

THE BURRELL LETTERS

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To

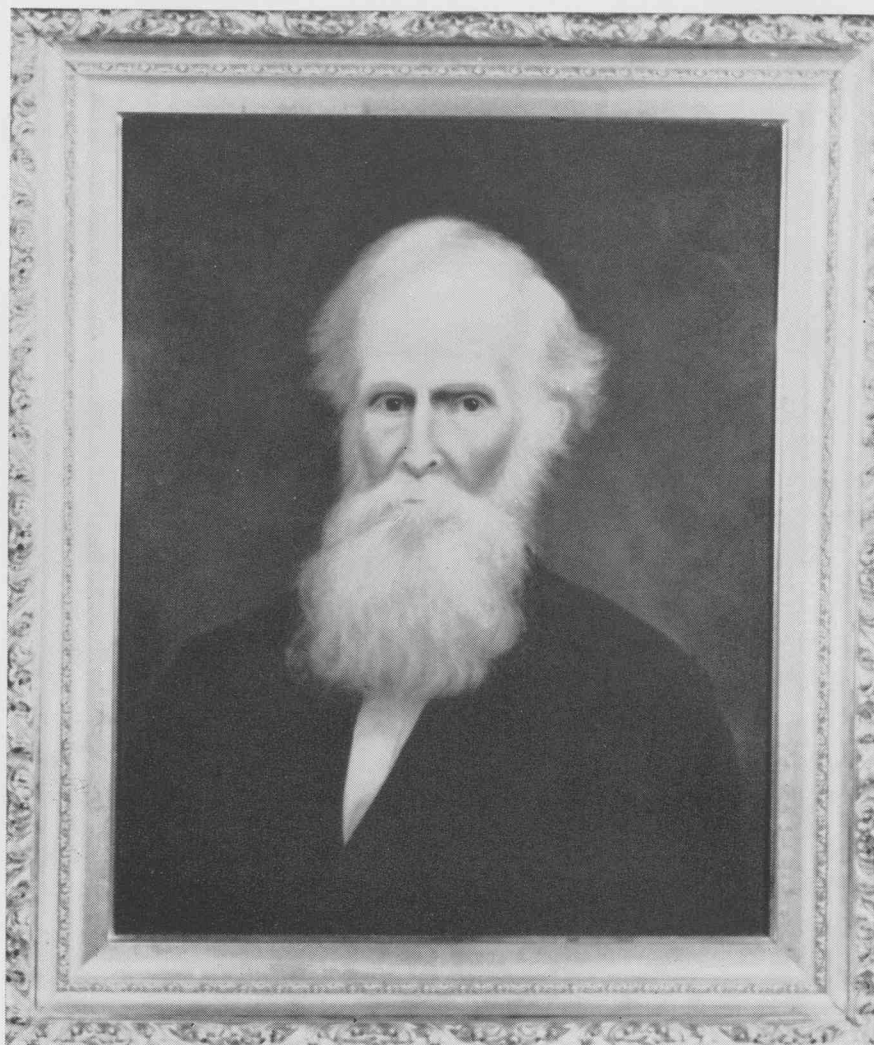
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LYMAN J. BURRELL
at seventy-seven years of age.

Reproduced from original painting in Burrell Ranch House, Los Gatos, California.

Burrell, Clarissa Wright.

THE BURRELL LETTERS

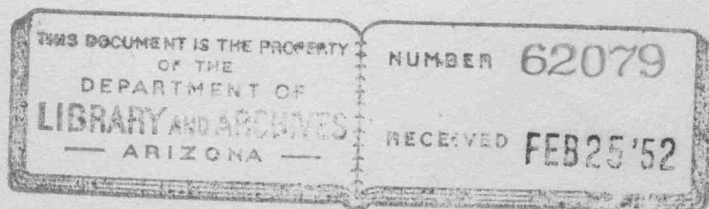
Including
excerpts from Birney Burrell's Diary
and "Reminiscences of an
Octogenarian"

*A contribution to Santa Clara County History
From the Original Manuscripts*

Edited and with
an Introduction and Notes by
Reginald R. Stuart



Oakland, California
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The Burrell Letters

INTRODUCTION

WITH a few exceptions, the letters transcribed below were written by Clarissa Wright Burrell (b. South Canaan, Connecticut, Aug. 31, 1805), the eighth of the children of Elizur Wright, and the second child by his second wife, Clarissa Richards.¹

Elizur Wright was of English stock. He was a Calvinist, a graduate (1781) of Yale College, where he began wearing a Phi Beta Kappa key in his junior year, and was said to have been "eminent for his piety, his mathematical ability, and his public spirit." The ancestors of his second wife were sea captains. Such of her letters as have been examined indicate that she was of superior mentality, deeply religious like her husband, but she appears to have had a pride which may have seemed worldly to some of her associates.²

In 1810, when their daughter Clarissa was five years old, the family moved by ox team and a horse-drawn carriage to Tallmadge, Summit County, Ohio, in the Western Reserve,³ where they lived until Clarissa married Lyman J. Burrell in 1839.⁴

Clarissa had been well educated—had even, according to the traditions of the family, been a student for some time at Oberlin College.⁵ Two of her sisters married ministers and two were the wives of doctors.⁶ Her youngest brother, James, became a Presbyterian minister and migrated to California in 1869.⁷

Of all her family, the one who exerted the greatest influence on Clarissa's life was her brother, Elizur, Jr., a Yale graduate, professor of mathematics and natural philosophy in Western Reserve University, national secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, 1833-40, and owner or editor of abolitionist journals. During the course of this latter work he was associated with William Lloyd Garrison and the poet Whittier. Besides his reforming interests (woman's suffrage, insurance laws for protecting policy holders, etc.), he was the translator of La Fontaine's fables, the foreign correspondent of a number of New York and Boston papers during a summer spent in England, and the first insurance commissioner of Massachusetts. He is remembered today as the "Father of American Life Insurance."⁸

Thus, although Clarissa and her family seemingly were buried in the midst of an Ohio forest, they were in reality quite alive to the issues of the day.⁹ They raised money, made clothing, helped escaped slaves across the Canadian border, and were in the center of many open or covert movements for abolition.¹⁰

Clarissa's husband, Lyman J. Burrell, was born in Sheffield, Massachusetts, September 4, 1801, one of the eleven children of Jabez Burrell.¹¹ By 1816 the

family had moved to Ohio where Lyman grew to maturity under usual frontier conditions. Marrying a young widow with a daughter by her previous marriage, he settled on a hundred acre farm which had been given him by his father.¹² When his wife died a few years later, he rented the farm and moved to Elyria, the county-seat. Here he worked successively as a quarryman, stock-buyer, and a small manufacturer of lard and tallow oil, soap and candles.¹³ In 1839 he married Clarissa Wright and shortly afterward was elected treasurer of Lorain County.¹⁴ Their son, Birney, was born August 4, 1840, and their daughters, Martha and Clara, during the following years.¹⁵

With the close of Burrell's term as a county official came news of the discovery of gold in California. Each month the magnitude of the find increased. By the spring of 1849 the urge to try his luck in the gold fields became irresistible. Burrell left his business affairs in charge of his wife and tenants and started on the overland journey early the next spring.¹⁶

He entered California via the Lassen Trail¹⁷ and passes over the hardships of the journey with the comment:

Nothing of much consequence occurred to me on the way except one accident which happened on the plains. Being tempted away from my train by wild beasts, a premature shot of my gun took off one of my fingers. As I had plenty of time to nurse it, I soon recovered; and, as it came from my left hand, I did not consider it of much consequence. I was able to work as soon as we reached our destination.¹⁸

In the winter of 1850-51 Burrell returned to Ohio with \$2000 in gold dust.¹⁹ A year later he made his second journey to California where he began farming near Alviso, renting land from Cary Peebels in 1852 and from James Lick the following year.²⁰ When his wife and children joined him in the early part of 1853, he was living at the home of J. T. Clarke, the second husband of Mary Graves, a member of the Donner Party.²¹

In straightforward fashion, the letters below tell their story and stop. They lack the repetitious, moral declaimings which were characteristic of many of the "Gold Rush" journals. In their description of the rigors of the overland journey, of the varying success and vicissitudes of placer mining, of the inevitable sickness, of the high cost of provisions, and of the haphazard communication conditions in the new country, the letters are quite typical; but in their recital of pioneer ranch life in the California foothills, particularly of the Coast Range, they are unique. In addition, the letters record the part played by the wife and mother who remained at home, and upon whose shoulders devolved the task of turning home and household goods into cash for the final removal of the family to California.

Few of those who migrated to California in the 1840's and 1850's were professional miners. They and their friends were by practice and affection, farmers. After the first rush to the placers, these ex-miner farmers either returned home or looked about for locations where once more they might cultivate the soil. They found a peculiar situation. They saw great unde-

veloped valleys, as rich as any in the world, owned or claimed by the native Californians. For most of the impoverished miners, however, the broad acres had little to offer. Titles were clouded, unfenced crops were destroyed by wild cattle, years of hard work might lead neither to ownership nor prosperity.

But bordering these valleys were hundreds of square miles of foothill and mountain land, outside the Spanish grants; this was the public domain. For thousands of home-seekers, the public domain appeared to be the solution of their urgent and immediate problem. Many of them pushed into the hills and established their homes in supposedly-safe locations outside the rancho limits. Today most of these early mountain farming settlements are gone and forgotten. Whole communities with schools, churches, stores, and post-offices have disappeared. It is believed that these letters may help to preserve some memory of the beginnings of one of the most interesting and more fortunate of these mountain settlements.

When Burrell found that the valley climate was harmful for his wife's health and that land titles were hopelessly unresolved; and, finally, when he saw wild cattle destroy his potato crop, he waited no longer but moved with his family into the Santa Cruz Mountains where, during the previous winter, he had filed a homestead on what he thought was government land and had commenced construction of a redwood house on a wooded ridge near the summit.²² The house was soon completed. But though prosperity came to this pioneer family through hard work and frugality, the mother's health did not improve. She milks, and makes butter, and gardens; she acts as housekeeper and mid-wife for her step-daughter; and she notices the trends of state and national affairs, the beginnings of educational and religious activities, and records the beauty and tranquillity of her mountain home, but says little of her health. Even her son, Birney, who kept an intermittent diary from the time the family left for California, has but a casual entry devoted to his mother's final illness. It reads: "Tuesday [February] 10 [1857] . . . Mother is going to stay down in the valley for several weeks to go through a course of medicine. . . ." From May 28 to October 25 of that year, Birney's diary is blank. It may have been during this period that consumption claimed its victim, for the family has no record of the date in 1857 upon which she died. And, beyond the fact that she was buried on the ranch, no one now remembers the exact location of her grave.²³

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Grateful acknowledgment is made to many members of Clarissa Burrell's family and to numerous pioneers who have given time and effort to make the notes accurate. Particularly is the annotator indebted to Henry H. Norton for his initial loan of the letters themselves; also to Mrs. Clara B. Hirsch who furnished additional letters, together with the early diaries of her father Birney Burrell, an etching of the first Burrell home in the mountains, and a typed copy of her grandfather's reminiscences. Special thanks are extended likewise to Mrs. C. M. Thompson, William Q. Wright, Erle T. Smith, William Adams, Mrs. John A. Wood, "Tass" Ryland, A. H. Bell, William B. Weston, and Frazier Reed, for assistance in various matters relating to the letters.

Part One

[Mrs. Clarissa Burrell²⁴ to Mrs. Amelia Hanford,²⁵
Tallmadge, Portage County, Ohio]

Elyria Feb 28th 1850

Dear Friends

I know your anxiety to hear what news I receive from my husband, so I take the liberty to write, or rather I comply with your request; the fifteenth of this month I received a letter dated the fourth of December and mailed at Sacramento City the seventeenth. It is the first letter I have received from my husband since his arrival in California. I suppose he was waiting to hear from me as he had twice requested me to write and direct to San Francisco. The letter which I commenced and James²⁶ finished when I was sick last August had just come to hand; his anxiety was some what relieved by a letter received by Mr Hall²⁷ of a few days later date, saying I had been very sick but was better. He says of their journey from the City of the Salt Lake to that place, he could give but a faint description on paper he could only say it was long and tedious,²⁸ especialy to their teams, they were so fortunate as to lose but one of theirs, it tired out on one of the long deserts over which they had to pass, one of them was sixty miles, without grass or water for their cattle, the last ten being the dry bed of a salt lake, the reflection of the heat at noon was almost intolerable, although but few teams had passed before them, the dead and tired out cattle were lying quite thick, all the water for several miles after crossing this desert issued from boiling springs, into which several cattle had plunged and were scalded to death.

In describing their rout, he says they passed along the eastern rim of the great basin from the Salt Lake City north 100 miles to the crossing of the Bear river, after crossing turned west along the north rim to the head of the Humbolt or Sinking Marys²⁹ river, down which they passed 250, within 40 miles of the sink or where the river looses its self in the sand; then north west on the Oregon Trail and crossed the Siera Nevada near the Oregon line the last day of August, they then turned South, and traveled over and through mountains about twenty days, reached the valley of the Sacramento Sept 22nd, 150 miles north of Sutters fort. Mr. Burrell then left the company and passed up the Sacramento 70 or 80 miles exploring,³⁰ after two weeks absence he returned and joined the company on Feather river, the young men in his absence had collected gold enough to buy a waggon load of provision, and two of them left the next day for Sacramento City near Sutters fort, with two waggons for their winters supply of provisions, and Mr. Burrell started for a placer 12 miles above, where they leave their waggons, and from which point they carry all their provision etc on their own backs

or on mules. when he arrived at the placer he found Peter (one of the young men who went with him) sick lying wrapped up in his blanket, with nothing but an oak tree to shelter him from the rain with which he had been drenched two nights in succession, he had called a physician who had prescribed calomel ipecac opium etc as they were obliged to send to the waggon encampment for medicine, it did not get there until Mr Burrell did; he concluded not to take it but let Mr Burrell try his skill with cold water;³¹ he succeeded in procuring an old tent, the weather became fine and after a few applications of the wet sheet he was so far restored as to be able to work, he soon over did and was down again. after an absence of about two weeks the young men returned from the City sick with chill fever; after several relapes they recovered so far as to be able to go to work; during which time Mr Burrell says he went to work in good earnest, or they might starve, 3 out of 4 sick, their provision very high and to be carried 12 miles on their backs over one of the worst of mountains; he went to work with a pan collecting about \$42 per day, once a week going to the waggons for provisions, after a few weeks they commenced draining the river to obtain the gold from the bottom, they commenced on Monday, by diging the bank down on one side and throwing a dam across, they succeeded so well that on Saturday they took out \$400 worth, on Monday forenoon Mr Burrell picked up \$170 in lumps from one to \$38 worth, in a week they took out \$1,200, to be divided between six of them; when the rain commenced and drove them from their work. they expected so soon as the river should fall low enough to begin their work again. The rain commenced the 2nd of Nov gently at first, but continued to increase untill it poured for two or three days and nights, they had no shelter but a poor tent which let the water in from the top, while the streams runing down from the hills saturated them from beneath. during this rain Mr Burrell was attacked with a diarreah which soon ran into the worst form of dysentary, he say thanks to dame nature and a comfortable log house built by those who went with him, he was then able to do a tolerable days work. He thinks the stories we have read about the quantity of gold there are not exagerated, there is plenty of it only it requires wise heads and hard knocks to get it. I left Sheffield³² on Tuesday James and family in usual health; a time of some interest on the subject of religion there.

