matilda. I want to send you a little piece addressed to her by a servant of an aunt of Mr. Ts, living in the neighborhood in which I think there is both poetry and feeling. They left us the morning after their marriage. I hear frequently from her, and Frances has been lately on a visit to her and cheers me with the most pleasing intelligence. My most formidable objection was, that Mr. T was a fashionable man, a man of the world. The discipline of affliction had not led him to his God, nor to the Church assembled in his neighborhood, and I feared for M. I knew the religious principle in her was partly the result of education, and tho a sincere lover of God and his people, it was weak in comparison with many other professing christians. But F tells me the family pew has been fitted up. The carriage regularly brought to the door on Sunday. The scriptures are read and daily prayer offered up at the domestic alter and a spirit of seriousness and enquiry awakened in Mr. Tillotson's mind which seems to promise much.

There my dear I have written to you a full account as things stand now, and freely entered on the past exercises of my own mind.

I hope that my beloved friend is enjoying herself in a happy, if not a merry Christmas Mary Ann I know, has festooned the Holly and bright winter berries round the little parlor. Grandpapa and Grandmama sit in their chairs admiring, and the little Pet claps her hands for joy. So, you see I picture to myself a cheerful group, and fail not to add Mary Young, Alexander and the sweet Babe to the Circle of enjoyment. I think of Maryanne's Evening Hymns and wish, as I have often done, that if not in melody of voice, we could unite in harmony of praise our family circles. I have lost the society of dear Matilda, for the present, but it has been a pleasant arrangement of Divine Providence, that we now have Frances with us, who with Mr. C. & her dear little family have enjoyed themselves in our family gatherings very much, this social season.

I find Mary, who is about writing to MaryAnn, has anticipated me in sending the poor Maria's little effusion of respect and love to her friend Miss Matilda. but I will not let M conclude her letter for a day or two, as I have written so largely myself on our own affairs. But for this I will not apologize altho my dear friend sometimes sets me the example.

Remember me most affectionately to the dear Doctor, to dear MaryAnne to Mr. and Mrs. Alexanders and believe as yours as ever my very dear friend,

Catherine Few

Some years ago I should have been ashamed to send such an erased and blotted epistle—but I must get used to it now, for I find it grows worse and worse with me.

MSA SC 2301-2-49

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, New York
Postmark—Feb. 28, 1834

Feb. 26, 1834

To me it appears a long long time since there has been any communication between us, my beloved Friend. I have flattered myself from week to week that

I should hear from you, but have been disappointed. I have felt your silence, perhaps the more, because I have been a good deal depressed in spirit, and have stood in need of your letters to cheer me; which they never fail to do. Early in the winter, I believe I wrote you, that my poor MaryAnn had a smart attack of pain in her side and hip, which the physicians thought proceeded from some obstruction in the liver. The complaint was treated as such, and she got well. About the first of January she was again attacked, but much more violently. Her pain was chiefly in her back. She suffered most excruciating pain, and at first, the Doctor thought it was rheumatic, but afterwards, they had reason to believe it proceeded almost altogether from bile. she was entirely disabled; for nearly three weeks she could not move without assistance, nor turn in her bed. Indeed she was as helpless as an infant. She was obliged to take a vast deal of medicine, which reduced her very much, but I am thankful to say she has regained health and strength enough to resume her charge in family concerns; and I trust as the spring advances, and she gets engaged in her garden and both her health and spirits will be renewed. Her indisposition has been the cause of her not having replied to dear Mary Few's letter. The rect. of it gave her great pleasure, and she thinks if Mary knew what a cordial it was to her, she would not be punctilious in waiting for an answer, but gratify her by writing whenever she could make it convenient.

You have no doubt learned (by the Public Print) ere this, that our mutual friend Mrs. Commodore Murray* is no more. Although it was an event we have expected for several years, it was a considerable shock. For several weeks she had thought her health better than it had been, and she was able to walk a square or two at a time, and frequently went as far as German Town and staid a week at a time with her friend Mrs. Chew. The day before she was taken ill she spent with her daughter, Kitty Stewart, which was Monday. On Tuesday she complained of a shortness of breath,(which was very often distressing to her when she was with us). They sent for the Doctor who prescribed for her, but did not think her ill. The next day she did not complain of pain or any symptom that alarmed Juliana, but an unusual drowsiness. There was no keeping her awake; when she was roused up she appeared perfectly in her senses, and observed herself, how very sleepy she was. When the Doctor came in the evening he put a blister on her breast, which she objected to. She said she was afraid it would give her pain. She was prevailed on to try it. She went to bed and during the night had got up and sat in her easy chair; but Juliana, who lay by her on the bed, said she found her mother was making an effort to get out of bed again, and she put her arm around her waist to support her, but she found, that she was not able to help herself at all, and concluded she had fainted, but when assistance came, they found her spirit had fled. She had passed into another world without a groan or struggle. She was, I believe, a sincere Christian, and one who daily lived in a state of preparation for the great event. She has been a great sufferer for the last three years, and a very uncomplaining one. Her daughter, Elizabeth Thomas was delivered of a daughter the very night her Mother died, and Kitty Stewart of one three days after*.

As I know your regard for the dear departed, I thought you would wish to know the particulars of her death, which has made me dwell so long on the subject; but I fear I have been prolix without giving you much satisfaction.

And now, my beloved Friend, I must beg you to tell me very particularly how you are; also dear Mary and Frances and her family. I can't tell you how often we think and talk of you, and how much more than ever I long to see you. O'do come to us this summer; now you have experienced how easy you can accomplish the journey it will be cruel to deny my request. Do tell me that I may look forward to the pleasure of seeing you, and it will be a bright spot in my prospect until we meet. But your visit I hope will be longer. Settle it in your plan before you leave home, not to hurry away from us as you did last summer. I long to have you by my side, and say a hundred things that did not occur to my memory in our last interview.

Do write to me soon. I should pester you with letters were I to write to you half as often as I feel an inclination.

I am commissioned with love from my whole family to you and Mary, indeed we do all sincerely love you. I hope your dear Mary will take pity on my poor daughter and write to her. She requests me to ask Mary to procure her a little Double Stock Jellie flower seed. It is hard to be got here. and the time is nearly approaching when it ought to be sown.

Adieu my own most dear Friend,

Believe me to be with unalterable affection, Ever yrs.

H. Murray

white & purple Stock seed is very scarce here & hard to procure.

I am quite sorry to hear Joseph has left you. You will scarcely find so good a "Womans Creature"

*Mrs. Commodore Murray—died Feb. 7, 1834 (Mary Miller Murray)

*Mary Rebecca Stewart was born 2/10/1834. died 5 months later on 7/6/1834

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
William Murray, Esq., Baltimore, Md.
Postmark—March 6th

New York March 5th 1834

Your last letter my beloved friend brought sorrowful tidings. The ill health of your excellent and dear Son* affected us all very much, "waters of a full cup have been wrung out unto you". The Lord has never suffered you to have your portion in this world. He claims you for his own, and I trust you will come forth like gold tried in the fire. You have to contend now with the weakness of your faith, but like thousands of poor timid trembling fellow christians, who have gone before you, thru the same wilderness, you will, I doubt not, find that the Captain of your salvation is leading you on to victory and triumph and you will unite with them in ascriptions of praise to him who doeth all things well- but perhaps you will say, ah, how easy it is, when the soul is at ease, to look calmly on, and say why so disturbed and perplexed? Were "your soul in my souls stead" I also could speak as you do will be the answer to this question. Yet after all, my dear, is there not in our times of affliction, clouds and darkness, arising from natural feelings, or physical weakness, that cannot well be discerned by the sufferer but which is better judged of when "the Lord who

can clear the darkest skies will give us day for night" and often a word from a fellow Christian whose mind may be more at ease, may come with some weight if the Lord adds his blessing.

The above my dear Friend was written shortly after I received your letter and since that I have heard nothing from you Mrs. Nicholson (of Annapolis) mentions Mr. Murray, but says nothing of his having pursued the course of a sea voyage as recommended by the consultation of physicians mentioned in your last to me. We wish much to hear of him if he has not gone I shall hope his going was not a necessary expedient. Mrs. N tells me you are still in Baltimore. I shall hope to hear from you soon. Should a change of scene, or air, be thought advisable, as the season advanced and the weather becomes mild and bland, New York might be a safe and perhaps a useful change. Tell Mr. Murray with my kindest remembrance I should be glad to see him with any of his family and could afford him a room in one of the most healthy and pleasant parts of our City.

What excitements and tales of horror have exercised the public mind this winter poisoning, dueling and one thing after another. It is well that we have nothing to do with the parties and are privileged to pray for ourselves and families, as our Lord prayed for his disciples "Keep them from the evil that is in the world".

Frances is now settled in New York, thus far the little girl, has done well and I hope her constitution is progressing towards a change for the better. It is a great favor to have them near to me. The Lord has dealt very graciously with us, but my dear Friend it is not only a changing but a transitory scene, we, who have passed the usual limit of human life must feel it to be so we expect nothing here, even worldlings at our time of life (strange that there should be such) are "faint tho pursuing" and often must exclaim, what is it all, what portion for Man is there beneath the Sun? All is vanity and vexation of spirit. My only hope for myself, and for you my dearest friend, is that we may attain to more ennobling and transforming views of the perfections and character of our God thru the medium of his word and spirit. Then will we rejoice in Him who has spread a table for us in this wilderness supporting and comforting his people, and let us trust, for (??) it is reiterated in his blessed word trust in the Lord: Yea tho we pass thro the valley of the shadow of death let us fear no evil for he hath said "I will never leave you or forsake you." and my dear let not the enemy of your soul weaken at any time your confidence, You are as a believer in Jesus, I doubt not, entitled to all the gracious promises contained in his word, only believe and as our Lord said to Martha, you shall see the glory of God I have lately heard an excellent discourse on that subject. But I must conclude my best and kindest remembrance to Doctor Murray. Frances and Mary, unite with me my beloved Friend in all love and sympathy.

Catharine Few

*Son—William H. Murray of Baltimore

Date of letter. after paragraph 1, April 5th, but postmark is Mar. 6—year 1834??

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
 Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, May 6

New York, 5 May 1834

My most dear Friend

I never was a good correspondent and now I find that writing is exceedingly injurious to my eyes which have become weak, very weak, and dim so much for the infirmities of age which have been creeping on me for some time but which of late has become more decidedly characteristic. Had youth and health been only tolerably improved I should have had less to regret but so it is, we know best how to estimate our blessings when they have passed from our possession.

Through the mercy of our God, we are all enjoying health and comfort in our families at the present time. Little Mary Chrystie has had the Scarlet Fever. It is a violent disease, and has been in some families exceedingly fatal, and the delicacy of our little girl's frame has made us very solicitous about her but she has recovered and appears now quite well. Mr. Tillotson and Matilda came down in February, and staid with us near three months and it has proved to us a very agreeable visit. He is in all externals prepossessing, and altho used to fashionable life almost exclusively, very domestic, conforming entirely to our more serious habits. His little girls, are very sweet children and entirely resigned up to Matilda's management who seems to love them as if they were her own. There is a promise of more happiness than we had a right to expect, and I say without exception there appears to be but one thing wanting but O, my dear friend how important is that one thing. Matilda says that he has changed his style of books and now is exceedingly taken with religious reading. Have you met with the works of Robert Hall, lately published. They must be to all who delight in reading, an intellectual feast and to the Christian a treasure indeed.

I am sorry that Mary's flower seeds did not reach her friend Maryann, they might have been blooming at Woodstock by this time and I am sure nothing could be more gratifying than to add by any means to the pure and innocent delight of your dear daughter's favorite occupation. We have here had the greatest variety of weather since the Spring commenced, very cold, and very warm not propitious to vegetation, and some fear I believe is entertained for our fruits. Mary says that I must tell Maryann that she would have written today but defers because she see me engaged in writing to you.

What an affecting death was Mr. Hoffmans, so sudden! it brought back to my recollection the events and melancholy history of your dear sister's family and to me that always presents an impressive instance of the mutability of earthly things. When I first knew her, every thing was bright, in prospects, and in possession nor knew I the sad reverse in its extent till we conversed on the subject when together last spring.

All things I hope will work for the everlasting good of her family that remain; and it must be a source of consolation to Mrs. Hoffman that she has it so

amply in her power to smooth the path of the last days of her aged and afflicted Parent, a traveler, I trust, to a better home. O how full of meaning are the Apostles words "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and fading not away" My beloved friend, are we so near that blessedness. Threescore years and ten have almost brought us to the verge of Jordan, and can it be that this anxious, changing, passing scene, will so soon terminate, and the promised rest be our eternal portion. This is our hope, this bears us up, even tho we may have to encounter "the labor and sorrow" that may still be before us we are journeying home and it is, we humbly hope, to "a City which hath foundations" Not unto us, not unto us O Lord but unto thyself be all the glory.

I have written a long letter and have said nothing of the little pets and their Mother and Father, but I most affectionately desire to be remembered to them and to the dear Doctor.

Yours my dear Friend, Most truly,

Catharine Few

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Mrs. Doc Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland

Rhinebeck, June 16, 1834

My very dear friend

By a letter received from Mrs. Nicholson, we were made acquainted, first, of the sad events which have changed your happy dwelling into a scene of sorrow and desolation what shall we say, what can we say it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth best to him, in wisdom he rules, and here after when the clouds and darkness which in this world hide him from our view, tho withdrawn, we shall unite in one song of praise with all his (ransomed?) ones. "He hath done all things well". This my dear I feel confident of, and "faith stands leaning on his word" O may your dear Alexander, may you all experience the abundant consolations of his spirit and his word. Deeply have you experienced through every period of your life the chastisement of your heavenly Father, but you shall come forth as gold tried in the fire, and your suffering time will soon be o'er Short is the longest period of human life and this truly is but the vestibule of that Temple, that City which hath foundations, when your dear daughter* has, though the youngest of our cheerful happy circle (only one year since) has entered first, and beckons us away. Her dear little one triumphs in unchanging blessedness, no anxieties, no doubt arises now, in a father's bosom for his future destiny. All is well.

My poor nephew* after suffering and languishing for 2 years and 6 months, finding all changes from situation and climate unavailing, returned to New York in the spring to close his earthly existence about a fortnight since. Even to the last, flattering himself with hopes of recovery, and too much taken up with that, seriously to devote himself to a preparation for a happier world, this dear friend makes the bitterness of death. Our only hope is that as he was for some days, tho in appearance suffering and insensible, prayers long, long, and

fervently proffered may have been answered at all events the scene is closed. and we say to each other as I say to my friend, now, "He hath done all things well." "We will trust and not be afraid".

I returned to the City and spent 2 or 3 weeks. The weather has been extremely warm and Matilda's impatience has prevailed. Mary and myself are here for the present, how long we shall remain I am uncertain. I am grieved to hear that Mary Anne is not well. Mary will write to her soon. May the Lord support and bless her, support and bless you all. I for a long time was (??) that I did not hear from West River. Little thinking of the cause of your silence when Mrs. Nicholson's letter arrived communicating to us the afflicting dispensation of providence. She mentions also the death of a Mrs. Thomas. What Mrs. Thomas can it be. She speaks as if we had known her.