Please give mine and the childrens love a general distribution.

Your sister CLARISSA

Dear Friends

Elyria Jan 21st 1851

I have delayed writing to you very much longer than I intended to, when Eliza³³ first came home I was expecting a letter from Mr Burrell soon and waited that I might have further news to communicate After several weeks the letter came it brought no very cheering news Mr Bur-

rell had been suffering from repeated attacks of ague and fever for several weeks, had not succeeded in his mining operations and pretty much lost the last six months labor he had concluded not to come home this season. Said he had sent me a letter and about all the gold he had on hand by a Mr Briggs³⁴ from Medina County and hoped I had made up my mind whether I would come to California without his coming after me, and would let him know immediately as he would not like to come home and find I had gone to California. Mr Briggs arrived a week ago last Monday bringing the letters and sixty ounces of the precious metal which he left at Philadelphia³⁵ to be coined he said Mr Burrell wished him to do with it as he did with his own; he could get only seventeen dollars per ounce for it at the brokers and as it was all Feather river gold of the finest quality he thought it might bring us over eighteen per ounce to have it coined; as it would be three or four weeks before it could be done he left it to be sent on by express I shall probably get it in about two weeks.

A week ago yesterday Mrs Hall³⁶ a neighbor of ours whose husband is at San Francisco received a letter dated Dec 1st saying Mr Burrell left the day before for home as he took a sail vessel for Panama he would not get here quite so soon as the mail I think should he have a prosperous voyage he may be here the last of this week; he may not however be here for a month yet, I do not know why he changed his mind about coming home; but I do know, I am very glad he did so. Mr Burrell had received a letter from Philo³⁷ but had not seen him when he wrote the 23rd of Oct I presume he found him before he left, We shall probably visit our friends if the roads are passable soon after Mr Burrell returns. I could not get the stockings wove for two months when I carried them these I shall try to get them done to carry should we visit you.

I was quite sorry Elvira could not content herself to stay and go to school in Tallmadge this winter, she certainly improved very much in her behaviour the little time she was there, and I think if she had been careful not to rub or irritate her eye it would not have troubled her much, we have done nothing for it and it is now almost well, I hope she did not give you a great deal of trouble while she was with you. I would gladly have spared her for her own good. though I needed her help very much when she came home, I had been rather imprudent and taxed my strength more than it would bear and was suffering from an attack of dysentary a few days of rest entirely relieved me and my health now is quite good. Our family are well excepting Ann³⁸ brother R.['s] oldest daughter, she has been confined to her bed nearly three weeks with a congestive fever we think she is beginning to recover though very slowly. Eliza and the children³⁹ would send love to their uncles aunts and cousins if awake.

Your affectionate Sister CLARISSA

Dear Husband

Elyria Dec 25th 1851

Your very welcome letter was received to day and I hasten to reply, although I am rather tired, for we have been attending to butchering. So you will excuse my scattering thoughts and careless style and I will tell you a few things just as they happen to come into my head. Your caution about eating meat and grease came just in time I think however we should not have been likely to suffer much for brother R⁴⁰ started for Cleveland this afternoon with the pork leaving us only the rough lard and plucks;⁴¹ pork has been fetching from five to six dollars per hundred. yesterday we heard it had fallen to four sixty, what we shall get for it tomorrow I do not know; brother thought they would average two hundred and fifty a piece, I think they will be sure to bring money enough to pay our taxes. Brother R has not yet been away with candles⁴² he thinks of going next week we have bought some rough tallow from an English butcher for five cents per pound and have taken Judge Hamlins after it is rendered at seven cents per pound. Mr Fretter⁴³ has been to Cleveland with two loads of corn and oats he gets twenty five cents per bushel for oats by measure, and twelve and a half cents for half a bushel of ears of corn, he thought better to dispose of the corn in that way than try to keep it over winter as our means for keeping it are poor. We did not seem to be likely to have much for Birney⁴⁴ to do so I concluded to send him to school to Mr Mills I will leave the rest of the story for him to tell himself as it is vacation⁴⁵ for a few days and he will have plenty of time

I received a letter from Sister Lucy⁴⁶ yesterday, her health was improving slowly she was confined at St Paul three weeks she wrote the next day after arriving at Bell Prairie⁴⁷ they expected to winter there Mr Lewis was assisting Mr Ayer to build him a new house they had commenced their school with only nine scholars but were expecting more

[Dec] 26th We are living very much after the old style the winter which I so much dreaded has arrived and is quite as uncomfortable as I expected; it has been the most tedious weather for lungs that I have known for several years. Notwithstanding I should like your company very much I am glad you are away where I hope the weather is not quite so cold; indeed I think if it is the will of providence I shall be very thankfull to live in a warmer climate.

Mr John Hall and Mr Briggs returned on board the same steamer you went out on Mr Briggs I understand has gone back Mr Hall intends returning he says any one who has lived two years in California will never want to live in Ohio again. I think he advises Edwin,⁴⁸ wife to go to him rather than have him come to her I hope if she does go I can manage to go with her

I would like very much to attend the lectures⁴⁹ in New York but I am fearful I shall not have time to obtain funds and make the necessary prepara-

The Burrell Letters

II

tion and get there in season. Those numbers of the journal and encyclopedia you mentioned I think very interesting. We have very little temptation to use meat for we seldom have it set before us. The children talk some of abstaining from all fleshly lusts but they think it would be rather hard to refuse chicken or squirrel if it was set before them

Martha⁵⁰ and Clara⁵¹ would like to have me write a separate letter for them but they are fast asleep now and I shall not have time to write in the morning. You will accept an untold quantity of love from them and also from their mother

CLARISSA W BURRELL

Do not fail to write often

Brother R has returned from Cleveland he got ninety dollars for the hogs

Clara has just kissed the letter and wishes you to receive it warm from her mouth

Dear Husband

Elyria Feb 24th 1852

I had been looking with great interest for the arrival of the California mail, it came Saturday evening, Mr Turner called in to say that Mr Wheeler in his letter to Mr Starr mentioned seeing you in Sacramento that your health was improved no letter was found in our box, so I was trying to content my self to wait two weeks longer I was really glad to hear that you were safely there for I had been thinking of fierce gales and burning steamboats & C not to speak of deadly fevers that prevail in that country. Sabbath night Lewis went to the office and behold there was a letter from you I need not tell you how much rejoiced I was to see it and to learn from your own pen that your health was improved notwithstanding the very unfavorable circumstances in which you had been placed. I think we have great cause for thankfulness that you arrived safe amid so many dangers I hope that you will continue to be prospered and happen to light upon some rich mine of ore, if you should perhaps we might see you once more on this side of the continent, though I should be almost afraid to have you try the journey again, as much so as you would to have me come to you I do not know as I am very particular where we live but I should like very much if we might live together some where; no doubt Providence will in due season point out the place and I think that in the course of a year or so if our lives are spared we shall find our-selves settled down in some quiet little nook where we may instruct our little ones, do some good in the world, and enjoy the blessings of our Heavenly Father I feel satisfied that it was the direction of a kind Providence that led you to go to California this season, for we have had an uncommonly cold winter thus far, and an uncommon amount of typhoid and lung complaints. Our family have been well excepting colds of which I think no member has escaped, but thanks to the use of cold water they are pretty much over with now I have felt very

thankful some of our cold days that you were where the weather was warmer. Notwithstanding the dangers of the way if you think best and I have the menes I think I have the courage to undertake the journey. Our cousins Nathan, Henry and Harmon Stevens have been here separately this winter Nathan and Harmon and his wife would like very much to go to California they intend to go if they can or when they can obtain the menes Nathan says if you could send him some thing to go with he would work and pay y[ou] after he got there I had a letter from Sister Lucy last week they were still at Bell Prairie her health was restored though she had been suffering some from a soar eye but it was geting better, Lucy said it had been proposed that they should remain there take charge of the storage and forwarding of the mission goods⁵² and take some children into their family to educate. she says it makes little difference to her where she lives while on earth if she only lives well. Her children said they would like to go to California and live near us. her letter also brought the news of Mr Tilldens death he died rather suddenly at St Paul. Lucy had not heard the particulars. Mr Lewis was complaining some but the children were quite well. I have not received any letter from Boston since you left; the Commonwealth continues to come brother Elizur is now publisher and editor with the assistance of a Mr List.⁵³ I think I will send you a number containing some account of a great man from Hungary, (Governor Kossuth)⁵⁴ who is visiting our nation in hopes of obtaining some assistance to free his country from the oppressors power and not only his country but all Europe from the power of despots; he certainly appears to be the most honest great man that has ever come along

I think the children have mentioned Joseph,s being here, he has given up going to California for the present for want of menes, Samuel would furnish the menes if he would give up his share in the home stead this Joseph thinks he ought not to do, and I think Father Humphry would fare rather hard if Samuel had the whole contrroll there. Mr Fretter continues to do well on the farm, the winter has been a hard one for cattle and they have required more feed than usual, so I shall not have as much grain for sale as I expected but I think we shall get along very comfortably, since the taxes are paid. I do not feel very much solicitude about any thing else. Perhaps brother Robbins will write and tell you how he has managed. Brother James and family are well as usual I have not heard from our friends in Tallmdge lately I would like to have you try a little to find Philo The children will send love in their own letters so mine will be burdened with none but my own

Your Wife C

Mr Wheeler writes that Peter has made his appearance among them lately I would like to know if it is really so

Your own dear Wife CLARISSA

The Burrell Letters

13

Dear Husband

Elyria March 3d 1852

Yours from Santa Clara bearing date Jan 30th made its appearance in this evenings mail, being only thirty three days on the way; Well I am very glad you have gone into farming⁵⁵ I think it will be better for your health than tramping all over the country; all I wish now is that we were with you, if we could only squeeze ourselves into the mail we might be there before the ground here would be ready for planting for it is still covered with snow we have had an uncommon share of snow and cold weather this season. I think I shall not be at all sorry to remove to a warmer climate. Cousin Harmon Stevens spent last night with us, he thinks of going to California the over land rout⁵⁶ this season and will take his family if he can obtain the menes. A company from Michigan expect to set out in about three weeks. The company is got up by a man who has lately returned from California with his pockets full of the needfull he is going to take in a drove of cows,⁵⁷ he offers to take passengers for a hundred and twenty five dollars a head and find them, he has a spring waggon fitted up on purpose for women and children, cousin Harmon thinks of going with this company; and I think if I had my hands full of cash, I and my children would take a seat in that waggon too, and set off to find Pa but the cash is wanting and I am not ready so this opportunity will have to pass. It seems almost an impossibility for me to accumulate more than ten or twelve dollars and those have very soon to be laid out in shoes or some thing else as necessary, it is a very poor place here for any one to make money as you very well know. I do not know as there is much to choose between the different routs for California whether by the Isthmus, the Horn, Nicaragua, or over land there are dangers and discomforts attending them all. There is such a rush for California this season and the fare is so high that I [think] perhaps it will be best for us to wait a while till the tide of emigration turns the other way, you may be sure we are very anxious to be with you and shall make every exertion to do so whenever we can obtain the menes. Eliza is still at Mr Mills will stay through this month I suppose brother Robbins, and family will move on to their farm next month though I have not heard them say much about it I believe sister is not at all reconciled to going there They are about building a meeting house in Sheffield⁵⁸ have drawn the stone and timber and think they shall get it up and enclosed this season

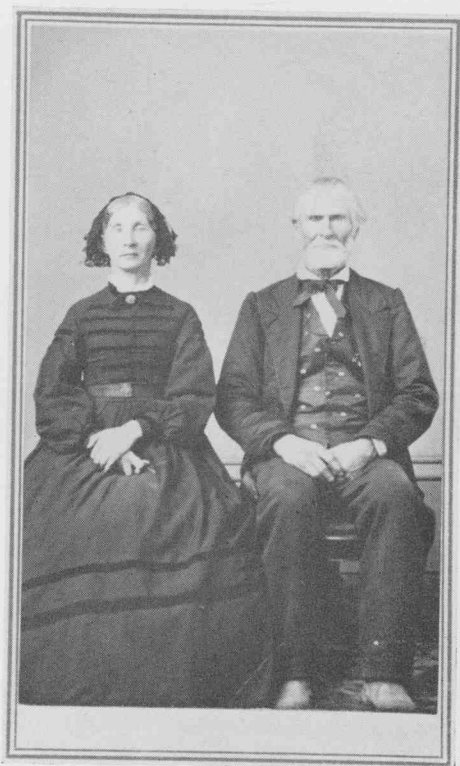
I wrote you a sheet full last week so I am rather short of news at present, but I am determined your letters shall receive an immediate answer so I will finish this up and prepare it for the mail to night Our family are in usual health excepting Birney who is suffering from an attack of mumps I feel in hopes he will not have them very severely if the children were awake they would send much love to Pa

Your loving wife CLARISSA

Dear Husband

Elyria March 20th 1852

As I think the mail leaves New York the 24th I will write you a few lines if perchance they may be in season I answered your last immediately I do not now recollect what I said about going to California only I know that I am always ready to go as soon as an opportunity offers and I have the means two very essential items to performing a journey I have devised several ways in my own mind about procuring the means some of which I will communicate to you I have thought of trying to loan some money from the Oberlin⁵⁹ people and mortgaging this place as security they have obtained their hundred thousand dollars collected some and are wishing to loan it on good security as fast as they do collect it. Uncle Isaac says he should rather not mortgage the place and thinks I might sell the out lot I think perhaps he would like to buy it but he made me no offer I think if I could sell it for fifty dollars per acre or perhaps more and sell the stock on the farm and the candle moulds I might pick up money enough to take us to California without selling or mortgaging the place; and I do not know either but you would rather I would sell the house and lots here than the out lot. I do not think that property here will meet with a very ready sale at present on account of the high taxes They are going on with the rail road and will probably have it finished in time and property here will be worth more. I would like to have your opinion on the subject. I suppose you will have time to write me after receiving this before I shall have an opportunity of going I might set off on the overland rout if I had the means the first of next month but I think on the whole that would not be the best rout unless you were along We have talked of the passage around the horn but it is getting so late in the season I think we should be obliged to wait untill fall to go that rout; the berths on both the steamer routs are engaged untill the first of April. I have talked with J Hall about the best way of going he thinks it would be best to wait till June or July and take the Nicaragua rout; the great rush for California will probably be over some what by that time, and the rainy season in Central America will be past too. Mr Hall says perhaps by that time she⁶⁰ may have a summons from her husband to go also, and I think that J H calculates to go about that time. I have written some of my cogitations as you see and would like your advice Mr Cooley the old gentleman called on saturday to speak for this place they have sold their place to a Mr Belden on the lake shore but do not give possession untill fall; they heard that I talked of going to California and thought they would like to speak in season for the place I think that you would rather rent to them than any one else he did not make me any offer. I had thought if we sold the out lot that one hundred dollars a year would be perhaps about right I think we might afford to rent cheaper to them than to some others for they would take such good care of the trees &C



Lyman J. Burrell and his third wife, Lucy Wright Lewis Burrell
From a Photograph by J. A. Clayton, in the early 1860's



Mrs. Clarissa Wright Burrell and her three children
left to right—Clara, Birney, and Martha.
Clayton's *Carte de Visite*, middle 1850's

I think perhaps they will be willing to pay the rent before hand or when I want it to go. The Trust company⁶¹ are about making another trial to sell the farm brother Robbins says he thinks they intend to bid it in and if they cannot make enough on it they will take the stock⁶² and I had better dispose of it as soon as possible I think they can not do any thing about [it] till after the next term of court in May I think I had better try to dispose of all I can without too much sacrofise to obtain menes to go to you and not wait for you to send me the menes I do feel very very anxious to get settled down with *you* some where I do not much care where. Brother James said he thought he should write you soon Our folks are all in usual health. The little girls Julia Martha and Clara wish me to say that they washed up the dishes for me this morning that I might have time to write my letter Birney talked of writing some but concluded to wait till next time

Your affectionate wife CLARISSA

Dear Husband

Elyria April 5th 1852

Yesterdays mail brought your letter of Feb 21st 24th O how I wish I was in California; we have had an uncommonly hard winter here, and a very cold backward spring it does seem as if warm weather never would come; as near as I can remember we have had a snow storm every week since you left yesterday morning the ground was covered with snow; this morning April 7th is a fine pleasant one with a white frost; how many more snow storms we shall have before this month is out I do not know. I called on Mr Cooley⁶³ last week to make some arrangement about renting this place I put the rent as low as I thought I could afford and he made no objection; he would like to rent for three years and is willing to pay the whole or part in advance deducting the interest. I put the rent at \$100. pe[r] year but it will be necessary to make some repairs to render the place comfortable the cistern is broken and kneeds plastering the wood house needs a new roof the kitchen wants plastering and indeed there is patching up needed all over the house. Considering the repairs, taxes &C I feel inclined to follow your suggestion to sell the place; although it is not a very good time to sell now for property is decreasing in value and there are more places to be sold than there are purchasers I think I mentioned in my last some of my cogitations about obtaining the menes for going to California, since the receipt of your letter I have changed my mind some what; I think I will try to sell this place and reserve the out lot Robbins thinks as property is selling now I had better sell this place for \$2500.00 than to sell the out lot for less than \$50.00 per acre Should I have an offer of \$50.00 for the out lot I think perhaps I had better sell Our stock does not look as well this spring as I should think they might I am afraid I shall not be able to get any more if I do as much as you gave for it I think perhaps by the next mail I shall be able to tell you more definitely what what I can do; and when I

shall be ready to set my face towards California. I think from all that I can learn the Vanderbilt⁶⁴ rout will be the best for us I would like to know how far Santa Clara is from San Francisco and what menes of conveyance I should find to get there; or if it would be practicable for you to meet us at that place. I am quite sorry that Mr Hall is up in mines for he has not received any of his wife,s letters since she has expressed a willingness to go to California I called on her last evening and I should judge from what she said that she would prefer to go and it is *my impression* that her friend would not make very strong objection, though there was nothing said about it. I know that Mr Beebe is very much dissatisfied with the rail road tax; and a good many of our property holders wear rather long faces⁶⁵ If Mrs Hall should not receive an invitation from her husband to come before I get ready I think I shall not wait. I suppose it not be possible for us to fail of having company

Cousins Harris and Harmon Stephens and their wives are quite anxious to go to California they have talked of going the over land rout but I believe have given it up; if they can procure the necessary funds they may possibly go when we do I shall let them know as soon as I can make any definite arrangements about going

I have not heard from sister Lucy since I last wrote you Our friends in this region so far as I know are in the enjoyment of usual health The little girles are asleep or they would send much love and many kisses they often talk about Pa and are anxious to go where he is. I am very glad you and Philo have met at last, has he given you that kiss I sent by him you may think it cold by this time but I do not believe it is. I hear that Mr Wheeler says in one of his letters that he has seen or heard from Peter lately if he is in the land of the living why dont *you* say some thing about it My sheet is filled so I must stop short Do not forget to write to your

Wife CLARISSA

Elyria April 25th 1852

Dear Husband

I had been looking all the week for a letter from you as the mail from California has usually arrived saturday or sabbath but this mail did not get here until saturday of last week I think it was owing to some new arrangement at the Isthmus the mail was not delivered to the first steamers that left after it arrived. I have put off writing so long that that my letter will not probably get into this mail which I think leaves New York to day or tomorrow I shall put it into the can of onion seed should I succeed in getting them, as your letter did not arrive till saturday evening I am obliged to put off getting the seeds untill tomorrow morning it shall then be attended to with all possible dispatch. I have not made much progress towards starting for California since I last wrote you I think I mentioned that I was about making a bargain with Mr Cooley to rent the place for \$100, per year;

but as you suggested seelling I thought I would try to do so; it is a very poor time to sell property in Elyria now the taxes are so high: and the citizens are doubtfull as to the benefit the rail road will be to the place Uncle Isaac asked me what I thought the place worth I told [him] you had always valued it at \$2500, but I supposed I could not sell it for that now did not think I could get more than \$2200. he asked if I would sell it for \$2000. I told him I thought I would if he would buy it, he said he must build a house for the girles and he did not know but he might as well buy one already built I have talked with him since about it he said he did not know as he could pay for it I told him if he would pay \$1000, some time in June or July he might take his own time for paying the rest; he did not talk very encouraging⁶⁶ so I thought I would follow your suggestion, and sent an advertisement to the office which will appear in our next paper Uncle Isaac may buy the place after all, for he did not say that he would not. My present calculations are so soon as I can sell the place to dispose of the furniture so much of it as I can and leave the rest with brother James to dispose of as *he* can, then spend a few weeks visiting our friends after which we will set our faces towards California. I think the Nicaragua rout from all I can learn will be the best for us. When all these things will come to pass I can not say for it depends entirely upon the sale of the place. I think with \$1000 besides what we may get for stock, furniture, candle moulds &C, we can go quite comfortably. If I can sell for \$2000, we shall then have \$1000. and the out lot left to pay brother and sister Lewis.⁶⁷ I do not expect to sell my self rich for I am not much of a hand at making good bargins, and I do not expect to have many coppers left by the time we get to California. If we all get there alive and well I think we can make ourselves comfortable. Brother Robbins and family moved to their farm last week so we are quite alone now we felt rather lonely the first night but since we have been so busy cleaning the house and front yard that we have not found time for being lonesome. Robbins wife was much more cheerfull about moving than I expected she would be. James has an addition of another son⁶⁸ to his family making now five in all four sons and a daughter they [are] getting along quite comfortably. The union schools are in a flourishing condition at present but I have thought best not send this quarter [last two words crossed out] for I am in hopes to leave here in the course of a month or two. We have had a very cold wet spring so far; but one or two days that have been at all comfortable to work out of doors I have not done any thing in the kitchen garden yet and hardly think I shall for should we go soon I shall not have time to spare, and should we be obliged to stay till fall we should want the vegitables so I am at a loss what to do The prospect for fruit is not very promising yet I think we shall have some cherries Eliza has been at home since Mr Mills and family left she takes hold of work very handily I think she has improved by

living with Mr Mills she seems to be desirous of going with us, and as female help is in such good demand I think I shall take her

Your Wife

Dear Husband

Elyria June 23d 1852

I was absent on a visit to Tallmadge when yours of April 25th arrived and did not return in season to answer it by the first mail I am very thankful that you are so punctual to write; the last mail is the first one that has left without a letter from me since I heard of your location at Santa Clara. I hardly know what to say with regard to my future movements I am very much between hawk and buzzard as the old saying is I had hoped to be able to say to you by this mail that we would leave New York the 11th of July and you might look for us some time in August and the only reason why I can not say so is I have not funds enough yet. I have sold the out lot for \$420, Brother Robbins has taken the heifers and colts down to his farm and will sell them for me as soon as he can the two cows he has sold I do not remember how much he got for them I have two yet to sell; the candle moulds and a great many other things which if I could sell I think would make enough to take us to California but nobody seems to want to buy what I have to sell; and I had also expected to rent this place to Mr Cooley if I did not sell it and receive a part or the whole of the rent in advance if I needed it: but while I was at Tallmadge Mr Cooley bought Mr Murrey's place and in company with Mr Pond Mr Olcott and Mrs E Mc Calkins started for California they left the morning before I came home. I think there is not much probability that I can sell this place if I should wait a year so I have about concluded if possible to borrow what I may need after selling every thing I can and set sail. I think Eliza and the children and I can get along very well without any other company than what we shall find on the boat. Mrs Hall has not received an invitation from her husband to come, and some how I begin to feel quite in a hurry to go and live with you since [you] have no idea of coming to live with me. There has not been much done in the factory⁶⁹ brother has kept the home market supplied with soap I believe that is all, nothing is doing in it now Dr Dolly and family have returned from Rochester where they spent the winter his health is quite poor, lung difficulties,⁷⁰ he would like to go to California and I think would go when I do if he could leave his family just now. A letter from sister Lucy says they are still at Bell Prairie and perhaps may remain there. Mr Lewis, health is not very good he is troubled with a disease of the kidneys which has made its appearance in the latter part of several winters more severely last winter and he thinks it is consequent on the long continued cold of their winters, all that the books recommend, is to remove to a warm climate I have just recommended them to go to California. Our friends in Tallmadge were well as usual sister Sally⁷¹ went with me to Windham found our friends well

Joseph had left for New York about fifteen minutes before we arrived so I missed of seeing him. Sister Amelia went with me to Solon; so you see I have made a general visitation. The children and I went by rail road it is finished to Coyhoga [Cuyahoga] falls I saw Mother Burrell and Henry Wettmore Mother is better than when we were there, they wished to be remembered to you. A letter from brother Elizur⁷² last week said they were all well; he has by some unfair means been cheated out of his interest in the paper, and he was in trouble about meeting a payment due on his house and there was some danger that he might lose the \$1500. he had paid on it and I see by the papers that his trial in the Shadrac⁷³ case was attended to last week it was dismissed as the jury could not agree. The whigs here had a great canonading night before last because Gen Scott was nominated for president. Since I have been writing Wm Wright of Oberlin has called and says Philo arrived in Tallmadge the 16th two days after we left. I think we shall see him here soon his Mother said she would let him come out here soon if he arrived before I left that he might give us all the information he could respecting our journey. Sister Sarah⁷⁴ was here yesterday friends in Sheffield well. I suppose there are a great many more things I might say but will leave them till I see you. If you do not get any letter the next mail after this you may expect we shall be on hand in the course of two or three weeks We have a pretty fair crop of cherries which are now ripe we intend to dry as many as we can to take with us Eliza puts into it with all her might she has been a very good girl since she came home last spring and I think will be quite a help to me on the way and a comfort to us when we get there I think when you get all my letters you will have a pretty good idea of what we are all doing here The strawberries you set out last fall are bearing some we have had two or three messes from the old vines. Eliza Martha and Clara send much love

Mr Lyman J Burrell

Your affectionate Wife CLARISSA

Santa Clara Santa Clara Co. California

Dear Husband

Elyria July 9th 1852

I think I said in my last if you did not receive a letter from me the next mail you might expect I would be on hand soon; well I do not seem to be quite ready to set sail yet; it is rather of an up hill business for a woman to sell, or rent a house and lot, and turn all the loose property of such an establishment as this into cash. Some times I get quite discouraged and think I never shall get money enough together to take us to California. If it were not for my large organ of hopefulness I should give up the matter entirely; but still hope every day some body will come along to buy the house or I can find some one who is willing to loan me a few hundred. You may be sure I shall be on the way so soon as I can scrape together enough of the needfull

for I am quite tired of living between hawk and buzzard I had written to cousin Harry Burrell (before the receipt of yours of May 22nd) enquiring what would be the fare and where we should go to procure tickets, he sent me a card of the agent of the Vanderbilt line, the fare is the same as when you went I have since written to him inquiring about the clipper ships If I should find the expenees considerable less, and can get a good ship I think I will take that rout, if not I should prefer the steamers I think the children would suffer from so long a confinement and I have a great dread of getting becalmed on the Pacific and starving to death though I have never heard that the clipper,s meet with such disasters You mentioned writing to me at San Francisco that will be a very good arrangement as you seem likely to have two homes or places of residence, and I might not know at which I should find you. You seem to be enlarging your business somewhat I hope you will not get so many irons in the fire that [you] can not strike any of them till they are cold Mary Burrell says you will work yourself to death and wont be able to carry a peck of bran by the time we get there. Our neighbors are most of them having the fever and ague, as many as one or two in every house and some whole families Charlotte and Mary Ann have had it Lewis and Julia have had it since they moved to Sheffield Our family have escaped thus far and I feel quite in hopes we shall not be troubled with it.