Such a pen and such paper, is my excuse for this blotted letter. It is all I can at present command but I could not defer writing. My love to the Doctor and all your dear Family.

May God bless my dear friend is the prayer of her ever affectionate,

Catharine Few

* dear daughter: Mary Young Addison Murray (died 6/9/1834) and new born son,
James Edmund Brice Murray,
Nephew: James Chrystie

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—Rhinebeck N.Y., Sep. 22

Rhinebeck, Sept 19, 1834

My dear friend

I think my last letter to you was dated from this place, and here I am still, but proposing to return to the City on Monday next. The appalling epidemic which for the last 6 weeks has prevailed, we hope has at last subsided, and at least, its victims have greatly diminished. My visit here, to my dear Matilda, has been made very pleasant. The situation is beautiful and the affection and kindness of dear children and friends very gratifying and let me not forget to acknowledge the mercy of our God in the preservation of our health, while so many others have been swept away, as it were in a moment, at least after a few hours illness; I hope my dear that you, and your dear family, have been spared from the autumnal fever of your climate, and that the Doctor's health is perfectly restored alas what a poor anxious, dying, life do we live on this earth! It is true, blessings cluster round us, but we do hold them with a trembling hand. We cannot but feel our unworthiness, and the Lord makes us often to know, by his chastising rod, our dependence upon him, and indeed, since this is not our home, and the sentence has gone forth "Dust thou are and ___how gently does He remove one beloved one after another, gradually loosening the ties that bind us to the earth and pointing to another and a better world" O that of his infinite mercy, he may be pleased to grant to us, who stand on the very

verge of time, more elevated and transforming views of that blessedness which eye hath not seen, and which we have a good hope we shall at last enter upon.

The sweet remembrance I have of our visit to you my dear friend, and the faint hope I have of ever repeating that pleasure, for infirmities increase with years, makes me often think of that reunion of separate and departed friends which await the people of God, there where is derived from the presence of God himself, for without that, there can be no heaven for us, yet, that we shall go to them, who cannot return to us, and together raise the song of praise, is, tho a minor, yet a sweet source of the anticipation of future blessings.

Frances Chrystie in returning from the pure air of the Sea Shore too soon, was affected with symptoms of Cholera after her return to the City. Her physician used very prompt means for her relief and thro the blessings of God she has perfectly recovered.

I am sorry to hear that your dear Mary has such delicate health, I hope it will please God to preserve her precious life. Remember me most affectionately to her I cannot but hope, that at some future time, our children will see more of each other, for I am sure there is a great deal of congeniality, which must make them desire it if it is practicable.

May God bless you my dear Friend. Do not forget to say to the Doctor that I desire affectionate remembrance to him—and do thank the Dairy maid, as well as her Mistress, for her hospitable intention.—The Balloon, may help along in some future generation, such neighborly intercourse.

Ever yours, most truly,

Catharine Few

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland
Post mark—New York, Jan. 10

New York, January 8th, 1835

My dear friend

I truly thank you for your kind solicitude respecting us. An awful calamity has indeed past over our City so flourishing, so towering, and alas I fear I may add, so wicked, devoted to gain. Money was the idol worshiped, on the mouldering ruins if not judgement, correction from the hand of God is inscribed; and may He grant that it may answer the gracious and designed, may we all be enabled to consider our ways, and turn unto him who has smitten us. Especially, may it be blest to his own people, for in the race of luxury and folly the world and the church were scarcely to be separated or distinguished. 53 acres of the fairest or rather the richest portion of our City now lay in ruins, and as you have heard, from 12 to 15 millions of property has been consumed. It is expected when notes become due and indulgences from banks have ceased to operate, many, many of our richest Citizens will become bankrupts but it is

not from thence that our sympathies are most feelingly called forth, alas, it has fallen most heavily on the upper class of aged men and women, unmarried ladies, widows and orphans, many of whom had invested their all in insurance stock which yielded a high percent and was considered safe, as since the first charter 50 or 60 years ago. No failure of fire insurance had ever taken place and who could have foreseen such a calamity but the Almighty directed the winds, his hand congealed the waters. He in the coldest night of the year, the thermometer many degrees below zero; it was then that the command was given and vain were the efforts of feeble man. With respect to myself, our loss has been, I had almost said, severe, but I check myself for I do not know, as yet, whether it will be necessary for us to make any change in our present arrangements. At any rate, all that is necessary, all that is comfortable is still left to us, and I know that it is the blessing of God alone that maketh rich O to be more engaged that, that portion may be our unfailing treasure. Almost all our family have suffered, more, or less Mr. Gallatin considerably.

And now my dear, let me speak to you respecting your own dear family. It does please the Lord your wise and gracious God, to visit you with many afflictions and that of a more afflictive nature than the loss of property. Dear Maryanne! still so ill, confined to the house, I grieve to hear this. Ah, why do not these visitations lead us to live more to the Lord? Our light afflictions, for so the apostle calls them, which are but for a moment, why, are we not sensible that they work out for us, in the end, an exceeding weight of glory—to the people of God, they do so—but alas, we groan being (??) . Tell our dear Maryanne to look to the Lord, to trust in the Lord. His compassions are infinite. and he can make us to rejoice even in tribulation. Whatever our own experience may have been (and O for an increase of faith and hope and love that we may rejoice always in our God. We may confidently appeal to the Word. He has there said “all things shall work together for good”: — I wish I had an opportunity of sending her the memoirs of Mary Jane Graham. I have poured over it with great delight myself, one so talented, so devoted, so heavenly minded, I have never met with. She exchanged an afflicted an heavenly life on earth for the more perfect bliss of Heaven in her 28th year. She was a great admirer of your favorite Leighton whose works, I own, and mean to read them more attentively.

If my letters have gone safely, you will not my dear think me negligent. Certain I am that I had written a long letter to you, that remained unanswered until I received your last letter dated Dec. 31st.

My love to the Doctor and your dear children. Kiss the little one for us. I wish I could see her.

yrs. my dear friend, most truly and affectionately

Catha Few

Good, faithful, and kind Henny she too has entered the world of spirits I sympathize with dear Maryanne, and with you all, it is no common loss to part with so devoted and so excellent a creature. Frances is spending the Winter at Princeton. Little Mary, she thinks is doing well, We have her William with us.

Mrs. Doc. Wm Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Jan 28

New York, January 20, 1835

My Dear Friend,

It is something very unaccountable that neither my letter nor Mary's found their way to West River. I was very desirous to hear how Maryann was and I think I wrote very shortly after the receipt of your letter. Dear Mary, I think of late she has been the child of suffering. May the Lord bless to her the discipline of his rod. When I calmly and at a distance look over the sufferings and the sorrows of this life, I can say, well, they are "but for a moment" and for his dear children God is preparing them for the inheritance it is all necessary let his will be done on earth as it is in heaven but my beloved friend, I know well, the conflict of submission when trouble is brought near, and I pray that he may still support and comfort you and if it is his blessed will, spare to you, your dear daughter and speedily restore her to health and strength. Her affectionate devotedness to her parents and family has made her life very precious.

I did not pass over your tender and kind invitation to Woodstock. You know, I hope, that the happiness of meeting again would be reciprocal, truly delightful would it be to me, if I could just drop down in your dear habitation, and pass some more pleasant days amidst your dear circle, but a journey of 200 miles, and above all passing thro Baltimore and then to stay only a short time with you and afterwards have so many regrets that so much was left unthought of and unsaid while we were together, effectually deters me from making a second attempt. We have now actually passed into old age, the period, after which, if by reason of strength, life is prolonged, all is but labor and sorrow and we flee away. Then shall we meet I trust "in seats prepared above". I sometimes rise to anticipation of that blessed day. Alas why not live with it more constantly in view. It is our only hope. The excitements of life are past. We have nothing to look for here "Arise and depart ye", says our God, "this is not your rest".

Our dear Frances and her family have not enjoyed very good health this winter. They have all been subject to almost constant coughs and indisposition. They begin to think that their situation is not healthy and are about preparing to remove and sometimes think of returning to the country, never does she mention you or yours but with the tenderest affection and sympathy.

Matilda and Mr. Tillotson are now with us, that, and other things which would be to most persons of very little consequence, have over tried me more than usual. In short Mary and myself live so much alone, and have so little to do with the world that a little more company and a little more ringing of the bell than usual makes me feel a hurry of spirits that unfits me for writing or reading with the same pleasure as when more retired. This is a weakness, an infirmity of old age and you will know how to excuse it. Since I received your last letter, or rather Mary's, I have been impatient to write to you and now you will receive my poor scrawl with all its imperfections for I could delay no

longer. Remember me to all the dear Woodstock circle, the Doctor, Mr. Murray and the little pet,
and believe me my dear. very dear friend, yours

Catherine Few

Jan. 27, 1835

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Mrs. Doc William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland

New York, 27 March 1835

My most dear friend

How often have your letters conveyed to me the melancholy communications of friends and beloved ones departed, but can "we not say we would not live always, away from our God". They have gone before but we are hastening to the same goal. The same haven will soon receive us. Eternity is close at hand. And tho I have been encompassed with blessings, the tempest within has made this life but as a troubled sea. Your sky my friend was early darkened by heavy clouds, mine, seemed to promise a brighter day but the sunshine of the world exhibited, even to my own feeble vision and partial judgment, hidden darkness which can only be known and confessed before Him, who searcheth the heart and tryeth the reins of the children of men, and which few could understand, even of the dear people of God, although they all with one consent cry out, with prostration of Soul, guilty, guilty. But oh, what a great salvation "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin" and while the spirit of our God, who counsels, who guides, who directs, who disciplines and corrects in all wisdom and judgment, and who afflicts, not willingly, has seen fit by outward trials to bring you my precious friend to the humility and meekness of which He, himself was the illustrious example. He also I trust is training us both for the same heaven and we shall both, I trust, join in the same song of praise unto him who hath loved us but O did you know all, you would say how can it, how can it ever be.

I have no recollection of your lamented Sister, but I sincerely sympathize with yourself, and her dear daughters. They mourn, not as those who have no hope, she has gone to be "ever with the Lord". Do remember me with affectionate remembrance to them. I shall not soon forget either of them, nor the pleasant hours I passed with the Doctor and Mrs Ridout, the evening that I visited them when their parlour was consecrated to the worship of the living God, where I trust, we met, before Him in Spirit and in truth.

Mr. Chrystie, yesterday, closed the sale of his farm in Fishkill, and I suppose they are now fixed as residents in the City, he receives 200 dollars an acre for it, that part, which, when he sold his House 3 years since, he had reserved for himself and which is without any improvements as to Houses. Barns etc. but it has not gone without much regret. Frances always thought and hoped her lot would again be to live in the country but the education of their children has determined them.

I am rejoiced to hear that your dear Mary Anne is recovering, but how slowly has it been and how much must she have suffered by such a long confinement. I trust your heavenly father, my dear friend, will cause all your afflictions and those of your precious children to work together for their everlasting good the dear little one too may she be spared to see many anniversaries of her birth and prove a blessing to her bereaved Father and family.

I believe I wrote to you that Matilda and part of her family has been spending the Winter with me. I have every reason to be pleased with Mr. Tillotson. He is all that a man of the world can be to render him respectable and agreeable affectionate and tender to her. He has in his manners all that belongs to the sensible and accomplished gentleman and indeed his children afford us great pleasure. Let me also mention (the most desirable of all acquisitions) that I think his thoughts are very much turned to serious subjects. This reminds me of a Work we have been reading, voluminous, but a treasure indeed to the religious world. Have you met with Robt. Halls writings? I know not how to express my admiration of them so spiritual, simple and elegant free from all metaphysical perplexities, and yet so profound on the mysteries of our Holy religion.

My dear Friend you do not, but you may consider all things when you say it is so easy for me to take my journey southward. Infirmities of age have crept upon me remember that I have turned the corner, where all beyond is "but labor and sorrow" and were you here, I could say more on this subject.

May God bless you, and yours, comfort you, with your dear partner and children, with all the consolations of his Holy Spirit and cheer you with his gracious presence.

I am most affectionately and
truly yours, as ever,

Catharine Few

If you did not know of old, how it has always been, I might say "excuse blots and blunders"

ms03245b02f06 106 107 108

Mrs. Doc William Murray
Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark - Rhinebeck, July 23

Rhinebeck, 22 July 1835

I cannot but think it probable that my last letter to you has never reached its destination. You say it is a long while since you have heard from me, I thought you were my debtor. I may have been mistaken but be that as it may, your last letter has made us feel anxious about the health of dear Maryanne, what can it be that has afflicted her so long. Our Physicians have now a theory that most of the undefined diseases that afflict our poor frames arise from afflictions of the spine and a young friend of ours afflicted with pains and sickness which could not be accounted for, has been greatly relieved by a discovery that it was a spinal complaint. Mention this my dear, and it may be a useful hint to Maryanne's medical friend, Doctor Ridout, for I hope she has been prevailed

on to put herself under his care. A Christian physician is a great blessing, and such may our dear Maryanne find him, a counsellor for soul and body; and may the Almighty Comforter, and Counsellor, support, and strengthen you, my beloved friend. Let us consider that our time is short. Infinite wisdom directs for us that discipline which will best prepare us for those Mansions which He went to take possession of for us and He will, I doubt not "come again, and receive us to himself" therefore let us "in patience possess our souls" "and what time we are afraid, like his servant of old "put our trust in him" for "all things shall work together for good" (?pain?), when writing to you, would I obey the Apostolic injunction "Wherefore comfort one another."

Your letter found me in New York, but just on the wing for Rhinebeck making, probably, my last visit. Mr. Tillotson has sold his farm and intends residing in New York, that is in the City. I dislike to see a beautiful patrimonial estate pass out of the hands of the family who have long possessed it. There is something painful in the idea. His mother was my intimate friend, and in the very room where I am now writing to you, I doubt not has many a wrestling prayer gone up for this Son, who was a beloved one, and however inexplicable such change is, he seems devoted and his children, are dear children. There is much domestic happiness, all that is different is that which God alone can give "that peace which the world cannot give or take away". Are you not struck with the restless character of our Nation. Perhaps however it only partakes of the restless character of the present generation throughout the World. No one seems at home. There is a perpetual desire to change. In your little peaceful neighborhood, you may be less sensible of this, but here, and elsewhere, the speculations in property, the facilities in traveling, political changes, and many other causes combine to set the World in motion and sometimes I think these over turnings and this restless feverishness is preparatory to His speedy coming. "Who shall subdue all nations to himself". Surely every christian may say, " Even so, come Lord Jesus."

Mary is with me, but intends the first of August to make a visit to New Port. I do not think she is quite well. I never saw her so thin in my life. She reproaches herself for not having wrote to our dear Maryanne, but says she means very soon so to do. Our best love to her. I hope she feels herself to be in the best hands. Her heavenly Father "afflicts not willingly".

I am expecting Frances and her family here daily. They have taken lodgings very near to us. I have her little Mary, who continues very delicate, with me and here I think we shall remain until the last of August.