The whigs are making great rejoicings over the nomination of General Scott for the next president. The fourth or rather fifth was not celebrated in town except by the firing of canon and crackers and fire balls and a bon-fire in the evening. I did not have time to look over Birneys letter before it was sent I think the sum was not done right he should have divided by 81 the square of 9 instead of 9 if I had thought of it in season I would have had him try the sums again and written a letter [to] send with this.⁷⁵ I would like to ask you what things you would like to have me bring (should we take a ship) besides the kettle and stove; but it takes so long for a letter to go and an answer to come back that we might be well on our way before the answer would get here. I am geting very sleepy so I will bid you good night perhaps I may add a word or two in the morning

Saturday Morn The children send much love I shall write every mail till we start and if we go by clipper will write you when we leave New York

Your affectionate Wife CLARISSA

Dear Husband

Elyria Aug 18th 1852

I am determined to keep writing to you till I get ready to start I know you think I am on the way and perhaps are looking for me now: well the only reason why I have not been on the way long ago is the want of cash to pay the fare I believe the *Men* here think it is beneath their dignity to trade with a woman; or if they do condescend to do so they are in duty bound to cheat all they can. I am realy quite out of heart trying to sell

any thing or earn any thing here I have had the place advertised in the Lorain Argus and in the Cleveland Herald but have had no offer only from Uncle Isaac of \$1500, and I have about concluded to take up with his offer for I think I might stay here two or three years and be no nearer selling than I am now and for my part I am quite tired of staying in this way. If Uncle Isaac pays me five hundred, now that with what I get from the out lot and else where will take us to California and leave one thousand for Lucy I think perhaps Eliza and [I] can get some employment that we can earn the other five hundred dollars in the course of a year or two.⁷⁶ I think if we can get to California we shall both of us be willing to do any thing by which we can make money We have made all necessary preparations for our journey and have disposed of or bestowed most of our house hold furniture and think we shall spend the next week in Sheffield and the week after set out for California. Now all it all depends upon whether Uncle Isaac will take the place and pay the five hundred. I tryed to borrow some money of Uncle James Burrell he had it to let but was afraid I could not give good security; as my husband was absent he thought a motgage on the place would not hold. So you see those of our friends who have money to let are afraid to do so, and those who have not any of course can not help me⁷⁷ Some times I feel almost sorry I ever tryed to sell out and go; not because I am less anxious to live with you but because I have to sell every thing at such a sacrafise, well I think if I ever get to California with all my children alive and well and find you so I shall be more thankfull than I ever was before. I would not have written such a gloomy fretful letter only I happened to feel just so; but they say the darkest time comes just before day, so I have some hope, for I am sure things look dark enough to me now If I do not make out to get off next month I shall write so you can hear from us if you do not see us we are enjoying usual health The children join in love

Your affectionate wife CLARISSA BURRELL

Dear Husband

Boston⁷⁸ Sept 19th 1852

We have at last set out on our long journey and got so far. We concluded after all to accept of your advice, and take the long voyage around the cape. brother Elizur also gave the same advice and invited us to come here to embark as the best clippers sail from here, we have engaged our passage on a new ship just finishing; it is one of the largest built here, it is built by the same man who built the Flying Cloud⁷⁹ and several others of the swiftest sailing vessels on the ocean; it is called Westward Ho:⁸⁰ the day for sailing is not set, but will probably be the first of October⁸¹

I will write you the day we sail that you may know when to look for us I am very sorry we cannot reach you before you leave Santa Clara.⁸² If you cannot meet us at San Francisco I hope you will leave word with Mr Peebles⁸³ where we shall find you, and how we can get there I think if we

meet with no disaster we shall be in San Francisco the last of December. The rigger of the vessel says he thinks this vessel will make the quickest trip that has ever been made to California. You must keep up good courage Pa. I hope you will see us some time or other and then I will tell you all the hindrances I have met with. The children are in usual health and send much love to their dear pa pa.

Your affectionate Wife CLARISSA BURRELL

[Mr. Elizur Wright to Mrs. Clarissa Wright Burrell]

Boston Oct 16—1852⁸⁴

To my dear sister

Clarissa Burrell, whose heart is too large to be separated from a brother either by distance or bigotry, I present these fine old heart pictures.

Had Shakspeare known *you*, Clarissa he would even have added to the beauties of his women, from a quarter where beauty is too seldom sought and less often found. May these pictures awaken many of the pleasant memories that bind us together till the space which will soon be between us is but a memory.

ELIZUR⁸⁵

Copy

Written by Uncle Elizur Wright in the first volume of the set Shakspeare that he gave to mother just before we started for California

[MARTHA BURRELL]

Santa Clara Feb 12 1853

Dear Brother & Sisters

You are doubtless looking with some anxiety for a letter giving an account of our arrival in this land of gold. I suppose brother Elizur sent you a paper giving an account of the departure of the ship *Westward Ho*. The ship being new and every thing clean we were not subject to all the annoyances that are consequent on long voyages; indeed we had on the whole a very pleasant time, though there were some things we could have wished different; for instance we had a drunken captain,⁸⁶ which was not very pleasant, he was continually scolding because the women and children made so much noise, and threatened to send the children to bed at six, and the women at eight,⁸⁷ we did not however feel ourselves under obligation to mind all his whims; and we did not apprehend any danger from the mismanagement of the ship, for we had a fine man for first mate,⁸⁸ who took charge of the ship and promised he would not obey the captains orders if they were likely to lead us into danger; but so long as the ship was safe he must do as the captain bid; though we were hindered some two or three weeks by it, for he kept us going backwards and forwards in nearly the latitude of cape Horn for almost two weeks and then would not make sail when the wind was fair and we could make ten or twelve knots an hour. Notwithstanding our hindrances we made the voyage in 103 days. The two first

weeks out from Boston were rather stormy. I think quite as severe gales as any we had, it was very pleasant sailing through the tropical regions;⁸⁹ we did not suffer so much with heat as I expected, especially on the Pacific, we could almost always find a cool breeze on deck. The weather was very cold at the cape, and as we had no fire we felt it considerably. We had several snow storms; one morning the decks were covered two inches deep with snow. I think it must be a very dreary region in winter when their nights are 18 or 20 hours long; I think we could see to read without a candle till after 9 o'clock; and it was broad day light by three in the morning. We went south nearly to the sixtieth degree. The albatross and cape pigeons were quite plentiful in the region of the cape. We saw several whales spouting at a distance, but did not come near enough to have a view of them. We passed several schools of flying fish, some were tolerable size, one was washed on deck by a wave and caught, when cooked it tasted much like our small river fish. I should have kept a journal of the remarkable occurrences on our voyage if I had not been sea-sick; the first week I was not able to leave my state room but once or twice and for several weeks I was but just able to get out to my meals and crawl up on deck into the fresh air to keep from loosing them, which expedient did not always succeed; it was with difficulty I could muster courage enough to knit, I did not get to feel quite comfortable till we came into the trade winds on the Pacific; the children suffered but little with sea sickness especially Eliza and Birney. They seemed to enjoy themselves very well. there were two little girls about the ages of Martha and Clara and two boys about the age of Birney and three young ladies were company for Eliza, and three married ladies going to meet their husbands were company for me, so we were all provided with companions, and quite pleasant company they were too.⁹⁰ One lady a Mrs Hamlin,⁹¹ from Peoria Illinois, found when she arrived at San Francisco that her husband had been dead three months; she was considerably overcome at the sad news, indeed, it seemed to us all very much as if there had been a funeral on board. We anchored in the harbor on Monday morning but did not get up to wharf till wednesday morning* our vessel was so large and the tide run so fast we were obliged wait till we could be towed in by a steamer. The gentlemen went on shore in the boats and brought us all the important news such as who is president the death of Daniel Webster⁹² &C

As there was no letter to be found for me in the post-office at San Francisco, Mr Johnson the (first mate) offered to find Mr Peebles for me as Mr Burrell had directed me to call on him in case I did not find a letter; he found him quite readily, and he had the week before received a line from Mr Burrell saying that he was expecting his family on the ship Westward Ho, and would be glad to have him find a conveyance for them to Alviso as he was then working on a Mr Clarks farm about two miles and a half from that place. The steamer for Alviso did not go out until thursday so we stayed on

board the vessel till we were ready to go Mr Peebles sent a dray for our luggage and came himself to wait upon us to the steamer Mr Johnson also went with us and saw us safely on board Mr P introduced us to an acquaintance of his Esq Ryland⁹³ of San Jose he appeared to be a very fine man, and as the steamer was not likely to get up to the landing untill after dark (on account of the tide) he spoke to the captain to let us remain on board all night; their accommodations were quite comfortable and they mad no extra charge. We rose before the sun on friday morning Birney started off first thinking he should find Pa and come back with a team to help us along, after seeing our baggage safely stored in a ware house, we set off in company with an old gentleman who was going in

Pa and the children join in sending love to uncles aunts and cousins Martha says she will write to Julia⁹⁴ next time

C B

Our post office is Santa Clara Santa Clara County California

Part Two

[Birney Burrell's Diary]

"Mon. [January] 31 [1853]

This morning we found ourselves very near land with our bow pointed towards it. I counted 8 ships including pilot vessels. Most of them got the start of us. One pilot boat came very near us. At length after waiting a good while for a pilot Mr Jhonson took command and steered us into harbor. We got a pilot before we came to anchor which was a good way out. Mr Jhonson and some of the gentlemen went ashore in a little boat a short time after the Flying Fish⁹⁵ passed us. I was the first to make it out. Mr Nichols⁹⁶ asked how is Mr Graves. Mr Spear⁹⁷ ans. he is sick. Mr Herric⁹⁸ asked how many days. Mr Nichols go. To night we had rumors of Mr Hamlin's death of Pirc's election⁹⁹ and of Daniel Webster's death.

Teus 1 This morning Mrs Hamlin's brother came on board and told her the sad truth they then went ashore in a little boat to settle down in a distant land. Mr. Atkinson Senior¹⁰⁰ came on board. He was surprised at seeing his son for he had seen reports in the papers of his death 1 month after we started. This shows the truth of reports. They both went ashore. Mrs Turner objected going in a little boat. Here we are in sight of the city with tide against us 7 nots an hour.

Wedns 2 To day we were towed alongside the wharve by the steamer Resolute where we took leave of Mrs Turner and family who were going to settle down in Indian Valley¹⁰¹ and Mrs Staples¹⁰² and family. Ma has seen Mr Pebles and it is agreed that he shall put her on board a steamer for Alviso and send her baggage along in a sloop. Mr Jhonson has got to be captain. San Francisco is situated on a piece of rising ground. There are few houses in it but plenty of shipping. The houses are mostly wood. I went up to see dock¹⁰³ he lives in a neat little house close by his uncle's grocery. To night the ship floated off and got stuck in the mud and it was hard to get it back.

Thursday February 3d 1853

Thurs 3 Mr Jhonson and Mr Pebles accompanied us down to the C M Weber¹⁰⁴ where we took leave of them. We had a slow passage down and took dinner and supper on board the boat. I saw numerous parties of men shooting ducks. We could see mountains on both sides of us. After we had got to the end of the bay we went through a slough to Alviso¹⁰⁵. We got stuck in the mud 1 or 2 times. Several boats came out to take us ashore. But some of us staid. The boat arrived at the landing about 11 o'clock.

Fri 4 Early this morning Ma and me went off from the boat. I started out to find father but took the wrong road. After traveling about 2 miles

I turned back I stopped to inquire in a house but found them Spanish.¹⁰⁶ I walked some ways with a Spaniard. after getting to Alviso I could see nothing of mother and the children. I returned again on the same road and walked about the same distance after turning about again I met a man who showed me across the river to my fathers home I found I had been traveling on the road between Alviso and San Jose. I was very tired but the song of a thousand birds cheered me up a good deal. After crossing the Godalupe¹⁰⁷ and walking through a good deal of mud I reached the appointed place I found father living on Mr. Clarks¹⁰⁸ ranche half way between Alviso and Santa Clara which are 5 miles apart mother and the children had taken the right road and got here before me I got acquainted with a boy about my age by the name of George.

Sat 5 Father is here working for Mr. Clark until he can get a place for himself Mr Armstead is also in the same position he is a young man I have been driving oxen for the plow all day the lot is a mile each way the house is made of red wood Georges brother Henry came to see him

Sun 6 Half a mile from us in a small creek¹⁰⁹ 1 mile from us is the river Godalupe In the mornings we have some frost and at night it is quite cold at noon it is warm. Mrs Clark was in that company that came across the plains told about in Thorntons¹¹⁰ 2d Vol of Oregon and California her maiden name is Mary Graves. Henry is 14 years old he lives in San Francisco and works at a lawyers office where he get 50 dollars¹¹¹ a month.

Sun 27 This morning Mrs Cartwright Mr and Mrs Clark set out for San Jose I finished wrighting my letter to Howard¹¹² and started off for Santa Clara with a letter for Uncle Hanford¹¹³ and one for Uncle James from mother one for Susan Turner from Eliza one from Mr Armstead and one from me after walking through about 2 miles of mud and water I arrived at Santa Clara here for the first time since I have been in California I saw a hand organ I inquired for the post office and found it locked after waiting a little while the post master¹¹⁴ came along he said he would do no buisness on Sunday so I had to put 3 of the letters in the box with out any stamp

Mar 8 This morning I went out into Mr Pebels lot weeding onions a job which pa has gave me after a little time I set fire to the weeds in the afternoon I went at the same work henry went with me after we got the work done we went hunting we saw several ducks but could hit none I fired off a light load at a rail we went along a little farther and came to a yellow breast I took the gun and fired at it and hit it in the head this was the 3d time I had fired a gun and the first time I had shot at game this was the only bird we killed this time.

The Strawberry Hunt¹¹⁵

June 5th 1853

June 5 This was the day set upon to start on a strawberry hunt over the mountains. of those who were to ride in the wagon there was Mrs Welland

and her daughter Mrs Irksome¹¹⁶ Mr Clark Mrs Clark and bob¹¹⁷ and mother clarry and me besides these there were Mrs Sanders¹¹⁸ dick george and pa rode on horseback pa put me on to the saddle to ride the first few miles in riding along I passed the place¹¹⁹ where I ought to have stopped to get me some shoes and therefore had to go little better than barefoot till I came back we stopped to eat dinner on the banks of a beautiful creek called the San _____¹²⁰ this creek Seems to be a division line between the hills and plains We traveled the remainder of the day over the rough hills¹²¹ and came to camp at night at the foot of the mountain in a beautiful little valley¹²² where there was plenty of wood water and feed the latter was mostly oats which grew as high as my waist here we built a fire and eat our supper and went to bed this was the first night I had ever slept out in the open air without any other covering than the blankets

" 6 Early this morning we started off and after going a little ways we came to the foot of the mountain where we got out of the wagon to walk up At the offset we saw some strawberrys but thes, were not ripe As we went up higher it grew colder and long before we got to the top of the mountain we were surrounded by an ocean of fog but occasionaly a little wind would blow away the fog when our position would comand the most beautiful view not only of the valley below but that that we came from

June 6 After reaching the top of the mountain¹²³ we commenced descending we saw nothing of importance until we came in sight of the Ocean we had one bad hill to go down. On arriveing at the foot of the hills we found ourselves on a sort of table land about a mile in width full of ravines. As we were going along by the washbank I saw two islands which were completely covered with seals¹²⁴ so that I thought there could not another one get on we left our wagon on the high land where the strawberrys were and then went to carrying the things down to the beach I went first to picking berrys they are fine large ones and very sweet when first picked they are out on a tapering point of land from 20 to 2 rods in width after a while I went with dick to kill a seal we saw one that we thought was dead but when I went up and hit it with a stone it showed evident tokens of life by pounceing off the rocks into the water It had a head like a dog a body like a lion covered with short black hair their fore feet are very long like a hand their fore legs if legs they might be called are very short and look like the wrist to a hand their hind legs are a little longer and have a point at the foot

Wednesday June 7th 1853

" 7 This morning father went out with his rifle and killed a seal he fetched a little of the blubber into camp it was warn blooded he went back with a sack and butcher knife to carry some of it up hill but behold the Sorf had washed it away. I went out and got some sea shells but They were not very pretty

Thurs 7 The low rocks are covered with mussels and at low tide they can be shoveled up by the cart load. they are a rough homely looking shell. we had some to eat but I did not like them. We found some pearls in them I have seen a star fish it was sticking to the rocks as near as I can tell it was something this shape with B for the mouth and at C and D the points of the Star [small illustration has been omitted in this transcription]. it is all covered with a sort of bead work I did not carry it home. dick killed 3 sea gulls and pa killed one they are perfectly white and about as big as a duck We have got as many strawberries as we want and have decided on going home tomorrow

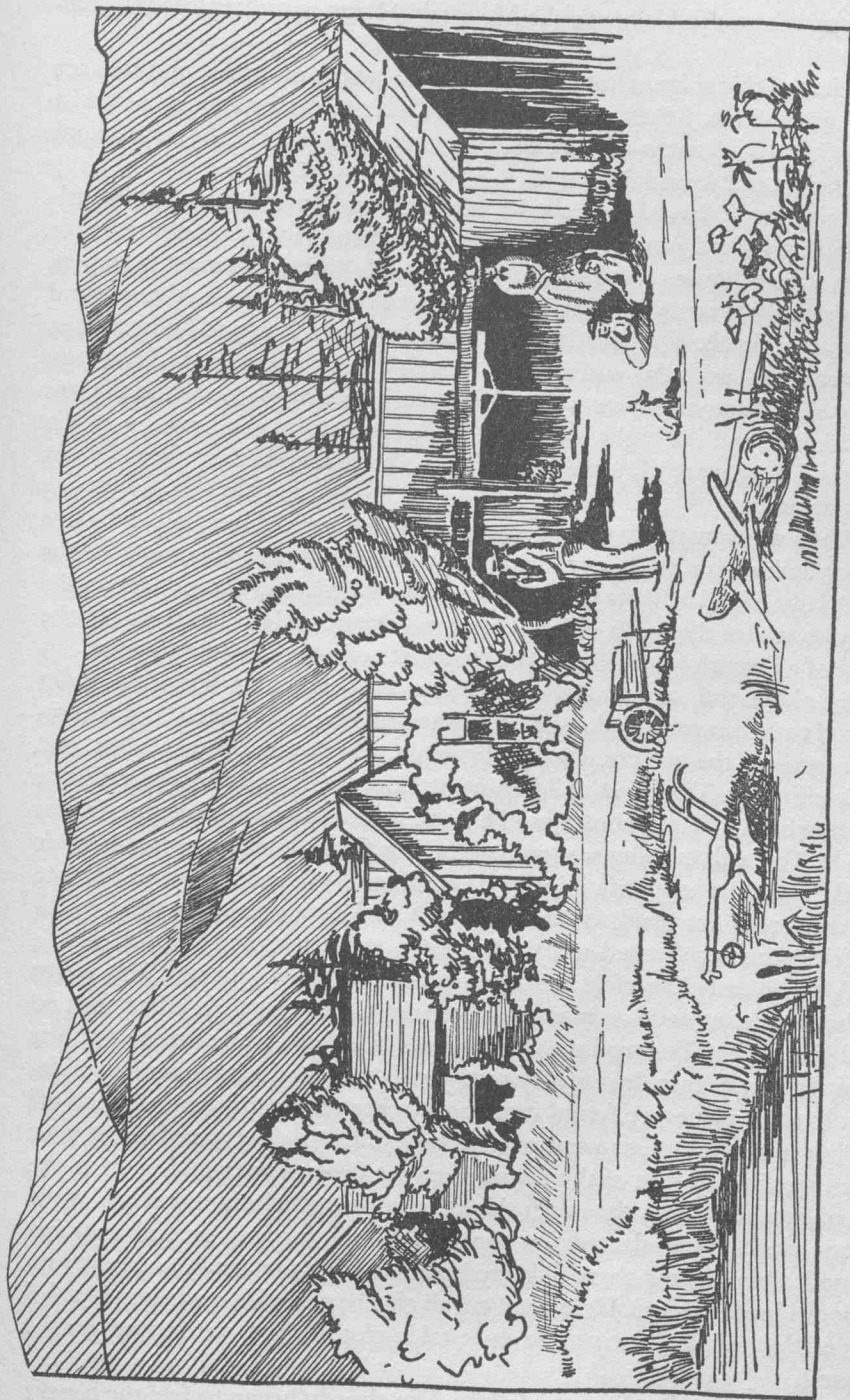
Fri 8 This morning pa and dick went out after seals pa killed one with his rifle and dick killed one with his shot gun They were both small ones and not very fat I went down there while they were taking off the blubber. while I was down there, there was a wave came over the rocks and washed me some 10 feet towards the bank it struck pa and knocked him over and carried his hat away which he came very near losing Dick came very near losing his shot gun by having it washed away. We put the blubber in the wagon to take home. We went home a differrant way from which we come¹²⁵ and gained a few miles shorter in exchange for a very long and steep hill where the mules could hardly pull the empty wagon up and most of the riders had to lead their horses up. we encamped in the opposite corner of the little valley where we staid when coming up

Saturday June 9th 1853

June 9 This morning we started off and got home about the middle of the afternoon. George fell off his horse while coming over the hills and pretended he could not get up again until mr Clark came with the horse whip and whipped him up and made him get in the wagon after this I had to ride home on horse-back. We stopped at carss Store¹²⁶ and pa got me a pair of shoes

July 3 Eliza was married to a mr Zenus Sikes today I did not get to hear the ceromony

" 4 It seems to me that this is the dullest forth of July that I ever saw there is nothing going on of any account. To be sure there is the Sunday School Scholars are going to have a pic-nic party but what is the use in going 3 or 4 miles just to see a set of fellows sit down and drink eat a good dinner when I cant get any of it myself so I shall have to content my self with reading novels (for we have abundance of them here. pa and mr Armstead started to go up on the mountains this morning. They have got a claim up there¹²⁷ all that I can tell about the situation is that it is some where near the half way house¹²⁸ between Santa Clara and Sant Cruz Pa says there is plenty of hazel nuts black berrys and strawberrys up there. he and mr Armstead have got a new house most built. we are going to move up there as soon as we can get the potatoe crop in



MOUNTAIN HOME

Pen Drawing by Roberta Treseder
from an early sketch belonging to Clara Burrell Hirsch

The trip from the Valley to the Mountain Home as written by Mr. Burrell.¹²⁹

"I selected this ridge where I now live, and where my three children are settled around me. I then thought it was Government land.¹³⁰ It seemed a vast, solitary wilderness—no houses, and no roads. I knew that bears and lions dwelt here, but I feared them not.

"It might truly have been called a 'howling wilderness:' for these beautiful hills and valleys, now covered with orchards and vineyards, comfortable houses, school-houses, good roads, with all kinds of improvement going on, and everywhere teeming with busy life, were then the abode of fierce and dangerous animals. They made their homes in the thickets and hollow trees, and went forth both day and night to seek food for themselves and for their young. Wild cats and lions were often seen prowling about while the sun was shining: and the night was often made hideous by the howling of the coyotes. There were a few wild cattle here, also deer and other game: but no roads or fences.

"When we were ready to move up to our 'Mountain Home,' my wife was in very delicate health. It was feared that the journey would be too hard for her. A lady friend in Santa Clara kindly drove with her in a buggy across the valley to where the town of Los Gatos now stands. Here she rested in the house of a Spanish family.¹³¹ I hired four yoke of oxen and two wagons.

"An old friend, who had formerly been my partner in business, kindly offered to accompany and assist us on the journey. We packed our household goods on the wagons, also one little pig, which was put into a box, and a few chickens. The three children went along with us, riding or walking, as they chose. We also took a saddle-horse with us, on which my wife was to ride. Towards evening we reached the Los Gatos, then known as 'Jones's Creek,' and here my wife joined our company. We made a good fire, ate supper, spread our blankets on the ground, and slept soundly,—after which we felt as much refreshed as if we had slept on feathers and in a palace.

"After an early breakfast, we began our second day's journey. The ascent of the mountains was not as easy in those days as it is now. We had then no graded turnpike. The road we were to travel had been made for the purpose of getting down logs. It was very rough and steep, and sometimes very side-lining. In some places we found it difficult to keep the cattle from sliding off the lower side. We first went over Jones's hill,¹³² a distance of about four miles, on the East side of the Creek; then we crossed over and went to the top of another hill on the north side of Moody's gulch, now known as the 'Evans place.' We selected the top of this hill for our second camping ground. On climbing these hills we had to double our team, and carry up only one load at a time. Here we were all glad to rest. We made our fire, fed our cattle, and laid our supper on a table-cloth which we spread on the ground.

"We slept soundly the second night. We already began to feel the benefit

of the pure and invigorating mountain air. On the third day we followed trails, or made our way as best we could to the top of a hill near Mountain Charly's. It was so rough and steep that we had to partly unload our wagons and take up only a part of a load at a time, thus making several trips. After a hard day's work, and having made but very little progress, we camped near a large rock. The next day we had no trail at all to follow; but we finally reached our home in safety. We unpacked our goods, and took supper in our own house. We all were pleased with our new home and its surroundings. We enjoyed the fine view of those magnificent old mountains on the North. We were delighted to see the waters of the Pacific on the South, nearly fifteen hundred feet below us: and it seemed as if we had never seen such gorgeous sunsets as we then saw here. We laid many plans for beautifying and improving our place; and we then christened it 'Mountain Home.'"

[To Mr Lyman J. Burrell, Santa Clara]

Dear Brother & Sister Burrell.

Tallmadge Dec. 21. 1853.

We have learned from brother Elizur that you had become located in your mountain home. That your location is good & healthful, & that your prospect is favorable, & that your health had improved in your mountain home. For these things we give thanks to the bestower of all our mercies. We hope that your health may be confirmed, & that as a family you may be permitted & enabled to live together in pe[ace] & contentment, & with a suitable measure of prosperity, after having been so long separated & scattered & after so much toil, & pain expense in getting to, & preparing a new home. We had long waited with solicitude for a second letter from you. one from Santa Clara Post Office we had received, giving an account of your journey over the oceans & how you found Mr. Burrell & how you were situated. This I answered soon & hoped to receive another, But none has come. We were very solicitous to hear from you again & not hearing were fearful, that the reason was inability to write on account of sickness. I should have written again, had I known where to direct. I made an agreement with br. Elizur, that if either received a letter from you, it should be communicated or the substance of it to the other. He received one & wrote me the 29th of Nov. which I communicated to Solon,¹³³ Sheffield¹³⁴ & Belle Prairie.¹³⁵ But Elizur did not mention your post office address. I have to day concluded to write you & inclose it in one to him that he may give it the proper direction. A letter from Lucy received about the same time as my last from Elizur represents their health comfortable a prosperous season, full crops good & secured, & plenty of work laid out for the winter. She says we are talking about going to California, & asks what I think of it. I have written encouragingly, believing that it would be well for Mr. Burrell & Dr. Lewis to have farms near each other & give their attention to that business believing, that there are many locations in that country where that

business may be carried on successfully, believing also, that you have detected a location of this description I think they would encourage each other & assist each other.¹³⁶ I believe also, that if the Lord direct & prospers, it would be not only pleasant but profitable for the sisters to be situated near each other. It is probable, that by an other fall the rail road across the isthmus may be completed. When this is completed the journey may be performed in less time & with much less fatigue than families formerly experienced in coming from Connecticut to the Reserve. If they should conclude to go, I therefore hope the way will be opened before them & that the Lord will guide their way safely to you before the close of another year. They will doubtless seek wisdom from above in this thing, & I trust, they will discover in the leadings of a wise & good Providence, the way in which they should go, & the plan, where they should take up their abode. You must help them by your prayers, & by such representations as will correspond with their judgments, when they come to see things as they are. It is pretty clear to my mind that they are not satisfied with their present location. True things may so change in the course of a few months, as to alter their views, & cause them to see that they are in the right place. A serious difficulty with them however is the severity of the winters & no great change is to be anticipated in this respect. James' family enjoy health, they have fixed out three to attend school this winter. Among his people nothing very specially marked had recently appeared, at the date of his last. The fore part of December, Mr. Seward & Harriet¹³⁷ as usual at the last dates. Our friends here are generally comfortable. Julia Loomis is still at her father's. Her health is such, that with Frank's aid she takes most of the care of her babe, t's a fine healthful boy & has done so for several months. She has been here a year & a half [Remainder of line illegible]

to New York & returned to Tallmadge after such a short absence. Dr. U. & Polly¹³⁸ think she cannot be well taken care of any where else. Of course they must attend to her & her children. For some months past, they have been greatly troubled for women's help, & Polly has undertaken to do more than she is able & is sinking under her burdens. Amelia cannot see her sink without attempting to aid & she is putting her shoulder under the burden, which, if aid is not soon procured will crush them both. Br. Francis¹³⁹ & family are in usual health. He has been greatly prospered in his farming business during the last season or during the now closing year. Br. Philo wife & Amelia are at home well. Rhoda is at Detroit. Philo Jr is with Anson in Canida engaged in the lumber business & will probably spend the winter there. Esq. Washington of Windham, died about the 30th of Nov. Old Mr. Carothers was buried last week on Saturday. A time of general health. A son of Rev. Mr. Bradstreet teaches the Academy¹⁴⁰ this winter. The men have been working on the rail road thro Tallmadge several months. It passes just east of the center & a little south of the burying ground and then between

the [illegible] & Mrs. Ashman's & runs through D. Upson's meadow some rods south of Camp brook. My health is not very good. Amelia would be comfortable had she no family to see to but her own. We are anxious to hear how your health is, how you are provided for, how you are situated as to neighbors; what religious privileges you enjoy what is your Post office address & your distance from office; & as many particulars respecting situation of family as may be. Amelia joins me in love to you all.