I have scarcely left myself room to say that my sincere and affectionate remembrance continues to every member of your dear family, with love to the Doctor and to each and every one of them I am, as ever, yrs my beloved friend,

Catha Few

[no cover address]

New York , Sept. 22, 1835

[To Harriet Murray]

My dear Friend

It is so long since I have heard from you that I begin to fear, all is not well at Woodstock but that is an earthly and an unbelieving thought all is well tho it should not be as our poor limited vision would make our hearts to desire. When last I heard from you Maryanne was thinking of a visit to Annapolis. I wrote to you after this from Mr. Tillotson's at Rhinebeck and that is months ago. I long to hear the result of this visit, and what is the state of her health at this time how you all do , etc. As for myself I never felt more as a sojourner on the Earth than I do at this present time. I have passed an agreeable summer among my children and friends in the Country and have now returned to the City sharing in the anxiety of my dear Frances respecting the health of our dear little Mary Chrystie. She is threatened with a pulmonary complaint, and has not been well for some time indeed when they visited you on their way from Norfolk, the child was very delicate and she has never entirely recovered her health since. They now think it best to change the climate on her account. New York being particularly unfavorable for diseases of the chest. They have therefore rented their house and furniture, purchased for themselves a pair of horses and a carriage and are about commencing a journey, somewhere, they know not exactly where would, that Annapolis and West River were more healthy at this season. They would not then be long in determining what route they would take. They leave their little Boy with me while they are traveling and propose afterwards to make their settlement for the winter at Princeton, New Jersey, which affords a high and healthy location and promises well for the education of their children should they be spared to them. These, my dear, are our earthly schemes (?) up: nothing permanent, nothing satisfying "Arise and depart ye for this is not your rest" is the monitory and gracious language of all these providences. I beg of the Lord that I may look upwards and press onwards. O what mountains of unbelief and sin darken my vision and impede my course, but these do not render the promise (?) , I will be a God to you and yours, I will never leave nor forsake you. My dear Children have long since dedicated themselves and their offspring to the Lord, and to His divine care I commit them, but not without much regret that they are about to remove from the sympathy of friends, and reluctantly compelled to give up the pleasant home. O may the Lord grant that you and my beloved friend, with all, whom we so dearly love may be cheerfully looking forward to our pleasant home eternal in the heavens. Here, all is changing, withering and fading away. We have tarried longer than others, to witness more of these changes. O may we have more distinct and comprehensive views of the blessedness of that state that is beyond, be fully prepared for an "abundant entrance" when our God shall see fit to remove us hence.

Mary has just returned from a walk. She says she wrote a line to her friend on the margin of a paper, saying we had just returned to the City so cheerful and happy little thinking how soon our sky would be clouded over.

Do my dear Harriett write soon to us. Give my love to the Doctor. I hope the Roses are still blooming at Woodstock, and the morning offering still enjoyed. Remember most affectionately to our dear Maryann, Mr. Murray and the sweet little girl*.

May God forever bless you and yours prays your most truly and affectionate,

Catharine Few

Mary says she was intending today to write, but defers it awhile, as I have anticipated her and joins me in most affectionate love to you all.

*sweet little girl: Harriette's granddaughter, Elizabeth Hesselius Murray.

MSA SC 2301-2-50

Mrs. Catharine Few
Park Place, No. 10, New York

Oct. 2nd, 1835

Your precious letter of the 22d, my beloved Friend, reached my hand yesterday, and I hasten to comply with your request, by writing to you immediately. Your letter dated at Rhinebuck was received in due time, (for which I now thank you very sincerely), but I thought, as you were traveling, it would be best to defer answering it until I heard of your return to the City, of which I was informed by dear Mary's line to MaryAnn, and was just about to write to you, when your thrice welcome letter came to hand.

I am sincerely grieved on account of dear Mary Chrystie's ill state of health, and deeply sympathize with our dear Frances on the occasion, (and indeed with you all). I well know what agonizing anxiety the heart undergoes in such cases, and can enter into her feeling. There is but one consolation under trials of this kind, and that is, that the Lord directs and governs these events. It is the privilege of a Christian, to cast all their cares on God, but alas! What sort conflicts are to be endured, before nature yields, and we are able to say, with holy submission, "Thy will be done," O how often have I experienced those bitter struggles! and altho I have been brought to know and feel, that whatever the Lord saw fit to do with me or for me was all right; yet when a new trial has occurred, I found I had again the lesson of submission to learn. But I am the weakest of the weak. My dear Frances, I trust, will be spared the realizing of her fears for her darling daughter, and that the means used may be blessed to the restoration of her health. It is an erroneous opinion, that is generally received in the states north of us, that Maryland is unhealthy in the autumnal months. It is not so. I think if Frances had made up her mind to travel in this direction she would have been convinced to the contrary, and she would have given her friends at Woodstock great pleasure to see her, as also Mr. Chrystie and dear Mary. They will have time enough between this time and their taking up their winter quarters, to extend their ride as far as this. Do propose it to them. You will no doubt correspond with them, and should they have commenced their tour, you can mention it to them, and with our joint love, assure them that it would give us sincere pleasure to see them.

I cannot express to you, my dear Friend, how grateful I feel for the affectionate interest you take in my dear daughter's health, (as also for the welfare of the

family at Woodstock), I thank God, I have it in my power to say she is much better than when I wrote you last. She is still an invalid. I trust her health is returning, though by slow degrees. She is able now to move about the house, and occupy herself in family affairs a good deal, sometimes I fear she exerts herself too much, but she says occupation does her good. I therefore do not prevent her. She did not make her contemplated visit to Annapolis. It was thought after she was strong enough to ride on horseback, that regular exercise was of more consequence than change of air. so she declined going. She is now talking of paying her Brother* a visit. who has for months been urging her to do so; but she feels such a reluctance to leaving home that I have my fears she will not go. We make a small circle at home, and we feel so essential to each other that it is difficult to separate. Much as I find this the case, I would most willingly give up my own comfort for a time, because I believe a change of scene and intercourse with her friends in Balt. would be very beneficial to her. Do not let dear Mary Few forget to write, if she knew how highly valued her letters are here, and how much pleasure they give, she would more frequently gratify us.

I wish you could see (and hear) our darling little girl* she is a most intelligent, interesting creature, and a source of great pleasure to us; I feel afraid to love her as much as my heart is inclined to do. It continually occurs to me that she is a treasure in an earthen vessel.

My Mary Ann desires to give her most affectionate love to you and her friend Mary. She wishes me to answer your enquiries respecting the nature of her complaint, but indeed I find myself incompetent. Her symptoms have been various and her sufferings (sometimes) great;. She thinks the seat of her disease has been in her bowels; the obstruction so great, frequently, it almost amounted to a constipation; but beside that, she has had most distressing pains in her shoulder and sides sometimes in one, and then in the other, so that it was hard to decide from what cause it proceeded. Our physicians evidently believed her liver was affected and treated her accordingly, but their remedies had little or no effect. At this time she takes but little medicine, occasionally the blue pill. I trust (though divine mercy) her complaints are wearing off, and that although her affliction has been grievous, it will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness. I must conclude, tho' I never know when to come to an end of my letters when I am writing to you.

My husband and son desire to be mentioned to you and yours in the most acceptable and affectionate terms. Alexander begs you to say to Mr. Chrystie that it will give him great pleasure to see him here with his wife and daughter. was his house as large as his heart, and it accommodations such as would be agreeable to them he would beg they would spend the winter with us. It is farther south, and quite as high and healthy as Princeton.

Adieu My dear dear Friend, I am with unalterable affection, Ever yrs,

H. Murray

*Brother- William Henry Murray

*darling little girl-Elizabeth Hesselius Murray

[The following two letters: MSA SC 22301-2-51 are between Harriet Murray and Elizabeth Hesselius Murray's grandfather Rev. Addison with an enclosed letter from Bet to her Cousin Sally]

MSA SC 2301-2-51

The Rev. Walter D. Addison
Washington, D. C.

Feb. 11, 1836

My dear Sir,

I am thankful it is in my power to give a favourable answer to your enquiries respecting our precious little granddaughter, who has had uninterrupted health ever since you parted from her. I often wish you could hear her talk. Her mind expands in proportion to her growth, which is very uncommon for a child not yet four years old. She has come on surprisingly with her book, and will I am sure read well enough to entertain you when you pay us your next visit; or perhaps before, should an opportunity offer of her Father's taking her to see you in Washington. She is certainly a very lovely child, and is a promise of everything we could wish. She is a great treasure, but I try ever to remember that it is in an "earthen vessel", and strive not to love her too much. I need not tell you she is the darling of the whole family. Her Grandfather thinks there was hardly ever such a child seen, in which opinion her father cordially joins, and her Aunt delights more in her than in anything in the world. Yet she is not spoiled, which I think you will acknowledge when you have an interview with her. She remembers you with affection and frequently talks of you. When she says her prayers, she mentions you, and adds "My Grandma Addison too". Elizabeth was much gratified by her cousin Sally's letter, and will not be satisfied unless I write one to her in answer, which I intend to do, and she is to dictate.

I am sorry to tell you my MaryAnn's health is still very delicate. She suffers much with rheumatic pains, and is at present very much of an invalid. I look forward with hope to the spring, when I trust air and exercise (with the divine blessing) may be the means of restoring her.

You will be sorry I am sure to hear, that poor Brother Rogers lays dangerously ill so much so, that they sent down for his son John, and I fear there is little hope he will find him alive. They say he speaks of his departure with great composure and willingness to go. I believe few can look back on a better spent life. He is in his 87th year.

No doubt you have heard of the death of your Uncle Fitzhugh at the advanced age of ninety.

My Husband, son and daughter desire me to present their love to you, Mrs. Addison, William and Sally.

I am Dear Sir ,Affectionately Yrs,

H. Murray

We all beg to be affectionately remembered to our dear Friends at Cold Brook when you see any of the family. I wish some of them would write to us.

[The following letter was dictated by Elizabeth H. Murray to her grandmother Harriet to write to Cousin Sally Addison as referred to in the previous letter #48 This letter is torn with words missing.]

MSA SC 2301-2-51

c/o Rev. Walter D. Addison

Feb 11, 1836

Dear Cousin Sally,

I thank you very much for your. but I am very mad with that wicked person who stole the Toys and Books, you were so good as to intend
for I can read now, and should love dearly to read the books. I am reading some beautiful stories in a Book called the "Fair Child Family". I know you would love to read them too.

Tell me if you will be glad to see me at your house. You must come to see me next summer when Grandpa comes ; and you must write to me again. You must give my love to Grandma Addison and tell her Mammy says she is sure she would love me very much knew me and give my love to Grandpa and Uncle William.

I am yr Afft. Cousin,

Elizabeth H. Murray

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Mrs. Doc William Murray
 West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, June 11th

Brooklyn, New York, June 10th 1836

My dear Friend

Will you not be surprised to hear that I have left the City of New York, and given up my old residence at Park Place after having resided there nearly 30 years but so it is and I must proceed to give you the why's and the wherefores Our City has become one vast emporium for the commercial world of all nations, and for the accommodations of business. It is literally tearing down and building up, beautiful dwelling houses destroyed and in their place, stores and immense Hotels rising up I had resisted all innovations, as it had respect to my own dwelling, thinking to end my days in that spot. Wall after wall had gone up still we had air and light from one quarter but 3 weeks ago, my neighbor, to increase his gain, laid the foundation of a house shutting me up from that one quarter. I complained, and felt very sad at the thoughts of moving, but all the comfort I received was, you can rent your house for 1500 dollars a year, and why should you continue. My dear Frances had occupied a house at Brooklyn, a beautiful little City, opposite the City of New York but after a short residence there, they found the situation which is very much exposed to the influence of the land and sea breezes, a bad union for pulmonary complaints, unfavorable to the health of their poor little girl; and as they had determined to leave it.

Mary and myself, with our servants, have taken possession of their premises, and they are about to set out again on their travels.

I have now my dear friend given you an account of this unlooked for change. Whether I shall continue here, I know not I feel unsettled and desire to be deeply and solemnly impressed with the truth, that here on this earth I am but a sojourner. There is something better than anything it can afford I trust in reserve for us and ours "A City that hath foundations. You have heard, I dare say, of the death of Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. J.R. Murray's daughter. She was young and lovely but not too lovely for the Kingdom of heaven when she gave a blessed testimony (before she left this Earth and her afflicted parents) that she was prepared for an abundant entrance. Since this event her Aunt, who was an intimate acquaintance of mine, and living in the same house with her brother's son has also left this vale of tears. She was a religious woman and I daresay has gone in the triumph of faith and hope. I have seen none of the family since, but am told the parents of Mrs. Crosby have been greatly supported thro this afflicting dispensation the death of their only daughter.

How does our dear Mary Ann? still suffering or has this milder season had any effect favorable to the restoration of her health. May it please God to bless her blessed be his name "there is a land of pure delight" in prospect. where pain shall be no more and "the inhabitants shall no more say I am sick". Tell her we love her, love you all Mary F. says she would have written to Mary Ann, before this, but for the fussing and turmoil of moving.

God bless you all, ever believe me my Friend, Yr. affectionate,

Catha Few

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[Written in pencil] Mary Ann Murray the only daughter of Mrs. Murray died the 23 of July 1836

Mrs. Doc. William Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—NewYork, (no date)

Brooklyn L. I., August 24, 1836

My beloved friend,

It was only yesterday, just one month from the period of your dear daughters transition from this world of sin and suffering, that the sad tidings contained in Mr. Murray's letter reached me. It was indeed very unexpected to me. I knew she was ill, but little thought that it was a sickness unto Death. Your last letter spoke of the hope that she would see the seeds her friend Mary had sent her blooming in her garden with the delight she ever took in that lovely spot but this was not to be so __ and in the paradise above she has been "led to living fountains of water "where there is no more pain, or sorrow, or death. She is forever with the Lord your God and her God.

It is necessary for us to take this just and consoling view of this solemn, and otherwise, sad dispensation and while we mourn our loss, reflecting on the various excellencies of her character the dutiful and devoted daughter, the

affectionate and tender friend, the interesting and intelligent companion for in all these we just had a glimpse of her worth, and that glimpse, too transient. We feel thankful that we were permitted to enjoy how more necessary is it for you my beloved friend and her aged father to comfort

[A section of this letter is missing]

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Sep 17

Brooklyn, L.I., September 16th 1836

My dear Harriet,

You do not feel yourself competent to write, even to your friend. I understand this but I long to hear from you This world, for the present, has become as it were a blank to you, and every day you are more and more sensible of your unspeakable loss but my beloved, "gird up the loins of your mind" our three-score years and ten are past and he who had prepared a place for your precious daughter and then took her to himself will soon summon us, and tho "clouds and darkness are round about him" yet the light from heaven breaks in upon our sorrowing souls, and he condescends to assure us "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for those that love him" Let us hold fast our confidence even to the end, let our "hope be as "the anchor of our soul cast within the vail" With respect to myself, things pass before me much as they have done but how differently am I impressed by them, shadows all, and were it not for that precious hope, that the gospel sets before us, how sad would life appear, excitement so needful for the young gone with me "all is vanity" I look for nothing and I expect nothing here, if any earthly change takes place, it cannot be for the better, the infirmities of age are daily advancing_ but do I not see the goodness of the Lord in thus hedging me in, Let us pray for each other, that we may effectually understand the language of nature and of providence comprehensively and graciously expressed in his blessed word "Let your affections on things above"_ there will be no disappointment, the fountain of life and love will abundantly satisfy our longing, weary, souls, and we shall at last "know as we are known".

Dear Frances and Mary have felt the loss of their precious friend, deeply, both intend to write to her dear Mother yet both are withheld by the sacredness of her sorrow fearing to intrude.

My best love to the Doctor, God bless and support you both The trial is great I trust that one in the form of the Son God walks with you in this furnace of affliction. If possible let me hear from you. Remember me also very affectionately to Mr. Alexander Murray. Kiss your little darling for me.

And ever believe me with tender sympathy and love.

Yr. most truly and sincerely,

Catharine Few

ms03245b02f06 118 119 120

Mrs. Doc Wm. Murray
 West River
 care of William Murray , esq.
 Baltimore, Md.
Postmark—New York, Nov 11

Brooklyn, L. I., 10 November 1836

My Beloved friend

Your sad, but deeply interesting letter has remained too long unanswered writing is a blessed expedient, it is true, to which absent friends are privileged to resort, but how inadequate to convey the thousand thoughts that pass in the mind to and fro, especially when sorrow or joy or anxiety agitate and afflict. Yet after all, our God alone can bind up the broken heart. He, who afflicts not willingly, He, who will at last lead his sorrowing ones to living fountains of water and with his own blessed hand wipe away every tear. Yet well do I know yours is a bereavement not to be made up in this present world, but I trust my beloved friend that your eyes are lifted upwards and that you will be looking and waiting for the coming of the Lord anticipating a blessed reunion to your precious child, when you shall, as she does now, understand the ways of the Lord No more clouds and darkness will then obscure his goings from your view, but praises and thanksgiving to the Captain of your salvation who through the wilderness, the dark and gloomy wilderness, has led you to a City of habitation. How earnestly ought we to pray daily that we may have eyes to see and ears to hear for under the infatuation of the things of this world we neither see nor hear as reasonable creatures, notwithstanding, we have the word of God to direct us and his providences to alarm us to convince us that this is but the beginning of an endless life, that here we can have no abiding place. Yet here we will be setting up our tabernacles here, we say "soul take thine ease" but our dear Lord says it shall not be with you "In me ye shall have peace" look then, my dear, continually to him and say with another afflicted one, who has long since reached the haven "Courage my soul, thy bitter cross, In ever trial here, shall bear thee to thy heaven above, But shall not enter there". My dear daughters and myself dwell much in our thoughts and conversation on our dear departed Maryanne. Her character rises in every recollection of her to our view. You say she was everything to you, "her better judgment, her decisions and firmness and "how exactly does my own Mary answer the same description in her relation to me. I hold her with a trembling hand, and the more so since her friend, her counterpart has left us sorrowing, but are we not all of one mind, of one heart, shall not one home receive us all at last. Blessed hope as the "anchor of the soul cast within the vail" "Christ the corner stone."

I believe I wrote to you, last June, what were the circumstances that induced me to leave Park Place, my residence for near 30 years. I have never found myself at home since, and at present, I am waiting for the opening of divine providence to return to the City, whether it will be this winter or not I cannot tell. We are now all at Brooklyn. Mr. Tillotson's, Mr. Chrystie's family, and my own but all talking of changing in the spring. Mr. Chrystie of returning to Fish-

kill. The house Mr. Tillotson occupies is too small for his family, he therefore has fixed on the city as his future residence and if I am spared, I suppose it will take us up also.

May the Lord be our guide and counsellor. You, my dear, I suppose are now in Baltimore. I was glad to hear that you were about to make that change, for the present. It cannot but be best. Does Alexander stay at Woodstock? It must be very solitary for him. I trust the Lord will be with him and sanctify his affliction.

Remember me to Mr. Wm. Murray and family. My love to the Dear Doctor. Alas what sorrow for his old age has not infinite wisdom laid upon him, May He grant that you may both, see one, like the Son of God walking with you in the midst of the furnace is the sincere prayer of your ever affectionate,

Catharine Few

MSA SC 2301-2-52

Mrs. Catharine Few
care of Albert Chrystie, Esq
Brooklyn, Long Island

Jan. 5, 1837

Were I answering a letter to anyone but you, My dearest and most beloved Friend, it would be necessary to begin with an apology for my long silence. But you have long borne with my weaknesses and negligencies. These infirmities I am sorry to say, with many others, have increased upon me. And although my heart feels a stronger attachment to you than ever, and an intercourse with you of greater consequence, being more soothing and valuable to me than any this world now affords me. Yet my want of energy is such, that I have put off from day to day writing to you that I feel ashamed when I reflect how long it has been since I rec'd your last dear letter, which gave me a pleasure, which gratitude should have prompted me to have acknowledged long ere this. You will, I know, believe my heart is not to blame.

Your desire of hearing from me is truly gratifying, and with humility I would inform you that the Lord has mercifully sustained me, beyond my expectation, and far beyond my deserts. I have been most comfortable, for more than two months, fixed in the family of my dear Son, whose affectionate attention with that of his Wife*, as much as possible, makes up to me the irreparable loss of my ever to be lamented, precious daughter*, whose memory so fills my heart, that it will not admit of anything that can restore my mind to the comfort I possessed in her. Nor do I wish it should be so. Though I trust I have resigned her to my God as the sovereign disposer of all events, and who in mercy gave so great a treasure and who had a right to resume it. Yet I desire to feel the chastisement, and always to bear upon my mind that his hand has inflicted the blow, and that he alone can sanctify the sorrows of my heart, and thereby make me a partaker of his holiness.

O my friend, how justly you observe, how inadequate is pen and ink to communicate our thoughts and feelings on such occasions! A personal interview with you is denied me, but I am assured that I have your tender and affection-

ate sympathy and that is a great consolation; as also that I have an interest in your prayers. Never did I need them more. The change of scene and the dear little grandchildren beguile me sometimes of a gloomy hour; but my spirit hovers over the scene of my recent sufferings; and my poor dear little home. How can I ever enjoy it again!

I have left my dear Alexander there, poor fellow, he has a dreary time of it; but he spends his Evenings with his relations and neighbors who are all fond of him and wish for his society. His dear little daughter I have with me, who is an uncommonly fine promising child.

Please to give my most affect. love to my dear Frances Chrystie. I recd. a letter from her a few days since, for which I return her many thanks. she mentions her having it in contemplation to travel, and I thought in that case, if I wrote to her, my letter would probably miss her. Please to tell me how to direct to her. I am truly sorry her little Mary is still an invalid. Say everything for me to my dear Mary, tell her she is dearer to me than ever. I have written until it is near twelve o'clock, all the family are abed and asleep; but I could sit up hours and write to you, were I not afraid my nerves would get so deranged I should not be able to sleep at all tonight.

Farewell my ever dear precious friend. Please to write soon to me. You do not know what a comfort your letters are to me. My Husband, if he knew I was writing, I know would send his love.

I am always with Sincere affection yr,

H. Murray

* Son - William Henry Murray

* Wife - Isabella Maria (Stirling) Murray

* daughter - MaryAnn Caroline Murray - died July 24, 1836

* Harriette Murray's daughter-in-law (Mary Young Addison) died 6/9/1834. There is no direct reference to this death in the correspondence. Just as she makes no direct reference to her oldest son Edmund Brice's death in 1827. The above letter certainly shows the immense grief that this poor lady had to endure.

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Mrs. Doctor Wm Murray
William H. Murray, Esq.
Baltimore, Md.

Brooklyn, Feb 16, 1837

My most dear friend

You are daily present to my remembrance and that with much solicitude for your present peace one after another has been torn from your earthly embrace and our God would have you take him for your all and all. "Ask what you will and it shall be given unto you". Mountains of unbelief shall flow down at his presence, and importunity in prayer will bring that presence near, your eternal happiness is secured in the finished work of your Redeemer but your present peace can only be attained by fervency in prayer. O let us try to abide near to him. He has already proved to you as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land and so will he be unto the end, if you continue looking unto him. I have

been much exercised on this subject lately and I think all my weaknesses, my tremblings, my sinking in trouble my unthankfulness, my proneness to rest in creatures and things when in prosperity all have arisen from failure of watchfulness in prayer "we shall nap if we faint not". I have lately read a memoir of Mary Jane Graham with which I have been much delighted, a young woman but O what an exalted Christian prayer prayer unceasing this led her conquering through even unto death; and in that book I felt often as if I was communing with you my beloved friend, one letter on affliction I turned down the page and thought I had an opportunity of sending it to you but was disappointed I may yet succeed when I return to the City which I propose to do in May, the season of selling and renting or rather moving in New York and I find it hard to root up an old tree, I shall, if I live, go back. As for my poor Frances, she is still a wanderer. The air of this place proved too keen for her little girl and they are now in Philadelphia. South eighth street is their residence and there they propose to remain till Spring. I have just received a letter from her. She had seen Mrs. Stewart, daughter of Commodore Murray. Frances talks much of you. Mrs. S visit had revived many tender feelings while Mrs. S spoke of Mrs. Thomas' letters to her last summer. She says, she has been much gratified by reading a work of Baxters, from which, she thinks, we would derive great comfort. It is called "Converse with God in Solitude and Dying Thoughts", his reasons for thinking that our friendships will be renewed in heaven, are more conclusive, to her mind, than any she has ever read. She adds "if this world is such a blank without friends, sinful as they are, surely, in that pure state a reunion to them will be a blessed, part of our felicity" I wish I could have a conveyance for these books to Baltimore perhaps you may meet with them there. I sent Miss Grahams memoir to Hester Barney some time since. If you don't get it, it may reach you before you go to West River. But are you to return there? My dear, you will scarcely be able to bear it but I check myself The Lord can support you and will be with you under all circumstances and the hope of that blessed reunion, we have been speaking of, will, I trust, cheer the desolate spot, once so lovely, and raise your anticipations of a lovelier spot "eternal in the Heavens"

I have passed this Winter in more retirement than has been usual for me except the society of Mr. Tillotson's family, I have had but little other I have read a good deal, and it is a great mercy that my eyesight continues tolerably good. Dear Mary is my constant companion. We read together and the same subjects interest us both. You, my dear, are often the subject of our conversation. I sometimes turn my eyes and over my Bed is spread the cover worked by your dear hands, allowed by all to be very beautiful and very precious to me, silently reminding me of days past, not to return in this world but our pilgrimage will soon be ended.

You have your dear little Pet with you. I think she must be about 6 years old, a sweet companion for her Grandmama and grandpapa but how must her Father feel at being separated from you all but I suppose he has much to occupy him and, in this way, the sentence once pronounced on our fallen race, proves a blessing. O what wisdom, what mercy and love is conspicuous in all the dealings of our God and heavenly Father. "O that Men would praise the Lord for his goodness and his wonderful works to the Children of Men."

Mary, ever, joins in love to you. I beg you to remember me to the Doctor,
most sincerely and affectionately Yours my Beloved Friend,

Catharine Few

MSA SC 2301-2-53

Mrs. Catherine Few
care of Albert Chrystie Esq.
Brooklyn, Long Island

April 1, 1837

My ever dear Friend

Ever since the recd. of your last letter my heart has been running over with desire of communication with you; but I have been withheld from writing from a variety of feelings. One, not this least powerful, was whether it could be consistent with my love for you to be always exciting your sympathy by pouring my sorrows into your bosom, for alas! it is a theme of which my mind is so full, that it has little else to communicate.

Your precious letter, (as is always the case) was indeed a cordial to me; and I earnestly strive to pursue what you so justly recommend prayer is a strong hold, it is to (what in my very feeble way), I continually resort; but I do not think you can form an idea of the extreme imbecility of my mind, or believe how weak a creature I am. Pray for me my beloved friend, that God may strengthen me to bear up under whatever dispensations it may be his will to assign me. The time has nearly arrived for my return to West River, the very thought of which has cost me the bitterest anguish of heart, and many many tears. What shall I do when I get there? I shall meet "The ghosts of my departed joys" at every turn, without a possibility of ever realizing them again. O, my precious friend, I know you can and will feel for me, but I have not language to describe the pangs my heart suffers. The Lord never needlessly afflicts. I trust that this overwhelming sorrow may be sanctified, and that this poor heart of mine, so slow to believe and learn all that he requires of me may be perfectly subdued, and "every thought brought into the obedience of Christ."

I have been highly favoured this Winter by the most comfortable accommodations, and unwearied affectionate attention of my dear children, as that of my relations and friends also. I have had the privilege of attending an excellent spiritual minister. These are great mercies. Yet I sometimes think I had better not have left my dear little home. I should not now suffer the pain of returning; and my poor Alexander would not have been left without a home. His lonely situation has determined him to marry again. The young Lady* whom he has chosen stands high in character with those who know her. She is one of an amiable family, whom I knew when I lived in Annapolis; but I never saw her until a week ago for a few minutes. The event, I pray, may be for good. My stay with them, in all human probability, cannot be long, nor have I any fears as respects myself, or my future comfort in this life. But it ought to be a very perfect character, to occupy the place of his former Wife, who was everything that I could wish. The dear little girl* will be my particular care as long as I live,

but I can illy supply the place of so dear a Mother. What a revolution has taken place in my family in a few months! Changes too, so uncongenial to so aged as me and my Husband, but submission is a necessary duty during our pilgrimage here and when we properly reflect, all our trials are "but for a moment".

Whilst writing this I was called down to see a relation of yours and Dr. Murray's Capt. Joseph Nicholson*, who is just returned from a long absence from his family. He inquired when I had heard from you, knowing our intimacy. The Captain appears to have a warm attachment to the Murray family, for the Commodore's sake, to whose friendship and attention to him in his early life he attributes his advancement in his profession. He seems now, to long for rest and domestic quiet, and no wonder, having a wife and four children.

Since I wrote you last I have lost my dear old friend, Mrs. Cheston* She died most unexpectedly, but I trust with a good hope. She has left me without any to supply her place. She has been my most attached friend for many years and although advanced in years was of great consequence to her friends and family. Thus you see my dear "that lovers and friends are removed far from me". All speaking loudly to me "This is not your rest".

I wrote a few hasty lines to my dear Frances Chrystie, but have not heard from her since. I hope her dear Mary is better and give my love to my precious Mary Few and thank her for her letter. I intend writing to her soon.

Dr. Murray sits by and desires me to give his most sincere and affectionate love to you and Mary. You'll be sorry hear, his sight is so impaired, that he is not able to read a sentence, even of the largest print. This is a great loss to me as well as himself.

Have you read any of Phillip's works? I have been much pleased and I hope edified by reading his "Devotional Guides". I have not got quite through the work; but I am sure you'll be of my opinion respecting it. I have been well supplied with the best books this winter. My dear William has an excellent religious library, and I am happy to add is a very pious man.

As usual I have scribbled a long letter to you.

Adieu My best and dearest friend, Ever Yrs,

H. Murray

*The young lady—Mary Clapham (daughter of Jonas Clapham and Catharine Cooke) marries Alexander John Murray May 10, 1837

*The dear little girl—Elizabeth Hesselius Murray, daughter of Alexander and his first wife, Mary Young Addison,.