Your brother WM. HANFORD

N. B. Please to let us hear from you as soon as may be—

[To Mrs Amelia Hanford, Tallmadge, Ohio]

Dear Brother & Sister

The Mountain Home March 4th 1854

Yours of Dec 21st came to us this week on monday in company with three others, one from Elizur Dec 19th one from Lucy Dec 27th and one from sister Knapp Dec 23rd; they were brought us by Mr Sykes, Eliza's husband; he and one of his brothers are in pardonship, and have a claim not far from us on this mountain; they have one also in the valley where they live, the men coming up here occasionally to see to their cattle and hogs. Santa Clara is still our post office it [is] about eighteen miles distant. Eliza lives about four miles from Santa Clara in the same valley. You have probably before this received a letter from me, giving some account of our journey here, and a faint description of our place and the surrounding scenery The rain did not commence as early this season as usual and we did not have so much of it; but we are abundantly supplied now. The small pond¹⁴¹ (or lagoon as it is called here) in front of our house is full and over flowing and springs are breaking out from the hill sides in all directions We have also had more cold weather during the winter than is common for this country: we had some snow here on the mountain but there was none in the valley, though I think they suffer more with the cold there than we do here, (at all events) they are not so bountifully supplied with fuel as we of the mountain, many of them having four or five [miles] to go for wood, and then pay for it; we have plenty all around us both dry and green, red wood and oak; the oak burns almost as well as hickory, and the red wood is not quite equal to pitch pine but resembles it some what. We have a fire place at one end of our house and the cook stove stands at the other; the house is twenty eight feet in length and twelve in width; we have posts set to divide it into two rooms but the boards have not been nailed on yet. it is however quite comfortable and we have enjoyed the cheerful blaze of the red wood in our fire place very much, it gives sufficient light for reading or knitting. We continue to like our home here as well or better than when we first came to it Mr Burrell finished putting [in] his wheat week before last, it is now up and looking finely, he also sowed some turnips that are up and growing. they have planted early potatoes, and we should have planted

beans, peas beets, &C, had it not rained. The land here looks mellow and rich as it is turned over by the, plough and one would think it might produce abundantly, we have strong hopes that it will. The only fault we find with our place is, it is not handy to market, that is we have no good waggon road to the valleys on either side of us; t'is true we came up here with waggons, but we were nearly three days about it, and were obliged to go five or six miles farther than we do on horse-back,¹⁴² our provisions were all packed up the mountains on horses and mules. Mr Burrell got a waggon and brought a load to the foot of the mountain and left it there¹⁴³ till he and Birney could pack it home. Birney went with the horses one day to help a neighbor and we had his mules to help up with our load. By setting out early in the morning they could get a load and come back the same day some times they did not get home till nine or ten at night. Birney went down two or three times alone and did not get back till after dark I did not feel very easy about him you may be sure for the trail passes through the canyon of a creek for about three miles, it is a dismal place after sundown; we come up out of it about [illegible] miles from here. We have not yet had the satisfaction of seeing any of the monsters that inhabit these mountains and ravines in the shape of grizzly bears lions, panthers, &C, but we see their tracks and know of their depredations; one of them came and took a large pig from a pen about a rod from the house, a few nights ago it came again, and attacked a good sized dog¹⁴⁴ that lay by the door I should think the dog is about the size of Maje the one that David owned when I was there. I suppose the dog was asleep when the animal sprung upon him for I heard the rattle against the house and door, after which the dog yelped, the animal succeeded in dragging the dog a few steps from the door Mr Burrell took his gun and opened the door but the night was so dark he could not distinguish between them and did not fire he thought from what he could discern the animal was considerable larger than the dog, we conclude it was a lion or large panther, for a grizzly would have taken the dog with him as they are not easily frightened It is said that one came in the day time and carried off a calf from a pen while several men were standing at a little distance making a noise to scare it away; this happened on the other side of these mountains

Our family are all well, my health continues to improve. I am considerably more fleshy than I have been for several years past. I was very glad to hear that Julia was able to be about again, and take care of her babe. I think if she could come and spend a few months with me, and breath this pure mountain air, and ramble over the hills, she would be quite well again.

Our neighbors here have all been of the bachelor order till week before last. Mr Wayland who lives about a mile from us brought his Mother and sister up here to stay a while. they have a farm in the valley and will probably go back and stay during harvest, as they have some sixty or seventy acres of wheat and barley there, I think the old lady will like to live here

best, for she says she has long wanted to live where there was plenty of wood and good water both of which are abundant here. It is very pleasant to me to have some female neighbors; though I have not suffered at all from being lonesome. I went down to the valley and made a visit of a week about Christmas. Martha had been there with Eliza about two weeks. Birney and Clara went with me, we left Mr Burrell alone, for one night only, Birney went back with the horses the next day and came for us at the expiration of a week. The weather was fine the roads dry and we had a fine ride and visit; our neighbors were very much surprised to see me looking so young and healthy; for when I left them they thought I could hardly live to reach my home on the mountain.

We expect to send Birney to the valley the first of next week and I have so many letters to answer I shall be obliged to shorten them all a little. Give our love a general distribution among the relatives and friends. Martha and Clara would like to be remembered to Julia & Cornelia.

Your affectionate sister CLARISSA BURRELL

[Clarissa Burrell to Rev. William Hanford, Tallmadge, Ohio]

Dear Brother & Sister

The Mountain Home March 19" [1854]

Yours of Jan 26th was received two days since. Mr. Burrell happened to be down in the valley when the mail came in, so we got our letters direct. I sent to the office last week an answer to yours of Dec. 22nd. of course I have not much news on hand of importance. With regard to our house it is built of red wood,¹⁴⁵ as I may have mentioned before; the studs are set in the ground and the sleepers nailed on to them. the plates are nailed to the top of the studs and the rafters nailed on to them; the sides are covered with boards split in the same manner they used to split shingles for log houses, only longer; the roof is covered with long shingle¹⁴⁶ there being only one tier on each side. The part of the house built first is twelve by twenty eight with posts set for a partition making a kitchen of twelve feet square and a sitting room twelve by sixteen. We have a fire place in our sitting room and a cook stove in the kitchen. We find the fire place quite a luxury during the rainy season, it gives sufficient heat and seems to chase away the damp better than a stove, and many a pleasant evening have we spent by the bright cheeful light of our red wood fire. Mr Burrell, Birney and Martha reading aloud by turns in some news paper or entertaining story book while I knit and Clara played with her doll. There is an addition of eight feet in width running the whole length of the house on the back side, this is to be divided into three bed rooms and a small pantry. it is enclosed but not yet divided. we have a temporary floor in one end where we put Birneys bed. we have two beds in the sitting room. I find the iron bedsteads I brought from Boston a great convenience as they are much easier to pack and put up than wooden ones. Mr Burrell has made some preparations for

puting up a wood house store room and work shop, making our building some thirty six feet longer, this building is not up yet. Mr. Burrell with the help of Birney does, all the work himself even to the making of window sash, he has also made a good substantial kitchen table several benches, some stools for the children and a comfortable seat with a back to it. also a stand which is not quite finished, but I have laid my moulding board on for a leaf, (said board being about two feet square, and was split from a red wood tree) and I am now writing on it: the articles of furniture are the work of rainy days We have nice floors in our rooms made of split boards plained, they are as smooth and almost as tight as a matched floor You will see from my stragling description that our house is not log, neither is it exactly a framed house (for there is no framing about it) though it looks like one. People in this country do not generally plaster their walls, in the place of it they line their rooms with unbleached muslin or drilling, on the sides they put paper, and white wash the cloth over head; this when well done makes a cheap substantial wall, and is as good for this country as any other for we do not need to make much provision against the cold Our house in its unfinished state has been quite comfortable this winter, we hope however before another winter to have it all completed and a good pile of wood under shelter April 2nd I commenced this letter two weeks ago thinking I should finish it, in season to send by Mr Burrell, as he and Birney were going to the valley in a few days to drive up some hogs which we have taken of a man living there, to keep two years for half the increase; they drove up fifty two; we had taken ten before from Mr Sykes, Eliza,s husband these with one of our own make quite a respectable herd. I think at the end of two years, if they increase as this kind of stock usually do, there will be as many as we shall care to look after; the barrows are to be divided each year after harvest and the owner takes away his share those of a year old are now bringing eighteen dollars per head. If we are prospered I think we shall be able in the course of a year or two supply our selves with all the cows, and other stock we wish for. Eliza,s husband has quite a number of cows, and he lets us have the use of one this season. We feel grateful to Daniel and all our dear friends for their kind remembrance of us; we love to think while here alone that there are those who think of us, and take interest in our welfare. We have not as many books of the historical and descriptive character as I would like. We intend before long to send for some of the most interesting periodicals published in the eastern cities to supply their place Martha and Birney are very fond of reading. Eliza and her husband are here on a visit and will take this to the office on their way home You will excuse my not filling the sheet. I have not answered your question about cows Spanish cows can be purchased for fifty dollars American cows at from one to two hundred

The weather is very fine now, vegetation is growing rapidly Mr Burrell and Birney are very busy puting in corn, potatoes, beets, pumpkins, squashes, melons &C. We think this will be a fine place for raising fruit. Mr Burrell and

the children send much love to all the friends Eliza would be affectionately remembered

Yours with love CLARISSA BURRELL

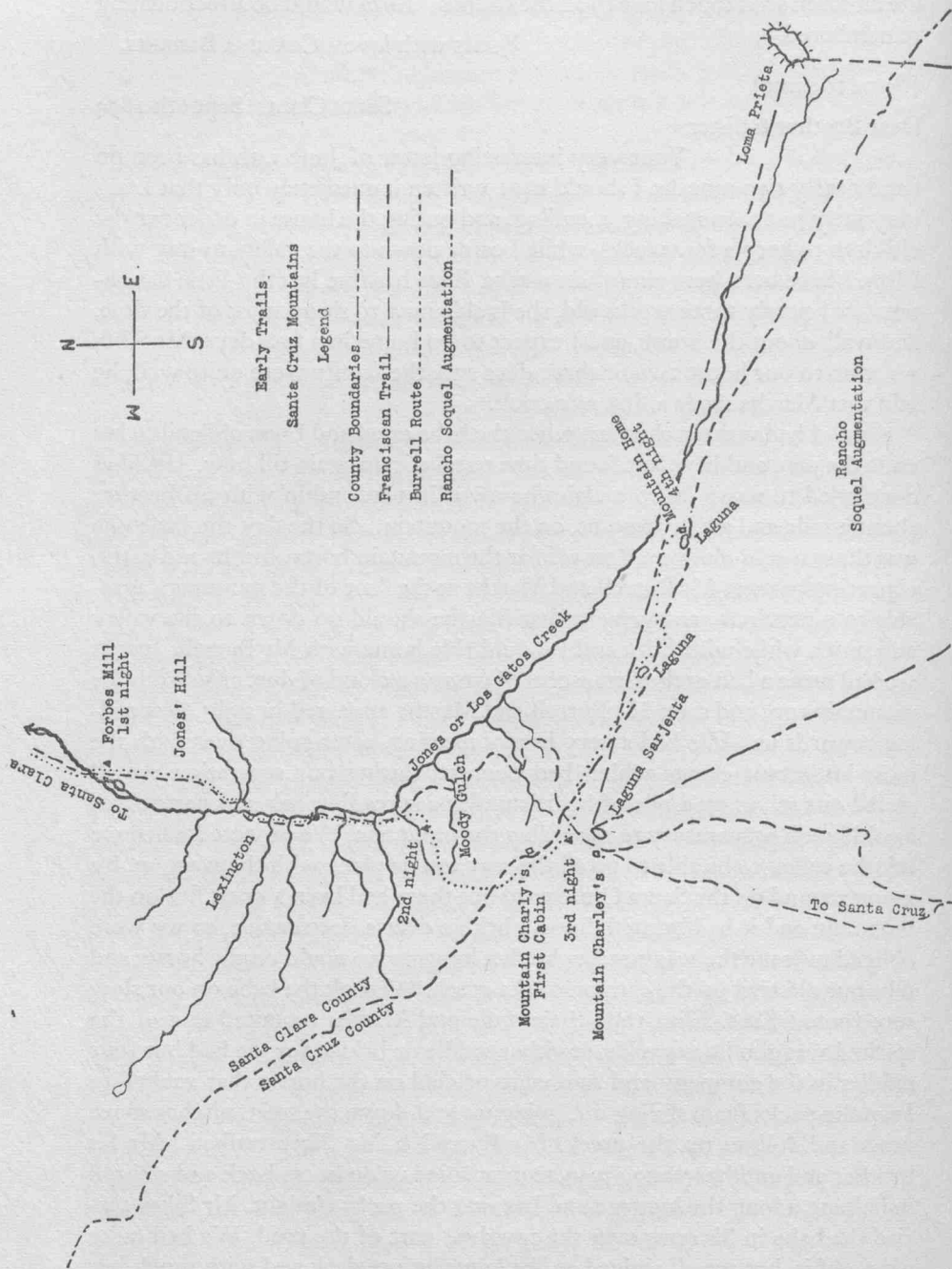
[Same to same]

Santa Clara Sept 6th 1854

Dear Brother & Sister

Your very interesting letter of June 14th has been on hand nearly two months. I should have written immediately only that I was very busy just then making, mending, and putting the house in order for the children to keep a few weeks, while I came down to the valley to stay with Eliza. I have been here almost six weeks. Eliza has fine healthy little daughters [*sic*] nearly three weeks old, she is able now to sit up most of the time, and walk about the house, and I expect to go home in a few days. Mr Sikes went up to our house two or three days ago, the family were quite well; he said that Martha made a first rate cook.