*Capt. Joseph Nicholson, probably Catharine Few's first cousin

*Mrs. Cheston (Anne Galloway) wife of James Cheston, died Feb.25,1837 note: see letters to Mrs. Cheston from Harriette,(1804–1808)

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
Wm H. Murray, Esq.
Baltimore, Md.

New York, 7th May 1837

My Dear Friend,

How long have I delayed writing to you. The principle cause has been a weakness of my eyes sometimes, the dimness is so great that I can do but little, and have to sit still and wait till it passes over before I can either read or write how often does the infirmities of age remind me of that (?) sentence "Work while you have the day for the night cometh wherein no man can work". Alas, how long have I been idle and how near is the close of life's day I almost tremble at times to think of it. Our only refuge is under the shadow of his Wing, in the finished work of our Redeemer.

Your last letter, my beloved friend, was full of sad anticipations. The beloved one has flown, the spirit has returned unto God who gave it and home appeared, in prospect, as a desolation. Ah who can describe the anguish of your tender, your maternal heart but I trust you have been enabled to look, by faith, within the Vail. and rejoicing in God, her Savior, and your Savior, that He has delivered her from all sin, from all suffering and in his own right way, he is now perfecting the work grace in your own soul and preparing you for himself, and for a blessed reunion to your precious child who has gone but a little while before.

I want to know where you are, to hear if the anticipated change in your family has taken place. I hope it will be all well Alexander's happiness* is a matter of great solicitude to you and the remembrance of those that are gone, comes over us, on such occasions, very painfully, but the Lord is good, let us put our trust in him. What we know not we shall know hereafter and even in this world we are often constrained to acknowledge, that He hath done all things well, well for us and well for ours, and that in a way we least expected. I have a feeling on this subject, which if we were together, I might express, to write it is impossible but I am brought to this, after all my anxiety for this world I am brought to say, O let the issue be health and salvation to the immortal soul.

I am no politician, either in feeling or speculation, but what a turmoil, what a confusion does there appear to be in our public affairs. and where will it end clouds over shadow our Nation. This City seems to be overwhelmed. The Rich are become poor and yet there is but little appearance of it in our streets. Luxury still abounds as far as we can see but all business is at a stand and we look forward to the Winter with gloomy apprehension. How far I shall weather the pecuniary privations I know not. It is said there will be but little to be derived present by those who have interest in the stock of our Banks and it is all uncertain whether Tenants can meet their engagements but it is not worthwhile to perplex ourselves with what is future I have to thank the Lord, that he has given my children moderate desires as to the things of the world and he has said to you, and I, and I trust to them also, "Your bread and your waters shall be made sure".

If my poor eyes did not begin to pain me I could not end my letter without saying more of our love to you, our many conversations of past enjoyment in your dear Society and present solicitude for your peace and consolation.

God bless you my dear friend
 You will always believe that
 I am most sincerely and affectionately yours,

Catharine Few

* Alexander's happiness: marriage to Mary Clapham May 10th, 1837

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
 Woodstock, West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Aug. 19

New York, August 17, 1837

My dear Friend

I long to know how you are, has not the Lord been better to you than your fears anticipated. I know that your home will never be to you, what it once was but the enjoyment I trust is of a different kind. You are looking forward to a Home incorruptible, undefiled, and fading not away.

We are drawing nearer to our rest, and since the "disenchanted world" has lost, to us, its excitements and its delusions the calmness of reflection, when indulged, in the faith and hope, and consolations of the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, does, in some measure, even in the lowest exercises of Christian experience compensate, for what has by false promises beguiled and deceived us in past days. "The things that are seen are temporal but the things that are not seen are eternal" Let us comfort one another. I know from sad experience what fearfulness and trembling and unbelief are. With you, it is constitutional, with me, it is a spiritual deficiency but with us both, it is perhaps that conflict of flesh and spirit a warfare that ceases not, in more or less degree, till "this mortal shall have put on immortality" Do you not Dear Harriett view it in this light or do you think with some of our Christian brethren that freedom from unbelief and sin is the privilege of believers in the present life? but would not then every true christian have attained to this enviable possession for is not sin their abhorrence, and is it not their daily prayer to be delivered from the evil of it. The excellent archbishop Leyton continues to be my first favorite of (??) writers have you not found him on further acquaintance, most excellent? I love to think that we enjoy the same books. If we cannot converse together, we can meet in the society of these heavenly teachers, and pray for one another that, by them, we may together be instructed. I am truly sorry to hear that the Doctor is suffering so great a privation from the loss of sight. It is a great affliction, but may it be blessed to him For more than twenty years my dear Mother was deprived of the same enjoyment and did not know her own children, only by the sound of their voice. She altho a great reader in her youth, bore it with Christian patience, and I doubt not it was among the all things that worked together for her good. She now I trust beholds the Beatific vision without a veil between and such I trust will be the result of this affliction to my friend and cousin and your dear Husband.

Frances has again been in the furnace with her dear little girl, they went in July to Saratoga, for the health of the parents and child. Little Mary, was there, extremely ill with the bilious fever. She has however recovered and is now at Newburgh on the North River. I hope to have them with me in September. Matilda and Mr. Tillotson have gone to Saratoga for his health and I am staying, while the weather keeps cool in the City. Greene Street No. 142. Should we have a very warm spell I will go to Brooklyn for a season.

How is your dear little pet, do you know that I know her by no other name. It was the name she always went by while I was at Woodstock, but I want to know her by all her names that so loves her for her parents sake. Remember me also to Alexander. I truly wish him every blessing in his new relation.

God bless you my beloved friend. I am, as ever, truly yours,

Catharine Few

Mary is not at home—but I need not say how much she loves you. That visit to Woodstock has endeared you all to us—altho it was, too, too short.

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Mrs. Doc William Murray
West River, Maryland

New York, Nov. 8

Ninth Street No. 239, New York, 1837 (in pencil)

Now my dear friend, I must have a little pleasant converse with you. It must be pleasant, not only because it has been long delayed, but because I think we must comfort and encourage one another, to look beyond the present scene, when all is passing away and from which most of our contemporaries have already passed many of them we have good hope, to mansions prepared above for them, for us but you, my beloved friend are oppressed with doubts and fears and so am I, and so are many of our fellow Christians, and so I suppose all are at times. "Nevertheless the foundation standeth sure Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever". There is no comfort in looking to ourselves but we have chosen him for our portion, he, it was that enabled us so to do, and he will perfect the work of his grace and while we feel our own weakness, our own instability inaction, our desires, our affections are the same obscured and deadened too often, by the frailties of feeble and suffering humanity but our eyes are lifted upwards, and we are enabled to say, "whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee" wherefore my beloved friend let us comfort one another. I have just heard of the calm and blessed departure of one of our fellow Christians She like you, was oppressed and distracted by recent afflictions, by the infirmities of age and 84 years, and by the fears of dissolution but when death approached, when it was full in view, there was no dismay, no terror. She left her weeping family, who are yet toiling in the vale of tears, in a joyful anticipation of reunion to those who had gone before and I trust she is enjoying the blessedness of the unclouded vision, of Him, whom we now see through a glass darkly, but she face to face.

October 6

My dear Harriett.

This is the third time since I began this letter that I have taken up my pen to finish it and you see what mistakes. what corrections but I will send it as it is, and you will excuse it, for I cannot defer answering your last dear, but, sorrowful one which I have received some time since, too long to remain unanswered. My sight is poor and I am often obliged on that account to lay by, when I have begun writing.

I have again changed my residence. I wrote to you why I had given up my Park Place house. and since that I have never been settled until now. This I suppose will be next to my last remove, or rather my last for this world but we know not Mary and myself are occupying a new and beautiful house in a retired part of the city which I have recently purchased and often do we say, O how should we like to have the dear doctor and Aunt Murray to pass the winter with us. I know not that it is possible but I know that it would be a great enjoyment and dear Frances also is spending the winter in New York, not very far from us. Her little Mary is better, a good deal, but still very delicate we cannot have things as we would and by this we are admonished to set our affections on things above. I never have heard of the death of Mr Phil Rogers till a few days ago. Alas how few remain of the companions of our younger years.

Mrs. A. Murray* has I suppose returned to Woodstock, before this. I hope you will find in her an affectionate daughter. She must love you, I am sure for your own sake as well as for her husband and you my dear must (not?) attempt to compare, there are not many women in the world like the dear one you have lost and let us not say lost, but gone before. We cannot administrate, but no doubt she with others of our beloved ones are waiting for us and we are waiting for the coming of the Lord.

Tell your dear little Elizabeth Hesselius that an old lady lives in New York that loves her Grandmama very much and sends her a kiss and a blessing.

Frances and Mary join me in most tender and affectionate remembrance. Mary says she would have wrote, but I have so often told her that I was writing that she deferred.

Yours my beloved friend,

Catha Few

Alexander John Murray's second wife, Mary Clapham

There seems to be a discrepancy in the date of the letter between Oct. 6 and postmark Nov. 8th

MSA SC 2301-2-54

Mrs. Catharine Few
Ninth Street No. 239, New York

March 21st, 1838

Yours, my most dear and precious friend, reached my hand some days since, and I have reproached myself with ingratitude for not immediately answering it, having received great gratification from your attention to me, as also for

the interest you express for my dear William but alas! my mind has been so painfully occupied with his illness, that I have put off from day to day writing, hoping some favourable change might take place, that my communication might not be altogether complaint, as is generally the case. He has been in a languishing state ever since I last wrote you. The voyage which was proposed for him was abandoned, for many reasons. The season of the year was very far advanced, and as the winter was mild his physicians did not earnestly urge it; which together with his extreme reluctance to leaving his family, determined him to try whether by an entire withdrawal from all business, and the advantage of good nursing and perfect rest, he might not be so far restored to health as to be able to go on to the "Sweet Springs" when the proper season arrived. I pray it may be the case; but at present I am sorry to say he is in a very debilitated state, so much so, that my poor heart is kept in awful suspense between hope and despair continually. I strive with all the powers of my mind, (which by repeated strokes of affliction is much enfeebled,) to commit him, and all I have, into the hands of the Lord, but the sore conflicts I have on his account, it is not possible for me to describe. Yet I trust I may say, my God has sustained me thus far; and I still have hope in his mercy. Surely I have stood in need of more chastisement than any of the daughters of Eve, for the Lord never needlessly afflicts his creatures. O that this dispensation may be sanctified, and that my whole heart without reservation may be devoted to the Lord. I have a strong consolation in the state of my dear Son's mind perfect resignation and tranquility of spirit he commits all to God. And here my beloved friend let me offer his warmest acknowledgements for your very kind invitation to him to visit you, (with which you'll please to accept those of his father and mother), but should Divine Mercy spare him strength to travel, his physicians have marked out a different rout for him. He hopes the day may come should his health be restored, that he may in person thank the dear friend of his mother, for the kind solicitude she has expressed for him.

This is about the time that I should be returning home, if I could see my poor son better. If the weather was such that he could regularly ride out, the Doctors think it would be beneficial to him, but the air is too damp for him (at least it has been so some days past.) He has only been out three times.

Alexander's Wife has added another Grandson* to my flock. I have not seen either Mother or child since the event, nor my precious little Elizabeth, since last December. I can't tell you how I long to see her.

I recd. a letter from my dear Mary Few this winter, for which I thank her very sincerely, if ever a gleam of anything like pleasure should again cross my path, I shall remember I am in her debt. Give my affectionate love to her and my dear Frances, whom I sincerely congratulate on her daughter's better health.

I need not say to you my dearest friend, pray for me, I stand in need of every support from that source. For I am weak and too apt to faint when I am rebuked. My husband begs me to present his very best love to you. We have lately got a letter from the Eastern Shore telling him his Sister Thompson is in good health and spirits and requesting us to go over and see her. She is in her 96th year.

I have got "Baxter Dying Thoughts" with which I am delighted and I hope edified. I have lately read "The Letters of John Thorp," a member of the Friends Society, which I think most excellent. If you have an acquaintance amongst them of whom you can borrow that Vol., do read it and let me know what you think of it. I believe it is a very.Book.

Adieu My own and best Friend.

Believe me to be always yrs with trust affection,

H. Murray

*Ninth St. The Fews must have moved from Park Ave.

*Harriette's son William dies March 1838

*Alexander's Wife, Mary Clapham, gives birth to Clapham Murray,(2/16/1838)

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray

Mrs. William H. Murray

Baltimore, Md.

Postmark—New York, April 20

April 19th 1838

William Henry Murray, the second son of Mrs. Murray died March 1838

(written in pencil at top of letter)

My beloved friend

What can I say, how shall I comfort you impossible He that wounds can heal. He alone can bind up the broken heart. To Him I look, Lord increase our faith. Let thy consolations abound. We dare not murmur, submission becomes us, since we know not the end from the beginning. Time may not develop it to us, but the light of Eternity will soon shine on our benighted souls, and then shall we say, He, our God hath done all things well. The glorified spirit of your beloved Son hath joined that innumerable host who are led to living fountains of water. He weeps no more. He rejoices in the presence of God. To the eye of sense, to the eye of his beloved afflicted parents, clouds and darkness are about the throne of the most High to his purified vision God is light, God is love and soon shall his mourning and stricken ones, join with Him and with the Spirits of the Just made perfect in one eternal song of praise.

Dear, Dear Harriett it is but a little while. Take courage wait on the Lord, trust him for his grace, tell me as soon as you can, if it be only in three or four words, that to you the consolations of God are neither few nor small.

In vain do we wish to be with you, all our ways are hedged in. We are separated by the providence of God. My children love you, and could they but minister to your comfort in any way would feel highly privileged. May the Lord bless you. He only can comfort. Remember us tenderly and affectionately to the Doctor to the dear bereaved family of your departed one.

Yours my beloved friend, ever yours most affectionately,

Catharine Few

ms03245b02f06 135 136

[no address]

New York, 2d October 1838

[To Harriet Murray]

My dear, very dear Friend

It is so long since I have heard from you, that, notwithstanding weak eyes and my increasing indisposition for writing I can no longer defer my enquiries respecting the cause of your silence. I fear you are not well or but I know not what to attribute it to, I feel that excitement to active employments, even to active duties has passed away with me, yet in the musings and dullness of age my thoughts often reverts to you, and I cannot but hope that tho drawing near to our journeys end our "one hope", our "one faith" unites us too closely to each other to quickly suffer any weaning of our affections this, I know, is not the case of your long silence let me then hear from you dear Harriett. I trust you have in some degree, in a good degree, recovered from the deep depression which has weighed down your poor afflicted heart. Do you not, now, that you have progressed so near to the verge of life often say to yourself, why was I so anxious to detain the dear objects of my affections here. What have I found myself in this weary pilgrimage. Would it have been better with them than with me had they lived to old age. They went when infinite love, and infinite wisdom saw it best for them and best for me and we shall soon in blessed reunion meet to part no more. I look with surprise at the eagerness with which the world around me are pursuing the objects of earth and sense, but with greater surprise at my own past infatuation yet perhaps this delusion of youth gives energy to action and in the order of providence becomes a stimulus to exertion, which age seeing things as they really are, could never put forth.

How are your dear little Grandchildren? especially dear little Elizabeth Hesselius, both of them I hope so much interest their Grandpapa and Grandmama as to be a great amusement to them. Thus does the good and gracious Lord provide us with a succession of objects to beguile and cheer our drooping hearts admonishing us, however, not to love them too well but more devotedly to set our affections on things above.

Little Mary Chrystie's health is much better and after some little country ramblings, we are all quietly set down in our residences in Ninth Street, hoping, if it please our heavenly Father to spend this Winter in the society of each other.

Frances and Mary would not be pleased if I closed my letter without renewing their assurances of love to their Dear Aunt Murray and you will please to remember us affectionately to the Doctor and to Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Murray,

Yours as ever my beloved friend

Catharine Few

MSA SC 2301-2-55

Mrs. Catharine Few
Ninth St., New York

Oct. 12, 1838

I am ashamed, my beloved and most dear Friend, when I reflect how long a time has elapsed since I last wrote to you. I have from day to day, for many weeks, intended writing, and have delayed so doing, from no other cause than a wretched torpor of mind that is averse to every, the least, exertion. You have been the subject of my thoughts; and my heart continually longs for a communication with you; and although there is no other medium allowed me but pen and ink, yet I have deprived myself of the pleasure from the want of energy to express my desire of hearing from you, and assuring you of my sincere affection. No my Dear, never can I cease to love you whilst I am capable of feeling an attachment to anything in this world. You are the only friend into whose bosom I could pour out my inmost thoughts, and from whom I could, with the most perfect confidence, expect the tenderest sympathy; but distance precludes my having that privilege. Fain would I keep up an intercourse more frequent than of late, and I will try to rouse my sluggish spirit and do better in the future. I most sincerely thank you for your letter by Leut. Chambers accompanying "Mrs. Grahams Letters." which I have read with sincere pleasure, everything that makes me better acquainted with the character of that most excellent woman cannot but be valuable and highly interesting. I have read a good deal this summer. Doctor Murray's loss of sight makes it my duty, as well for his sake as my own, to give as much of my time as I can spare, to religious reading, and a good book is a treasure to us both. I am now going again through Leighton's Sermons, and his Commentary of the Epistle of St. Peter, in which I see new beauties in every page. Certainly he was a man of God! There is a power and an unction attending his writings that we find but in few. I have had great satisfaction in the perusal of that precious little Volume "Baxters Dying Thoughts", which by your recommendation I now possess. My poor cold inactive heart needs line upon line and precept upon precept. I strive to commit all I have and I am to God, and wish to realize his mercy in the severe bereavements I have experienced; and at time I hope I feel the submission and resignation that he requires, but often I am constrained with the weeping Prophet to say "When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me." I know, my dearest Friend, you will pray for me. I stand in need of help, for I am the weakest of the weak. I am thankful to say Dr. M and the rest of the family are in their usual health. Alexander's wife is now on a visit to her Mother and friends in Baltimore. I have my beloved William's eldest daughter* staying with me during Mary's absence. Maria Murray* is very pressing for Dr. M and myself to spend the winter with her; but I think returning to that house would be more than I could bear. Yet, if she thinks we can be any comfort to her, I could not refuse. I am therefore undetermined.

I am truly glad to hear Mary Chrystie has better health. From what you say I suppose Frances and her family will sojourn with you this winter. Yours will be an enviable circle. My kindest love to her also to my dear Mary. Let me hear from you whenever you can.

My little Bet desires me to give her love to "Aunt Few" and say she thanks you for thinking of her. The little Boy is rather a delicate child, but poor fellow, had not a fair chance, his mother was obliged to wean him at seven months.

It is almost dark, I must bid you Adieu. May every blessing attend you my beloved and ever dear Friend,

Ever Yrs,

H. Murray

accept the love of Dr. M.

*William's eldest daughter-Elizabeth age 16

*Maria-Isabella Maria (Stirling) Murray -

MSA SC 2301-2-56

Mrs. Catharine Few

Balt., January 18, 1839

What can have been the cause of your long (and to me painful) silence, my ever dear Friend? I have been looking out every mail for tidings from you and have wearied myself with conjectures respecting you; fearing your health might have prevented your writing, or that your eyes might be still weaker than when you wrote last. You have always been so indulgent to me, that I could not bring myself to think that your silence would proceed from a trivial cause. Especially at a time when I stand so much in need of the consolation of the very few friends I have now left in this world.

Mrs. Bosley, whom I saw a few weeks ago, relieved my mind in some degree, by telling me, that there had been a letter lately received from Mrs. Montgomery, mentioning that you and your family were all well. I am thankful to hear it. and cannot but hope I shall soon have the truth confirmed from under your own hand. Through the strong solicitations of my beloved William's family, I was induced to leave West River to spend the winter with them. My inclination plead powerfully for staying at home, but when Maria wrote to me and said it would be a great comfort to her to have Doctor Murray and myself with her, I could not withhold my consent, and the week before Christmas we came up. I need not tell you my beloved Friend how severe a trial I found it, to return to the House from which I lost so inestimable a treasure; and where everything that met my eye continually reminds of the happy days we had passed together never to return; but the idea of being a comfort to his widow, outweighed every other feeling. So here I am on the post of duty (I hope) tho' I have little talent, I fear, for comforting anyone. I am almost in as perfect retirement here, as at Woodstock. Indeed my health has been so delicate for the last two weeks that I have not ventured to expose myself to the open air at all. There is something of an epidemic here, which almost everybody is complaining, cold attended with a cough, and sometimes with fever. My indisposition has been of this kind. The fever has gone, but I still have a cough and am not well enough to go out. I have been to church but three times since I came up. My husband's hearing is so bad, and his cough so very troublesome that he but seldom attends church. In which case I feel it my duty to devote my sabbaths very often to reading to him, as his eyes are in such a state, he is not able to

read a sentence. I am thankful to say notwithstanding his many infirmities, his health is good, and he appears to have the enjoyment of life, which many want, who do not carry the same burden of years. We have a most excellent religious library, in this house, which affords us each a great resource. Have you read a little work, call'd "The Heart" written by a Presbyterian of the Episcopal Church? If you have, tell me what you think of it. I read it with pleasure. Phillips Works too has afforded much pleasure. And I am now reading for third or fourth time, the Sermons of The Revd. John Vern, which I think, if you have not read, you have a great pleasure to come.

I was sorry to hear from Mrs. Bosley, that her mother is suffering very much in her health. Her disease, the Doctors say, is on the heart. She is in such a delicate state she is seldom permitted to leave the house. That part of the family connexion has been a good deal afflicted in the death of Capt. Nicholson and Leut. Chambers. Both events quite unexpected, but severely felt by their own particular family. I have not been to see anyone since I came here. My desire is to keep to my own room, but my heart is always drawn towards the afflicted, and I mean, when I am well enough, to go and sit an hour or two with Mrs. Nicholson.

My dear friend I fear I shall tire you with my unreasonably long letter. I must bid you adieu for the present. Present my kindest love to your dear daughter, in which Dr. M. joins, as also to yourself. Please to let me hear from you as soon as you can.

I am always with sincere affection Yrs.

H. Murray

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[written pencil]—This letter ought to have been placed before the four preceding ones

Mrs. Doctor William Murray

Mrs. Wm. H. Murray

Baltimore

politeness of Miss J. Lynch

New York, April 8th 1839

My ever dear friend,

I cannot think what could been the cause of my letters (for I think I have written two that have not reached your hand) miscarriage I fear it may have been something wrong in the direction, if so they are laying in the post office in Washington. It matters not, only that it had the appearance of neglect to one I so dearly estimate. You have now I suppose returned back to your beloved retirement beloved, tho changed, endeared by pleasing, painful, and precious remembrances but shall we who are standing on the verge of eternity desire no consolation from the reflection that the time short. "We shall soon see those who are not lost but only gone before" and forever blessed be his name,

see him,* who has gone to His Father and our Father to his God and our God and that, to prepare a place for us well may we upbraided with the words addressed to the Apostles "O ye of little Faith" strange, that with such prospects, our hearts should be so desponding, so fearful, but He who is all compassion speaks for us "the Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak". Have you recovered from your bad cold. I was sorry to hear that you were so much confined to the House while in Baltimore. Air and exercise to aged persons are essential to us and altho I have been very much troubled with the rheumatism this Winter, I find I cannot do without my daily cold Bath. I have never felt the infirmities of age so sensibly as this Winter, altho we have had a comparatively mild season but we must expect to find it so, should our date be protracted. If our judgment and memory is not impaired what cause for thankfulness and submission and if there is any difference in those respects I am not sensible of it.

I wrote to you that Mr. Chrystie had purchased a house within a few doors of my own, but my letter was lost, and in that I answered all your kind enquiries respecting Frances and her children. I can only now say that they are progressing in their education and Mary's health is much better, altho she is still but a delicate child. How comes on your dear little Elizabeth, her little cousins made up, in part for your separation from her this Winter. May they prove a blessing to their widowed Mother* how interesting her charge, may the Father of the Fatherless and the Husband of the Widow be her support and guide.

I send you by this opportunity a little Vol. of poems written by a person who has been well known to me from a very early age, and often a humble intimate in my family, and who is indeed a very extraordinary Woman her history is briefly written by the Lady she lived with the introduction, by the Rev. Mr. Potter, is, I think excellent I was going tell you of Mr. Potter's loss since these poems were prepared for the press by him, but you knew not his wife, one of the most lovely and interesting of Christian Females. She died within a month past, leaving seven children, one, only four hours old, I spent a little time with her last summer, and it was but to make me feel her death most sensibly but it becomes us to say with submission and confidence to say "the Lord doeth all things well".

Remember me my beloved friend to your good doctor, and believe me most truly your Affectionate

Catharine Few

You will find in Maria's poems, one that she names the "Brides welcome" addressed to Matilda Few or rather to Mrs. J.C.T., who was a playmate of hers when children and who spent much of her time, when young, at Mrs. Garretson's on the Bank of the Hudson, where Maria lived.

him—she is referring to the death of William H. Murray, Harriett's son
widowed mother—Isabella Maria Murray

Mrs. Catharine Few
 Ninth Street #239
 New York
Postmark—West River, Md, June 7, 1839

June 5, 1839

Your thrice welcome letter, my most dear, and tenderly beloved Friend, reached my hand only a few days after I had written to our dear Mary Few. I therefore did not immediately reply to it; because as I had in her letter informed you respecting my family and self. I thought a little delay in writing again might be better, than communicating the detail of the same subject so soon alas! I can say nothing on that subject but what will excite a sorrowful sympathy in your affectionate heart. My poor dear Maria Murray of whose ill state of health I informed you, has been sinking ever since, and the last accounts I have had from her, leaves me no hope that she will ever recover, indeed that she can survive many weeks. The Judge of the whole earth, must do what is right, and it is not for erring mortals to say "what doest Thou" but this affliction presses me so. I am ready to say, what will become of my six orphan Grandchildren? How desolate is their condition, and how incapable their Grandfather, or myself of rendering them any service. Yet, although my heart is bowed down with grief, there is a comfortable answer comes to my relief. "The Lord will provide". Was it not for this Anchor what support could I have. This consolation is all I have; but oh, my beloved Friend, my exhausted worn out spirits, my feeble health, added to a naturally melancholy mind, prevents my realizing as I ought to do at all times, the wisdom, mercy and goodness of God in all his dispensations. I know that it is so, but I have not that feeling sense, that gives me comfort. but why do I always pour my complaints into your bosom? Forgive me my Dear and bear with me. You are the only one left me in this world, whom, I think can understand my feelings and sympathize with me.

We have this moment recd. a letter announcing the death of Dear Maria. She departed in peace on the 1st. inst. The discharge of an abscess on the lungs hastened her end very rapidly for the few last days, only surviving her beloved Husband 13 months.

My mind and nerves are in such a state, I cannot enlarge. I know my beloved Friend you will excuse me. Pray for me I beseech you. Let me hear from you as soon as you can make it convenient. I stand in need of the consolation of the few friends that are left me. I am a poor weak creature, and too apt to faint when I am rebuked. The Lord I trust will sustain me, or I shall be overwhelmed.

My love to your dear children. When I am capable of writing, you shall hear from me.

I am your afflicted, but unalterable affectionate,

H. Murray

A thousand thanks for the Books which are a treasure.

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
 West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, June 15

June 14th 1839

My ever dear & precious friend

Your letter has announced a sad and painful event ah, how inscrutable are the ways of divine providence. Still our God only knows "the end from the beginning" It is all well let us bow with submission this transient scene will soon be past then shall we know the why's and the wherefores then, shall the note of praise, begun here below, rise higher and higher, through all eternity. Even here, the consolations of God are not small, I fervently pray that those consolations the fruit of the Eternal Spirit, may abound, more, and more to my dear afflicted friends and that they may experience abundantly the legacy of their dying and risen Lord. "In me ye shall have peace".

My beloved friend you are ready to say "what will become of my six orphan grand children" you have answered the question yourself "The Lord will provide" The Lord will provide, doubt it not. I have a proposal to make, but hardly know how to go about it. Could you bring yourself to the event of parting with one of them to whom? you will reply to me, the little while I may remain on this earth but to me only secondary It is your Mary Few that asks for a little girl, the granddaughter of her Aunt Murray, she may call it her own. I would not presume to say so on any other occasion. Parents are often blind to their children but I think I may confidently assert I know no one more tender, more qualified in all respects: affectionate, judicious, and devoted to the love and service of her God. The dear little girl would be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I have looked to the Lord for direction. Mary proposed it, and if it is practicable, let us be indulged. It would be a sweet pledge of our long and tried friendship. Think of it my beloved friend and send me your answer.

I will say not more now, I shall fatigue you—perhaps oppress you with fears and anxieties by this request. The Lord direct you—comfort and sustain you; enable you to cast your burdens on his arm—He is ever near to bind up the broken heart. "The Land that is very far off" will soon receive us both. We have outlived our generation. The "weary" will soon "be at rest"—and God himself will soon wipe away the tears that have, so successively and so long, flowed from the eyes of his afflicted Child—to this gracious God I commend my beloved friend, and her dear partner, my tender, my affectionate remembrance to him.

With sincere Love and sympathy yours Harriett,
 Catharine Few

Mrs. Catharine Few
Ninth Street No. 239
New York

West River, Md., June 22d 1839

My dearest & best Friend

Yours of the 17th reached my hand in due time, and I hasten to answer it. I have not words to express my feelings on the occasion. My eyes ran over with tears, and my heart with gratitude as I read the contents, and I exclaimed, who can boast of two such friends as I have! When under the excitement of grief I wrote to you last, I expressed myself in terms that did not convey to you the real situation of my dear grandchildren. My mind was so deeply impressed with their sore bereavement in the loss of both their parents, that it extorted the cry from my heart "What will become of them". This dark view was before me, and indeed the only concern I felt for them was, that they had lost the instruction and tender care that is rarely supplied by any other relation.