26th I had written thus far, when the babe cried and I was obliged to lay aside the pen, and have not found time to take it up again till now. Mr Sikes concluded to move on to a claim he owns in pardonship with his brother about a mile and a half from us, on the mountain. So the day the little one was three weeks old, we all set off for the mountain home, bright and early, expecting to meet Mr Burrell and Martha at the foot of the mountain, agreeable to a previous arrangement that Martha should go down to the valley and stay a while with Eliza and I should ride home with Mr Burrell. Just as we had made a halt at the first ascent¹⁴⁷ we saw a cloud of dust arise from the mountain top, and soon Mr Burrell and Martha appeared in sight, descending towards us. We had a very happy meeting, after going over with the most important events which had occurred during our separation we all seated our selves on a pile of boards under a spreading oak and partook of a cold lunch preparatory to ascending the mountain. We expected when we left the valley to be able to go all the way to our place with the waggon, by going around on the Santa Cruse road but there had been a great fire on the mountain and it had burned down a bridge over a deep ravine, so we were obliged to leave the waggon, pack what luggage we could on the horses and take our old trail up the canyon of the creek.¹⁴⁸ I took the babe on our slow sure footed Kate. Eliza rode their mule and Martha mounted one of the spirited waggon horses without either saddle or bridle, for we had but four saddles in the company and two were needed on the horses that packed to keep the packs from sliding off, going up and down the steep pitches as we cross and follow up the creek. Mr Burrell & Mr Sikes walked Mr S, brother and another young man accompanied us on horse-back and assisted in halping a long the luggage and keeping the packs straight. Mr Sikes carried the babe in his arms over the roughest part of the road. We had quite a time of it, but we all arrived at *the home* before dark and with much less fatigue than one would imagine; indeed we were all quite well the next day, and I commenced washing and cleaning.



I have now been at home a little more than two weeks and have my work pretty well caught up again though I always find a great plenty of mending to do. Last saturday afternoon Mr Burrell and Birney were making a fence along the father side of the garden a little before sundown they heard a great noise among the hogs that were feeding upon the carcase of a dead horse on the hill a short distance from them Mr B—— said he would go up the hill and see what was the disturbance he jumped over the fence with his ax in his hand and proceeded a few steps up the hill, when he was met by an old grizzly bear and her cub coming down at full speed, he brandished his ax at her, and shouted with all his might to frighten her, but they are an animal that never give even half the road, and it is not safe to wound them if you are within their reach, so Mr Burrell either in turning to let her pass fell or she in her haste to go knocked him over, it was done so quick he could not tell which, as his feet were towards her she gave him one snap with her teeth on the left limb just above the knee leaving one large hole on the lower side and two smaller ones on the upper side of it she then run three or four steps and turned to look at him, as she saw he did not follow her, she and her cub bounded off down the hill into the brush with all their might.¹⁴⁹ Mr Burrell was able to walk to the house though the wounds were among the cords and made him quite lame, and it was very painful for several hours the frequent application of cold water relieved the pain and they are now doing well, it is now tuesday and he is able to hobble about with a board for a crutch and has been smoothing off a stone for a hearth. We are in hopes he will get along without being laid by any length of time. Our crops have done much better up here than our fears led us to expect we have a good supply of wheat, corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, melons, tomatoes, potatoes, beets, &c, &c, also grape vines, peach trees, and apple trees, growing. We continue to like our place very much notwithstanding the wild beasts do continue to live here still, the bear did not kill any of the hogs for they all come home safe and sound.

I have run over my sheet and have not said at all the things I intended to say; many thanks to you for the particulars of Julia,^{s150} death. Dear Julia: like a sweet sun beam she smiled upon us, and smiling passed away. I was much surprised to hear of her death, for I had heard she was better, and like myself I hoped she was feeling quite well again; but it seems she has performed her mission here on earth and is now receiving her reward while we are left to toil a little longer. I hope my friends will excuse my want of punctuality about writing and not follow my example, or feel that I have lost my interest in those I love, this is a new country and the fingers find many things to do besides wield the pen

Your Sister CLARISSA BURRELL

I would like very much if Mrs Fenn or brother Francis wife¹⁵¹ would send me a receipt or rather their process of cheese making, especialy the management of the rennet how much they use and how they prepare it; it has been

so long since I made cheese that I have forgotten many things Much love to all the dear friends C B The children wish to be remembered to all the cousins Birney would like to see some thing more from Frank,s pen he is very busy now his pa is lame or he would write. Eliza is with us and sends her love

Dear Brother & Sister

The Mountain Home Feb 25th 1855

Your very welcome letter of Jan. 1st was received about six days since. I was feeling rather anxious for it had been a long time since we had heard from you I was sorry to hear that you had been suffering more than usual and that Amelia was sick I hope by this time you may both be feeling quite comfortable again. What a variety of changes have taken place in Tallmadge in the course of a few years; it seems to me but a little while since Mr Alpha Wright and his wife were young married people living in the same place they now do and his father and mother were living with them, *now, they* are the grand parents of a rising generation. I should love very much to visit the old place once more and see my dear brothers and sisters, nephews nieces, and old acquaintance; the children and I often talk about it and we think if we should ever happen to discover a gold mine we shall ceertainly go. I am happy to learn that Brother Francis is so comfortably situated I hope he will not have to work so hard now; and certainly he will have much less vexation. I have been suffering for a while, from a cold but think I am geting better now. We are all very busy now; we have taken between 140 & 50 head of cattle and calves to ranch for a man living in San Jose, about 70 are cows we are to take care of the stock and make the butter and cheese for two thirds of the profit they are not remarkably good cows for a dairy; we milk 28 now and make about 60 lbs of butter per week, the cows are coming in very fast and I suppose we shall soon commence cheese making, thank you very much for the receipt contained in your letter, it was just the information I wanted, The children are a very great help about milking, the little girles milk 5 cows apiece and when I am not well they milk six or seven and one time they milked ten. We have a hired man who assists about milking Mr Burrell not being able to milk on account of his hands being so much crippled; we expect to have the man make the cheese; he is from Ashtabula county Ohio, has made cheese there; and he made the butter and cheese from the cows we have last season, we pay him \$55, per month, we made about \$13, more than the man's wages the first month; we shall probably make more than double the quantity of butter this month but I do not know that we can get the same price for it, we have had \$.75 per pound, but the merchants said they did not generally pay but \$.50 but ours was very nice and we were sending quite a quantity at a time so they would like to keep it; cheese fetches from \$.50 to 37½ cents per pound. A few weeks ago I had a letter from our old neighbor in the valley, Mrs Clark, urging us to come and live near them, and offering us a

claim they had purchased from some people who, wished to leave because there were no young people there, the claim has a house, a corral and a garden fenced in. The place is about forty miles from here Mr Burrell went over to see it; he says the land is better for gardening or crop raising than this but not any better grazing Mr Clark and his bachelor brother have each of them a claim besides the one they purchased and that is liable to be squated on perhaps by people who will not be very agreeable neighbors, so they say, we are welcome to the place and the improvements if we will come, and they have as many cows as we are keeping here, which they say we may milk and make the butter and cheese for two thirds and they will take care of the calves and get up the cows for us. Mr Burrell told them if he could sell this place for a thousand dollars he did not know but we might accept their offer. The last time Mr Burrell was down in the valley he told Mr Quimley, the man of whom we have the cows that he would sell him his place for a \$1000, he seemed very much inclined to take him up, but said he could not make up his mind just then, but would let him know in course of a few weeks I suppose the next time Mr Burrell goes to take the butter to market we may find out. I do not feel very anxious to leave this place for I find myself considerably attached to it; its green hills, the spreading oaks the tall red wood, and the beautiful flowers look to me like mementoes of our Heavenly Father's love. But we shall have very much the same surroundings where we think of going and the beautiful flowers those sweet smiles of our Heavenly Father will still be with us, to remind us of the great Giver of all good. I suppose if we can sell our improvements here, and take up another claim equally as good; and lay out the greater part of the proceeds of our place in stock, it will be better for us than to remain here, though it is something of a task to move in this mountainous region; however it does not trouble me any, for I always find my health improved by a jaunt over the mountains. As Mr Burrell's business will call him to San Jose instead of Santa Clara you will please direct your letters to the former place and let us hear from you as often as may be

Your affectionate Sister CLARISSA BURRELL

P S Mr Burrell and the children send much love to all the dear friends

Dear Brother & Sister

The Mountain Home Dec 14th ,55

Your very interesting letter of May 22nd was received several months ago, when my hands were so fully occupied that I could not find time to take up the pen; and it is very apt to be the case with me if I am obliged to put off answering a letter a few weeks it will stay put off for months; and now I do not seem to have any thing to communicate which I think will be of interest to you. We live so secluded upon this mountain and have so little to do with the busy bustling world either politically or ecclesiastically that I am not able to say much about their doings in this

region The Methodist denomination I think are the most numerous here, they are divided into northern and southern divisions and hold their separate camp meetings. There is also quite a flourishing society of Cumberland Presbyterians who hold camp meetings occasionally. The Methodists have a college at Santa Clara¹⁵² which is in quite a prosperous condition. the Baptists have a school for girls¹⁵³ also at Santa Clara. We are thinking if we should be prospered another season we shall be able to send Birney and Martha to school. Miss Mary Atkins¹⁵⁴ a cousin of Mrs Marcia Ashmun is teaching a school for young ladies at Benicia I think I should prefer sending Martha there if we are able to do so. A few years schooling now will probably be as useful to the children, as it would have been to be confined in school ever since they were big enough to go. I think they will now know how to improve their time

We are at present quite alone on the mountain Eliza and her husband have gone back to their place in the valley or rather they have sold their old place and bought a better one, they think they can make money faster there than on the mountain and I do not doubt but they can. Mr Sikes owns a share in a thrashing machine which he makes quite profitable in the season for using it, they were quite well the last we heard from them. Mrs Wayland the widow lady who has lived up here occasionally died last summer and her sons have let their place to a young man who takes care of their stock; a man and his wife who lived about a mile from us in another direction moved away a few weeks ago; but their place is to be occupied by another family this week.

We still continue to feel satisfied and contented with our place though we have but few neighbors and they are continually changing. Our crops did very well last summer and the gardens afforded us an abundance of vegetables and melons, the tomato vines are some of them still green and blossoming. We have fourteen fine peach trees growing in our door yard and quite a number of grape vines we think the grape vines will some of them bear another season; we have two fig trees some courant and gooseberry slips which we intend to set out so soon as Mr Burrell finishes preparing the ground. The winter is the time for transplanting trees here, and we intend to do all we can at it this season we think from the little experience we have had that this will be a very good place for raising fruit especialy grapes; fruit trees grow very fast in this country and bear fruit soon. Those we have planted did well last summer without watering and they were not set out till after the close of the rainy season I believe that the curculio and other insects do not trouble the fruit here yet

We succeeded with our dairy business last summer much better than I feared; the first two month the cows did not give much milk and of course we did not make much butter, after that the price of butter fell so much that we found we could not afford to keep a hired man any longer, and I

believe he did not care to stay for he did some times see a grizzley along with the cows when he went after them; he stayed with us four months, about the time he left several cows came in and the others gave more milk so that we made some over one hundred pounds of butter a week and the price of butter raised in the course of two months from thirty to seventy cents a pound; we kept the cows seven months and for the last four hundred weight of butter we sold we received two hundred and eighty dollars. As the feed began to grow scarce late in the season we thought it not advisable to try to keep so large a herd any longer and our agreement was only for six months; Mr Burrell then purchaced ten cows with their calves for twenty five dollars apiece; we have also taken six cows and eleven heifers from the man of whom we bought the cows, to keep three years we have half the increase for keeping them and all the butter we can make for taming them to milk; the cows had been runing with their calves all summer so that we only get milk enough now to make what butter we use. Mr Burrell has been working at our house this fall and winter and we find it much pleasanter and more comfortable to have our rooms separated and ceiled, so you see we are geting around us one comfort after another for which to feel thankful; the children often observe that it was well we did not have every thing finished and to our hand when we first came here for then we not know so well how to prize our comforts and should loose the great happiness of being thankful.

I have an opportunity of sending to the post office and think I will close my letter and send it along without filling the sheet Mr Burrell and the children join in sending much love to all our friends, we hope to receive an answer to this soon

Your affectionate Sister CLARISSA

P S When you write again direct to Santa Clara we can get our mail more readily from there

Dear Martha & Clara¹⁵⁵

[No date]

I was very happy to see a note from you in the bundle and to hear you were geting along so well. Eliza says I must not forget to ask Martha if she made the cake she sent us; if she did she will like to have her come and teach her to make the like. I think it is better than I can make We are all well here I can not say yet, just when I will come home. I hope you will be good girles and love one another and not quarrel give my love to pa and Birney Eliza sends a little piece of calico for you both

Your affectionate Mother CLARISSA

Dear Brother & Sister

The Mountain Home June 1st 1856

Your favor of March 7th reached us some time in May, we were very happy to hear from you and thankful to learn that you were tolerably comfortable during the severe cold of winter; we had heard of the uncomon severity of the season and were afraid of the effect it might have

on your broken constitution. The winter was quite a comfortable one with us though perhaps a little colder than the preceeding one. What a loss the society in Tallmadge have met with in the death of Mr Alpha Wright I hardly think there is another person in the community who would be so much missed especialy at church; give my love to Mrs Wright and tell her I feel to sympathise with her in her great affliction though I am far away. I hope that his sons will try to make their fathers place good