As to pecuniary matters, the children are well off; and it has pleased God to provide for them a protector and guardian in Mrs. Anderson (the only sister of their mother) and her husband. They having no children of their own, have very promptly come forward and taken them all to live entirely with them; so that it seems I can have no right to dispose of either of them. If I had, most joyfully would I commit my sweet little Harriette to yours and your precious daughter's care. There is no situation under the sun, were I to have my choice, in which I would so soon place her, having the most perfect confidence in the ability and piety of both my dear friends, to render her every advantage that instruction and example could give her. I would that I could tell you, my beloved Friends, half what I feel on this subject. So benevolent, so disinterested an act seldom occurs in this our world, it speaks the motive which inspired it; and I feel assured, will be rewarded by Him, with whom good intentions are weighed as actions. I am selfish enough to regret that what I view as so great a blessing offered to my dear bereaved child, cannot be accepted. There are obstacles that would be insurmountable, beside the unwillingness of her Aunt to part with her. The dear creature is not more than eighteen months old, and could not leave the nursery. The two eldest girls would not bear to be parted, neither do I believe their relations would hear of a separation. They have all gone into the country to live on a farm Mr. Anderson has lately purchased, about twenty miles farther from us than Balt. Town; so that I have little prospect of much intercourse with them. These things are against me but I desire to commit all to the Lord. Tell my dearest Mary Few, words are inadequate to express the debt of gratitude I owe her, for her wish to render my dear child so great a benefit as her care and instruction. God I trust and pray, will bless her, "in that it was in her heart to do it".

Your dear letters, my beloved Friend, are cordials to my poor worn out spirits, and I hope to profit by the spiritual consolation they offer, I trust I may say my eyes are unto the Lord, and that the desires of my heart is to be made entirely conformable to his blessed will; but there are times when the billows

almost overwhelm me; and I say to myself "If thou hast run with the footmen and they wearied thee, what will thou do in the swelling of Jordan". And with the same Prophet I often say, "When I would comfort myself against sorrow my heart is faint in me."

My eldest granddaughter, Elizabeth Murray, it is thought has materially injured her health by her close attention to her dear mother during her last illness. She is now labouring under a severe cough, attended by very unfavorable symptoms. We got a letter by mail today, requesting Alexander to go to see her and persuade her to come to West River, to change the air. in hopes that it may recruit her spirits. She is much dejected, and thinks she is going just as her Mother did. I feel quite unhappy about her.

My husband joins me in best love to yourself and dear daughters. I am my ever dear Friend with unalterable attachment and sincere affection, Ever Yrs,

H. Murray

I believe I forgot to mention that Alexander's Wife has presented him with another Son, now 2 months old*. The eldest of the two is 16 months old, so that there are two babies to attend to. Little Bet insists on my sending her love to Aunt Few.

*William Henry Murray, b. 4/30/1839 d. 7/3/1863 (Capt. in Confederate Army) dies at Culps Hill in the battle at Gettysburg

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland

Postmark—Baltimore, Md., Oct. 2

My dear friend

I have not written to you for some time, my young cousin Henry Darden has been intending to go to the South and promised to take a letter for me and I have been from home part of the time. He will put this letter in the post office for me when he arrives in Baltimore. I have desired him to leave a bundle for you at Mr. Bosleys. It is a frock for dear little Elizabeth Hesselius pet as her dear grandmama used to call her, and it will be there when you send for it.

I was sorry indeed to hear that you were anxious respecting the health of your dear Elizabeth Murray*, and I wish much to know how she is. I sometimes fear, lest you are still distressed about her. It so long since I have heard from you. Alas, how many are the afflictions of the righteous, but take courage my beloved friend, and believe the gracious promise of the Lord. It is intended for you, doubt it not "Out of them all the Lord delivereth them" I too am one whom fearfulness and trembling too often beset, but nevertheless, I believe the promise of God standeth sure, and I trust we both have a right to confide in him, and know that He careth for us.

I have a dear, a beloved friend, now staying with me, Mrs. Garretson, 87 years of age "an old disciple" walking in all the commandments of the Lord, blameless rejoicing in hope. It is a great privilege to enjoy the society of one so

talented, so heavenly minded whose faculties are no ways impaired by age, and whose conversation is (truly) in heaven.

Frances and her family are returned from their country excursion, and we are all now settled quietly down in Ninth Street, her residence is only a few doors from mine, which is a great comfort to me. Her daughter is very much improved in her health and her son, William, enters College next month, a situation, at all times, sufficient to fill a parents heart with anxiety. We can only say Lord keep our children from the evil that is in the world. For while these literary institutions give youth many advantages, their associations expose them to many temptations.

My eyes my dear Friend are very weak today and I must on that account shorten my letter. Remember me most affectionately to the Doctor, to Mr. and Mrs. Alex Murray, mention me with best wishes for their happiness. Kiss little Bess for me. I hope her Shalley frock will reach her safely.

Yours my beloved friend,

Catharine Few

MSA SC 2301-2-59

Mrs. Catharine Few
No 239 Ninth St., New York

West River, Md., Nov. 14, 1839

It is a long long time, my beloved Friend, since I have attempted to address a letter to you. Therefore part of the summer I concluded you had taken your annual excursion into the country, and that it was probable my letter might not reach you. And in truth my mind was so painfully occupied by the rapid decline of my dear Granddaughter, Elizabeth Murray, that I could not write, or do anything that required the least mental exertion. Dear creature, her uncle went up and brought her down to try what the change of air and scene would do for her but alas! the disease was fixed; from the first of July until some time in September she remained with us, when her physicians thought advisable for her to return to Balt. thinking a situation more remote from the water, in the autumn, might be better for her; but she only survived a few weeks after she left us. A period was put to her precious life by the bursting of an abscess on the lungs. In such diseases we are apt to flatter ourselves with the hope of recovery, even though our fears often predominate. Such was the case with me. The event came sooner, much sooner, than was expected, and the shock was great. Thus in little more than eighteen months, Father, Mother and daughter have followed each other to the grave. I cannot tell you my dearest friend what have been my feelings on the repeated and deep afflictions I have passed through. My prayer is that I may experience its purifying influence, and be made perfectly conformable to the Will of my blessed Saviour. I am a wonder to myself; that weak both in body and mind as I am, with the weight of years and infirmities upon me, that I am sustained and kept from the deepest melancholy. Viewing myself as I do, as one the least and meanest of the servants of God, I feel almost afraid to attribute my support to his Almighty grace. Yet I think nothing less could have kept the waves from swallowing me up.

Your last letter reached my hand just three days before I received an account of my dear Elizabeth's death, or you would have heard from me sooner. I thank you a thousand times my Dear for your letter as also for the precious good books you have so kindly sent me. Blunts lectures are great treasures. They are now on their travels amongst my neighbors. I cannot withhold what I think may do them good. The Fishbite too I have lent out. My little Bet appreciates your present very highly. She said O Grandma as soon as I can write well enough, I must send Aunt Few a letter to thank her for thinking of me and sending me such a beautiful frock. Please to give my love to her and tell her I thank her very much.

I have lately been very sick. The Doctor did not think me dangerously ill, but I felt as if there was "but a step between me and death". I thank the lord I am much better, and today I have rode out.

Please to give my love to your dear Daughters. I am now writing by candle-light with miserable implements. Excuse the scrawl. My Husband sends his best love. His sister Thompson* is still living, nearly 98 years of age. Farewell my ever dear Friend. Do let me hear from you soon. You deprive me of one of my greatest pleasures when you are silent.

Yrs. with unalterable affection,

H. Murray

*Elizabeth Murray Thompson (Mrs. John Thompson) b. 10/7/1743 d. 1840, Dr. William Murray's sister

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Mrs. Doctor William Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Nov. 16th

New York, Nov. 15, 1839

My ever dear friend

I have waited so long in expectation of hearing from you, expecting a letter day after day, that I begin, now, to be seriously afraid some sad event has happened to prevent your writing it must be six weeks, since I wrote by a private opportunity, Henry Darden, and sent a small package containing a muslin de lane frock for your dear little Elizabeth The bundle may not have reached your hand but surely my letter would have been forwarded, as the bearer was requested to put it in the post office in Baltimore. In this changing world, where we know not what a day may bring forth, I cannot but be anxious to hear from you. Your last letter mentioned the delicate health of your granddaughter. Has she recovered, did she pass the summer with you etc.? Let me know something of your own health, of the Doctors, etc etc I sent you in my package a small book, a translation from the German. If you have received it, tell me how you liked it. It has been much thought of here. My beloved friend, every day brings us nearer to the end of our earthly pilgrimage and how many generations have passed away since our young hearts beat high with happiness in prospect. It was a vain delusion. Our God gave us many blessings on our journey but in his

providence reminded us continually, that this was not to be our resting place. He has provided better things for us. He has been training and disciplining us for the enjoyment of Himself. We have too often been rebellious children, and it has been of his mercy that we have not been cast off forever. But God remains the same, unchanging in his love and compassion. Old age is the season for rumination and contemplation and if by the aid of his Holy Spirit our eyes are open now to see his wisdom, his goodness, his power, in all the way in which he has led us, we may bless Him for it and "trust him for all that is to come". The time draws near which we shall see Him as he is and then O then Eye hath not seen or Ear heard what He hath been preparing us for. I have had a short visit from one of the most beloved of my friends, her age 87 years her intellect fine as ever her soul filled with faith, and hope and love perhaps we shall not meet in this world again but I feel that the tie that has united us for many long years, is greatly increased by our nearness to eternity, and now, in my daily prayers, I unite you both together. I cry to the Lord that he would bless you, bless us all all his aged ones that we may "fear no evil". that we may remember that He is with us, tho we pass thro the valley of the shadow of death. We have placed our feet on the Rock of Ages and fearful and unbelieving as I am yet there is an abiding hope, guilty as I am, that He will not leave or forsake us.

My family are all enjoying our usual health, and you are not forgotten in the social circle. We love you. I am always sincerely glad that our short visit to Maryland brought not only us, but our children together a preparation, I trust, for a more permanent enjoyment in the paradise above.

Will you tell me if your Sister, and my Cousin, Mrs. Thompson*, is yet living, if so, how does extreme old age find her. Is her facility of thinking, seeing, hearing etc. preserved?

Remember me affectionately to the Doctor and believe me my beloved friend yours as ever,

Catharine Few

Mrs. Thompson—Elisabeth Murray (Mrs. John Thompson) sister to Dr. William Murray

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Mrs. Doctor Wm. Murray
West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, Dec. 6

New York Dec. 4th 1839

My dear, very dear friend

It is then as I feared your anxiety awakened, and your fears have been realized, it has pleased God to take your child* to himself and you must now submit, acknowledging that all is well for He hath done it, the wise, the compassionate, God and Father the gracious Savior, who gathers the lambs in his bosom who knows the end from the beginning, and saves our beloved youth from the evil that is in the world, by taking them to himself. If ever there was

a rebellious soul, visited by a similar providence, that soul was mine. I tremble to reflect on my own guilt, and own that it was because his compassions fail not that I was not consumed. Why should you doubt my dear Harriett respecting that strength that has been offered to you in your various trials, unbelief is the besetting sin It is the Savior that has sustained and comforted you. "Let not your heart be troubled Ye believe in God, believe also in me" says He to his sorrowing and suffering Disciples "I am with you always, even to the end". Let us go on trusting in him The Jordan of Death shall not separate us from his love. This I confidently believe and it is enough for us But, O, how straightened in ourselves nothing to look back to with any complacency, nothing to look forward to but fearfulness and trembling But why art thou cast down, O, our souls Look away from ourselves we shall yet praise him. His shall be the glory of our deliverance "not unto us O Lord not unto us" be the glory all thine own You have thus far been brought thro much tribulation, and will hereafter, doubt it not, join the song of triumph where unbelief can never enter when looking to ourselves shall cease, for we shall behold Him "eye to eye". These are not the suggestions of my own weak mind and fearful heart it is the truth of God that we rest on it remains the same thro all ages you have not come to your Redeemer to plead your own righteousness you have come to cast your sinful, weak, and burdened spirit, on his almighty arm and there is rest for your soul. Tho in the midst of conflict and you have found it to be so, tho unbelief that besetting sin, still puts you upon the enquiry Can this be from God?

If I advance in my religious course, it is at a snails pace, still I am enabled to hold fast. The precious season of youth was past in busy cares, vain solitudes. Much of the love of this world whose friendship I nevertheless knew, to be enmity with God. The conflict was severe but age, experience and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ has taught me to say all is vanity and vexation of spirit, thy favor is life my God and thy loving kindness is better than life be this the portion of me and mine.

Can you excuse me dear friend from running on in this manner. I love to converse with you on this subject but never satisfy myself when I conclude. I have said too much or, I have said too little.

My best love attends you remember me to the Doctor and believe me your affectionate friend,

Catharine Few

note child—Elizabeth Murray, Harriett's oldest grandchild (age 15) dies of consumption. See letter # 57—Nov. 14, 1839

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[part of letter missing.]

[Reference to the burning of the Steamboat Lexington, which happened Jan. 10, 1840]

Mrs. Doc William Murray
West River, Maryland

New York, March 28

upon the awful gloom and points to brighter world on high. We are roused from the delirium of youth and feeling that we have mistaken this world for

our home, can see cause why we should have submitted ourselves with more resignation to the will of our Heavenly Father who through this wilderness is leading us to the heavenly Canaan, our true home our abiding, resting place. When we have good hope we shall see those, for whose removal we "refused to be comforted" and holding them in our embraces, experience a bliss that we have never known before. We shall meet never more to part. O to know more of this infinite goodness of our God then we shall see Jesus as He is. Then we shall "love Him as we ought". We shall join with our dear ones and with the Spirits of the just, in one unceasing song of praise acknowledging that He hath done all things well.

These are indeed the reflections of the aged Christian, while he sits with composure and contemplates the scene. But oh, when the tempest gathers, dark around him, when beloved ones are stricken what conflicts still await him, temptations within and sorrows without. He must acknowledge himself a feeble worm still and must wait in hope of that Rest which remains for the people of God.

I spend much of my time alone and at home. Mary is a good deal out. Frances lives very near me, but is much occupied with her family concerns. Her children are very promising William now near 17 years old is in college. Mary's health is much delicate. Matilda leaves the City. Tillotson and his family are going to reside in the country, through the summer. He has land 40 or 50 miles from the North River, the road passing thro a hill country, far too rugged for me to encounter. I shall be separated from them for a time, and I cannot look forward to any time but it may please God to bring us together again in the Autumn, as they intend residing in the City in the Winter.

New York in its commerce is suffering great depression. The poor and the middling classes feel it severely and I am sure the Rich also but wickedness and forgetfulness of the providence of God pervades all classes The burning of the steamboat Lexington* the loss of so many precious lives aged, youth, genius, science, all, all hurried into Eternity by the most awful of dispensations, threw a temporary gloom over society and the most busy and thoughtless were made to feel "But alas we hear, we tremble, we forget".

My love to the Doctor and kind remembrances to your dear family. A kiss for little Miss Betsy from her Aunt Few.

I am yours my beloved friend, Most truly and affectionately,

C Few_____

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Mrs. Doc. Wm. Murray
 West River, Maryland
Postmark—New York, July 9

New York, July 8th 1840

My Dear Friend,

I know not how long it is since I have heard one word from you. I know the infirmities of age increase upon us, and writing becomes a task, but I cannot bear to know nothing of you for a time so long. As for myself I am still in the City and at present have no thoughts of leaving it. The season, tho very dry, has been of delightful temperature, and I feel but little inclination to rove about my own home is the best and I would never cease, to thank my God, for the blessings I experience here. Still I am admonished in many ways not to take my rest here but to look at those things that are eternal.

The little acquaintance I had with Doctor Ridout's family gave me an interest in them which I continue to feel. The dear old gentleman I trust has made a happy exchange, and what a blessing, when called to part from beloved ones, to know that they are traveling the narrow road. The longest life cannot separate us long from those who have died in the Lord. This my beloved friend is your consolation. Our race is almost run, and at the close, notwithstanding, all our sorrows, it will be but little consequence that they have gone before, as to this world, and who can speak the bliss that may be prepared for them and us in that blest abode, that their Lord, and our Lord, went before to prepare for us and for all that love him. Then will our union be for eternity.

You write me that your health has been more feeble for the last two years, and your spirits are low how pleased should I be if we were near to each other, that we might comfort each other but the Lord has ordered it otherwise. It is therefore The blending of age and infancy or rather age and childhood, is natural and pleasant. I trust that my dear friend and the Doctor, both experience in this an alleviation of the ares and sorrows of old age but the best of all is, as good Mr. (?Wesley?) expressed it on his dying bed, that "the Lord is with us" Let us hold fast the promise of our God, nor suffer unbelief to deprive us of the blessed consolation which his Word so graciously imparts "I will never leave you or forsake you". And I think you must have had a blessed exemplification, and a sweet encouragement in witnessing the happy death of your friend Mr. Ridout. Your steps I have no doubt were led to his house, at that solemn season, for the encouragement of you faith. How glad I should be to see the Doctor and his Wife in New York. I well remember the pleasant visit that I made them when in Annapolis. Bridges exposition of the 119th is a precious book, it has been one of my treasures for several years. How is your eyesight. I hope it continues still to allow great enjoyment in your books.. and great it is, I feel that I can not be thankful enough for what I still possess, altho it is much diminished by age.

Mary and Frances always speak of their dear Aunt Murray with the greatest affection. Little Mary Chrystie (now 15 years old, continues delicate She has

had a home education, and is a perfect child in simplicity very fond of reading and very seriously (?). William is in College, and so far, very promising.

Remember me very Affectionately to the Doctor. I always remember that He was a first cousin of my Father's but our generation has almost passed away and our children will be entire strangers to each other, so it is, but we will say with the psalmist "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian Love" that bond will never be broken.

God bless and comfort you my dearly beloved friend.

Yrs. truly,

Catharine Few

This correspondence which was begun in 1782, when Katharine Nicholson was 18 years old and Harriet Woodward 19 was continued through all the vicissitudes this life and closed but by death in 1841.

F.F.C.*

*F.F.C.—Frances Few Chrystie—eldest daughter of Katharine Nicholson Few

*Harriett Woodward Murray died Oct. 3rd, 1840—see letter written by Prudence G Ridout to Catharine Few, dated Oct. 5th, 1840 (letter #59 on p. 94)

MSA SC 2301-2-60

Mrs. Catharine Few

No. 239 Ninth Street, New York

Postmark—West River, Md., July 31, 1840

July 29, 1840

You are indeed very kind, my beloved Friend, in remembering me, and I thank you most sincerely for your thrice welcome letter of the 8th Inst. I had been looking out for it with great impatience for some time, as your silence had been longer than common, in which easy I became anxiously uneasy lest you may be prevented writing by ill health, or some other painful cause. I am thankful to find by your letter it has not been so; but that you have been enjoying this uncommonly pleasant summer in your own habitation, which is so far preferable to a summer excursion, (So I feel it would be to me). We have had fine pleasant weather and also the blessing of frequent fruitful rains, which has not only made our crops abundant, but has kept our verdure as vivid as in spring. I don't think I ever knew so cool and pleasant a month of July in my life, as the present. As far as I am capable of enjoying these mercies, I hope it is the sincere desire of my heart to be thankful for them; but the season brings back to my mind most painful recollections. On the 24th of this month I parted with the dearest, best of daughters, whose loss I feel every day and which never can be repaired in this world. Do not think my dear that I feel a murmuring spirit. I thank God I do not. Through his grace I trust I have been enabled to give her up with all those most dear to me, that it has been his blessed will to resume. Yet still I feel that they are gone and I am a bereaved parent, tho a resigned one.

My Husband and self move on much as usual, his health is very good and but for the loss of his sight, would, I believe enjoy life as much as he has done for many years. He can scarcely discern one colour from another, yet he watches the monthly rose bushes, and regularly brings me his morning offering of a

Rose, when he can find one. Few have been permitted to live so long together as we have, and I may add very few have been so uniformly affectionate, and so unwearied in their attention as he has been to me. I can never be thankful enough, that it has pleased God to give him that perfect resignation to his will that I have never heard him express anything like discontent. The chief of his time is spent in holy meditation and prayer. There is nothing of the quarrelousness of old age about him, a perfectly subdued temper and happy mind. I told him I was about to write to you and he desired me to give his most affectionate love to you and your dear Frances and Mary.

Death has made his appearance lately in our neighbourhood in one of its most interesting and afflicting forms. A son of Daniel Murray's,* a young physician of a very promising stand in his profession, has settled himself within a half mile of us; and in November last, married a lovely girl, who was much approved of by his relations, and all who knew her. They appeared to be at the summit of human happiness; he succeeding within his business; and she to all appearance in the vigor of health; in which state she retired for the night. About three o'clock she complained of not being well, but there was nothing alarming in her case until five o'clock, when she was seized with spasms succeeded by violent convulsions which terminated her life. She was a corpse at the hour of eleven. She was six month of pregnancy. Poor dear Girl ! anticipating the happiness of being a Mother. How blind are poor mortals to future events. Her Husband is much to be pitied. He is the picture of despair. All his plans blasted and at present, can look forward to nothing that can give him comfort as to this world. His friends have hopes that his mind has turned to the only sure refuge. God grant it may be so. I observe he attends Divine worship more frequently and regularly than formerly. He has had a good opportunity of late.

We have had an association at our church during part of the last week, where there has been faithful preaching and much prayer, which I trust will produce fruit to the glory of God.

Alexander and his Wife are likely to perpetuate the name of Murray. She is near her time of being confined with her third child. The two eldest are Boys* Should the one a coming be a girl, it is to bear the name of my beloved Mary Ann Caroline*, whom I shall love for her sake.

As you take an interest in the Ridout family, I must mention them before I conclude. Dear Prue has very delicate health. She has just left home for the change of air in hope of recruiting her strength which is feeble indeed. You would love and admire that whole family if you knew them. The Doctor and his wife are amongst the true followers of the Lamb and their household seem all of one mind. Their children are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and are very promising. I spent three weeks with them, early this spring and left them with sincere regret.

Happy indeed should I be could I be within reach of you my ever dear Friend, but that cannot be. I must strive to be thankful for the privilege of knowing you are my friend and that I am remembered in your prayers, no one can need them more.

I hardly know how to conclude when I begin to write to you, but I feel as if I ought to release you. Give my best love to dear Frances and Mary. I bear them on my heart always.

Adieu my own most dear Friend.

I am with unalterable affection, Ever Yrs,

H. Murray

*from Addison Worthington:

*Son of Daniel Murray—Dr. James Henry Murray (b 1816) married Catherine Dulany Belt 11/19/1839 in Baltimore, lived in Owensville (in the house recently owned by Clemence Cheston Burwell) Catherine died 7/8/1840 together with her child. Another account of the event of her death differs from Harriette Murray's. It is that she died from a fall down stairs together with her unnamed son. Dr. James Murray remarried on 10/7/1841 Mary Cheston and again in 1845 to her sister Fanny Cheston. I think Harriett's version is the most probable or perhaps a combination of both versions.

*Boys—Clapham b.2/16/1838—William Henry b. 4/30/1839

*Mary Ann Caroline, k/a Mollie, b 10/09/1840 (named for her deceased Aunt)

MSA SC 2301-2-61

Mrs. Catharine Few

Oct. 5, 1840

My dear Madam

Knowing the sincere friendship which has so long subsisted between you and my dear Aunt Murray, I will not apologize for addressing you under circumstances in which ceremony should have no place. You loved her I know, and will regret to hear that the affectionate and Christian intercourse which you have both been privileged to hold on earth, is now at an end. It has pleased God after an illness of nine days to take her to himself. Many were her afflictions here, but the Lord has delivered her out of them all, and whilst we who remain in the body, cannot but weep for ourselves, we must rejoice with her, that all tears are forever wiped from her eyes, and that having "washed her robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" she has gone to join that blessed company who are "before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in his temple". On Friday 25th of September my dear Aunt felt unwell in the morning and did not rise as usual. Soon a severe chill came on, succeeded by a high fever, and it soon appeared that her disease was bilious fever. For three days in succession she had each day a severe chill, and another out of time, on Sunday night. After that, she had no more chills, but the disease progressed without much change until Saturday, last, Oct. 3d, about one o'clock when she quietly sank into the sleep of death.

My sister Rogers*, who was particularly dear to her, nursed her most assiduously, and I was privileged to watch around her bed for three days myself. During that time, her sufferings appeared less than I should have expected from one of her temperament in that disease. For you know she was always disposed to dispondency; especially when her system was bilious. The fever produced a good deal of drowsiness, and at times the medicine caused a distressing nausea,

so that she was able to talk but little. Prayer and praise however flowed continually from her lips though in broken accents—"Precious, precious Saviour" she would often exclaim and very frequently her eyes and hands were lifted up in prayer when no words were articulated. Not long before the closing scene, she repeated the whole of that hymn "Jesus lover of my Soul". She did not speak of dying, and I am not sure that she was aware that the last enemy was so near. But be that as it may, no one who knew her humble, holy walk and conversation, but must believe that he in whom she believed was near . . .

. . . (a large section is cut from the original probably by some stamp collector)

But my poor dear(probably Dr. Murray)witnessed his anxiety while lifethey tell me he his quite tranquil. No human being can at all supply her place to him. But God will surely take care of him and he cannot linger long.

My dear Madam I am almost surprised myself, at the familiarity with which I have talked to you. but indeed I have read so many of your letters to my dear Aunt and heard her talk so much about you that I cannot feel as if you were a stranger, altho I have seen so little of you. Please remember me kindly to your daughter, Miss Mary Few. Doctr. Ridout desires to be particularly remembered to you. Farewell my dear Madam. Believe me respectfully and affectionately yrs.

P.G. Ridout

*Sister Rogers—Sophia Owings Rogers, wife of John Rogers

*P.G. Ridout—Prudence Gough Owings wife of Dr. John Ridout daughter of Mary Woodward Owings & Samuel Owings) and Harriette's niece.

Homily from Murray family bible:

Harriet Woodward Murray

Died at West River on the 3rd of October 1840—in the 78th year of her age. Mrs. Harriett Murray consort of Dr. Wm Murray. This excellent lady was born at Primrose near Annapolis then the residence of her mother, Mary Hesselius, there she spent the early part of her life, which has throughout been marked by the afflictive dispensations of Providence. Though she enjoyed to a remarkable degree the sweets of private life and was blessed in her domestic relations more than is the common lot, yet was she called to suffer severely from the same sources which administered in the highest degree to her enjoyments, amongst the many afflictions with which she was visited, she was called to resign at his bidding that bestowed them several of the most exemplary and devoted children in the meridian of life, and this too when age and feebleness naturally clung for support under her own fostering care. To those who knew her well and had an opportunity of observing her conduct, it is unnecessary to say she bore her varied afflictions with that meekness which becomes a Christian. Gifted by nature with a sensitive and delicate mind, she keenly felt the dart of death as it pierced one and another of her loved and cherished ones. But quietly submissive to the hand who directs all events, she found her consolation in the exercise of an unshaken trust and confidence in her god, and in those bright anticipations with which he favours his own people of that better world from

which "sorrows & sighings" shall fly away. She was not selfish in her grief, but under the weight of years and sorrow, she still found enjoyment in contributing to the pleasure and improvement of others. The subject of this brief memoir was endowed with intellectual gifts of the highest order and these had been improved by an extensive acquaintance with the best authors, with whom she was accustomed to spend much of her time.

To delineate justly a character so loved and honored by those who were accustomed to hold intercourse with her, could not be done without appearing to those, who knew her not, to indulge in overstrained panegyric. But it was one of the characteristics of the deceased to shrink from observation & to seek retirement. She loved the praise of God more than the praise of man. We will not therefore dwell longer on a subject where truth and feeling alike dictate the highest praises. It is affecting indeed to think of the loss her bereaved husband has sustained. In the evening of life he has been called to part with such a treasure as few have possessed. For more than fifty years she delighted, cherished and comforted him. It has pleased God thus to afflict him. He alone can console him in his desolation. "The time is short" to any of us. The aged cannot suffer long and soon shall those so long united on earth be reunited in heaven. "The memory of the just is blessed." The recollection of her virtues can never pass from the minds of those who knew and loved her. May grace be given to her family and friends to follow her as she followed Christ.

(the Rev. William F. Chelsey was the rector of St. James Parish in 1840 and probably wrote this homily)

[to Elizabeth Hesselius Murray from Mary Few]

Ninth St., Nov. 17th, 1864

My Dear Lizzie

I miss you at every turn and most of all, at our morning readings, which were so precious to me. Mrs. C. tried to take your hour; but you know it is a very bustling one. She has not as much patience as you have and with her calls added to mine, we could not arrive at anything like regularity. The gold arrived in due time and is now in hand waiting Mrs. Thomas' order. Mrs. C. is surprised you have not received a letter acknowledging it, but hopes it has reached you by this time. It was directed to Baltimore as also one sent yesterday. The bundle was duly forwarded to Elminia. We hear nothing of its arrival.

Our household has passed through its revolution very comfortably. Our good Lizzie wore well to the last; and the wedding was conducted with her usual good sense. The brides cake made by Kate and beautifully iced, who also attended to the bride's toilette which was modest, becoming and appropriate, the groom did his part by inviting a circle of friend's and preparing a supper at his own house, wither he conveyed the bride and her friend. The minister made his appearance and tied the knot. Kate reports a very respectable company pleased with each other and broke up at 11 o'clock.

And now for the new Dynasty in point of cookery, we have certainly gained, and in a trial of a fortnight we have good reason to think she is all we wish. Mary Wilks is now with us. The poor child is suffering severely with nervous debility but we hope she is better than when you saw her. Sarah has taken charge of the conservator and is anxious to make it show its best face when you return. At present we can boast but little. We hardly dare aspire to such a bloom as Mollie's but hope to have some flowers to show you in March. Aunt Montgomery makes many inquiries after you. She is very feeble but still spends three or four days in the week with us. Do not apply my remarks about long letters to yourself dear Lizzie! I never yet received one too long from you nor do I ever expect to do so, but I feel much gratified by hearing from you every week weather your letters be long or short. Remember me affectionately to your home circle.

Ever your affectionate,

M. Few