July 13th I had written thus far in answer to yours of March 7th when some little household matters obliged me to lay aside the pen for the present, not thinking that more than a month would pass before I should take it up again Although the girles do the greater part of the hard work there are a great many things for mother to do that take up the time. About the middle of June I had a call to go down to the valley and spend a little time with Eliza She has another daughter I think it was born the 15th of June I staid with her till her babe was a week old she and her babe were both geting along finely when I left The crops in the valley are very poor this season on account of the small quantity of rain which fell last winter, in many places the wheat crop will prove an entire failure not even reproducing the seed, and that too on land which in a good season produces from sixty to seventy bushels to the acre. Our land on the mountain does not seem to suffer any as yet with the drouth Mr Burrell has just harvested his wheat, he thinks it the best we have yet raised here, our other crops are all looking well; the apple grafts that we set out last spring are most of them growing nicely and two of the cutings have sent out a limb apiece two feet and a half in length a number of the others are growing some, the pear slips are about one third of them growing, and fifty or sixty peach slips, a few of our quince cutings are growing and the most of the currants, we have five or six hundred grape vines that are flourishing finely, and one of our peach noculates has made a beautiful tree of six feet in length several others have done almost as well and if they grow as long as they did last year they will have time to double their size. In this country the fruit growers let their trees throw out limbs near the ground and trim them off at the top. We have also a seedling peach tree that has come up and grown three feet and a half this season The prospect seems to be fair for our being well supplied with fruit in a year or two Our kitchen garden is remarkably good this year and we have a few flowers in front of our house that lend their aid to make the place look happy. I often look out upon our yard of flourishing vines and trees and think hard indeed must be that heart that could murmur or repine when surrounded by so many tokens of our Heavenly Father,s goodness. True, tis pleasant to have social intercourse with those we love, and to meet with them in the assembly of those who come together to receive instruction from one of their fellow men more gifted or more learned than themselves But this does not appear to be our destiny at present Providence seems to have placed us here, and

it would be the height of folly for us to spend our thoughts in useless murmuring and regrets for that which at present we cannot help; besides setting a bad example for our children; for certainly we are surrounded with blessings far more abundantly than we deserve

14th Three weeks ago to day our hearts were made glad by the receipt of your interesting letter of May 7th, the perusal of letters from the old place, seems to carry me back to the scenes of other days when with youthful feet I used to traverse those fields, forests and high-ways, gathering trees to ornament the yard or trudging to school in search of useful knowledge; there are many delightful recollections connected with that old place both of earlier and later date often in imagination I am holding sweet converse with you and the dear family at the old house; perhaps the time may come when these visions will be realized, though the prospect is not very flattering at present The political aspect of our country looks rather threatening on either side of the continent, a week or two ago I sent the Doctor two papers giving some account of the troubles in San Francisco The organization of the vigilance committee¹⁵⁶ was caused by the murder of Mr King¹⁵⁷ a man who was universally respected for his honesty and good morals; he was editing one of the daily papers¹⁵⁸ and took the liberty to expose some of the iniquities practiced in high places. What this state of things will lead to it is impossible to say but we are in hopes that the vigilance committee will hold the power till honest and upright men can be elected to rule over us. Perhaps if we were not so far from Washington governor Johnson¹⁵⁹ and his gambling associates might receive assistance to put down the vigilance committee, as it is they can do nothing for the mass of the people are in favor of the committee. In regard to the books you mentioned sending us, they certainly would be very thankfully received especially by Birney and Martha Though we do [not] need them so much now as we have done; we are taking the New York Tribune, the Northern Farmer and the San Francisco Herald¹⁶⁰ Birney takes Woodworths Youths Cabinet and Clara has sent for the Little Pilgrim edited by Grace Greenwood,¹⁶¹ so we have considerable reading on hand all the time. I suppose that a box might be sent by clipper around cape horn quite reasonably, it could be directed to Mr Burrell Santa Clara to the care of Bray and Brothers San Francisco. if a letter was sent to us at time it was shipped giving the name of the ship and the time of shipment we should be looking for it

We are all enjoying usual health Mr Burrell and the children join in sending love to all the friends

CLARISSA BURRELL

[Clarissa Burrell to Mrs. Lucy Wright Lewis]

Dear Lucy

The Mountain Home Aug 17,th 1856

Yours of June 11th arrived at the mountain Home the 14th of this month, we always have a time of rejoicing when a package comes from

Minnesota; but the rejoicing would be abundantly greater if the dear good people would come themselves. Now if it were not for the trouble of pulling up stakes and taking such a long journey I should expect to see you here forth with, but as it is I suppose we shall be obliged to wait about seeing each other till the right time comes. The children often say if Aunt Lucy and her folks only lived on these mountains they would never want to go any where else to visit. Indeed sister Lucy I think this is an admirable place for one to reast in their declining years, you can have just as little company as you please and if you are lone some you can go out and hold converse with the beautiful and sublime in nature where every thing that meets the eye bears the impress of an Almighty hand. Keep up good courage Lucy it may be the time will come when your feet will tread the mountains of California though things do not look much like it now.¹⁶² Many thanks for the papers you sent us though we are taking the Tribune ourselves Mr Burrell joined a club that was geting up in the valley for taking it and gets his copy for one dollar per year he also subscribed for a San Francisco paper but the paper stoped after we had received our first number¹⁶³ we are some in hopes it will be started again if it does I will occasionally send you a number that you may see what is going on here. I can not remember whether I told you in my last any thing about the troubles in San Francisco and their geting up a vigilance committee to put a stop to murder and gambling; this committee have been strongly supported by the whole mass of population through out the state; they have hunted up or taken and hung four murderers that the legal authorities would probably have let go at large to commit further iniquities; and I think if the vigilance committee had hold of our congressman Herbert¹⁶⁴ they would give him his due. What a shame it is that people in high places can commit almost any outrage and it will be winked at, but if a poor man does the same his life answers for it immediately. I do not know what our country is coming to, but I have some hope that if Freemont¹⁶⁵ is elected and the republican party have the power that we shall have no further extension of slavery if it is not abolished. I have no doubt if the north would once take the stand that no more slave states should be admitted into the union and abide by it and not be frightened by the cry of a dissolution of the union but just tell the south if they wished to dissolve the union they might do so and I think we should soon find them as tame and peaceable as a whip,t spainel. I think I never felt so much interest in politics before for it seems that the salvation of our country depends upon a change of administration and such a change as will give the power to those who will not use it for the extension or upholding of slavery.

Now for home matters and things, that same peach tree that I have been telling you about in all my letters this season is now seven feet ten inches high and still growing. Mrs Eskrose¹⁶⁶ our friend in the valley sent us a dozzzen or so of peaches from the tree our noculates were taken, they are a

fine rich yellow peach, we had them cut up with cream and sugar for our dinner to day, I tell you they were luscious, we have five trees of that kind which are all growing nearly as fast as the big tree Mr Burrell thinks he shall have a hundred peach trees that he has raised this season large enough to set in the orchard next winter he will noculate them this summer, we have also a hundred or more apple trees that were grafted last winter that will be large enough to set our fruit trees have done better thus far than we expected I like to tell you how nicely our fruit trees grow thinking perhaps Mr Lewis may be encouraged by it to set his face towards California, our crops are as good or better than usual this season, the wheat is much better Butter does not bring as high a price this season as it did last, 42 cents is the price at San Jose and Santa Clara but Mr Burrell took some down to Santa Cruze¹⁶⁷ last week and got 62½ cents for it half trade and half cash I think your cows must be rather better milkers than ours though I think the feed makes considerable difference we know that cows do not give as much milk on our mountain feed as they do in the valley, but they get much fatter. I think I told you in my last that Eliza had another daughter added to her family which her husband has named Eva. she is altogether like Eliza, s family of the Burrells as to looks but is one of the most quiet little bodies that ever came along Clara was down there last week and she says that after Eliza has dressed her in the morning she lays her down on the bed and when she has work folks does not take her up but three times in the course of the day; the little one never cries only grunts a little when she gets tired she is quite lively with her hands and laughs a great deal. I think Mr Sikes has given up going to Michigan at least for some years yet. I hope you will have a good visit at Tallmadge, I wish I could be there with you. Some how my health does not seem to be at all good at present, though I am rather expecting every day I shall feel better but that day seems to be long coming I am able to trot about the house most of the day and do a great many little jobs and perhaps if I was not lazy I might do some hard work; but as I am not obliged to do it I let it alone Mr Burrell has not felt so well as usual for two weeks past The weather was uncommonly warm for several days and I think he worked too hard at his harvesting though he is apt not to feel quite so well at this season of the year You see I have filled my sheet and I will say good by with love

Your sister CLARISSA

Dear Martha & Clara¹⁶⁸

(No date)

Pa says he thinks that you get along better when I am at home and the folks think I shall be more likely to get well if I stay here till warm weather It is a great while to be gone from home but if I get well I suppose if get well you wont care I would like to have you send down my gingham dress also that sack that Mrs Taylor gave Clara my other night gown

and cap a few of best squash seeds also some string peas. pa says you can come down one at a time and get some new dress [Fragment missing] and some beet seed for [Fragment missing]

YOUR MOTHER

Now be good children and I hope I may get well but I am not any better yet

NOTES

1. "Wright Genealogical Chart." (Henry H. Norton Collection, Grants Pass, Oregon; see notes 50 and 51 below.)
2. P. G. and E. Q. Wright, *Elizur Wright, The Father of Life Insurance* (Chicago, 1937), p. 1.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
4. H. S. Foote, ed., *Pen Pictures from the Garden of the World; or, Santa Clara County, California* (Chicago, 1888), p. 263.
5. Letter of Clarissa Wright to her parents, Apr. 10, 1824, from Wooster, Ohio, where she was teaching; and another to her sister, Mrs. Amelia Hanford, May 16, 1834, from Edgeworth Seminary, Wilkens, Pa., where she was attending school. (Norton Collection.) However, "A careful search through the college records fails to reveal the name of Clarissa Wright." Letter from Donald M. Love, secretary, Oberlin College, to present writer, Jan. 14, 1949.
6. "Wright Genealogical Chart," as above; and data given in this series of letters.
7. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 302.
8. P. G. and E. Q. Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-239.
9. Letter of Mrs. Clarissa Wright to her daughter, Martha, Dec. 21, 1828, from Tallmadge, Ohio. Speaking of Western Reserve College, she says, "... they are yet without a President for Mr Emerson would not be prevailed on to accept the appointment." (Norton Collection.)
10. Letter of Mrs. Clarissa Wright Burrell to her mother, Mrs. Clarissa Wright, May 11, 1840, from Elyria, Ohio, gives detailed information concerning anti-slavery activities in Ohio, the collection of funds for freedmen's benefits, etc. (Norton Collection.)
11. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 263.
12. "Recollections of an Octogenarian," *Mountain Echoes*, I, No. 1 (Dec. 31, 1881). This was a handwritten serial publication of ten issues, 1881-82, now in the collection of Erle T. Smith, who resides near the old town of Burrell, Santa Clara County.
13. *Idem.*
14. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 263.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 264, 266. Clara Burrell was born June 30, 1845. J. M. McGuinn, *History and Biographical Records of Coast Counties, California* (Chicago, 1904), p. 1287.
16. "Recollections . . .," as above.
17. For detailed description of this route, see Ruby Johnson Swartzlow, "Peter Lassen, Northern California Trail-Blazer," *Calif. Hist. Soc.*, 1940.
18. "Recollections . . .," as above.
19. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 263.
20. *Idem.*
21. C. F. McGlashan, *History of the Donner Party* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1940), p. 239.
22. "Recollections . . .," as above.
23. Mrs. Clara B. Hirsch writes from North Bergen, N. J. (postmarked Jan. 4, 1949): "Grandmother was buried in the Mountains on their property—later becoming the property of Miss Martha Burrell."

24. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are transcribed without change.
25. Mrs. Amelia Wright Hanford, wife of Rev. William Hanford, was an elder half-sister of Clarissa (Wright Genealogical Chart).
26. Rev. James Richards Wright, Clarissa's youngest brother, was born in Tallmadge, Ohio, April 14, 1814, and died in Santa Clara County, California, in 1898. He was a graduate of Oberlin College and a Congregational minister. He migrated to California in 1869. Wright's Station on the old South Pacific line from Los Gatos to Santa Cruz was named for him. In 1844, he was married to Sarah Holmes Vincent. Ten children were born to this union: Charles R., Elizur, Lucy, William H., James F., Albert T., Henry W., Sumner B., Frank V., and Clara A. He was a farmer and Presbyterian minister in California. His home, "Arbor Villa," was located on the ridge a thousand feet above Wright's Station. Guinn, *op. cit.*, pp. 1070-3.
27. This was Edwin Hall who had been an Ohio neighbor.
28. The route as described by Clarissa is shown in detail in the "Map to Illustrate [Hosea B.] Horn's Overland Guide to California and Oregon," published by J. H. Colton, New York, 1853: from Salt Lake City north 100 miles to the Bear River, then westerly over Brophy's Cut Off to the Humboldt River; down this river to a short distance above Humboldt Lake (or Sink), thence northwesterly along Lawson's (Lassen's) Cut Off to a point east of Grave (Goose) Lake near the Oregon boundary, thence southerly to enter the Sacramento Valley along Antelope Creek. See Swartzlow, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-12, for additional information about the "Lawson Cut Off." Also see Asa Merrill Fairfield's *History of Lassen County* (San Francisco, c1916), pp. 3-10 and map. For a day by day record of a trip over this trail in 1849, see Israel F. Hale, "Diary of a Trip to California . . .," *Quarterly, Soc. Calif. Pioneers*, II (1925), 114-30.
29. Sinking Marys River was an early name for the Humboldt.
30. The gold region was not so accurately defined in 1849 as it is at present. It was at about this time that gold was discovered in the vicinity of old Shasta, six miles west of Redding.
31. The water treatment, hydropathy, though of ancient origin, was popularized and extended by a Silesian farmer named Priessnitz during the years from 1820 to 1841. In this country it found many advocates during the gold rush.
32. A small community in Lorain County, Ohio, where her brother James was a minister. Guinn, *op. cit.*, p. 1073.
33. Eliza was the daughter of Mr. Burrell's first wife.
34. Joseph W. Briggs, born in New York in 1832, moved to Medina County, Ohio, when young, and came to California during the gold rush. With his brother he became one of the first extensive fruit growers near Marysville. Later, he located on the Trimble Road in Santa Clara County. He died Apr. 19, 1887. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 572.
35. The San Francisco mint was established in 1854.
36. This was Mrs. Edwin Hall.
37. Clarissa's elder half-brother, Philo Wright ("Wright Genealogical Chart").
38. Ann Robbins, the daughter of the Burrells' tenant.
39. Birney, age 10; Martha, 7; Clara, 5.
40. The tenant, Samuel (?) Robbins.
41. The heart, liver, and lungs of an animal.
42. The Burrells owned and operated a candle factory in Elyria.
43. Fretter was the tenant on the Burrell farm in Lorain County.
44. James Birney Burrell, probably named for the great abolitionist, James G. Birney, was born Aug. 4, 1840, in Elyria, Ohio. His diary of the trip around the Horn and of the early days in California is a most creditable document for a young boy. According to his records, his life on the Burrell ranch was a strenuous one. It is quite evident his father

placed many responsibilities on his shoulders. On June 18, 1871, he was married to Miss Mary L. Campbell, a native Californian. To this union were born three children: Frank L., now living in San Jose; William (deceased), and Clara, now Mrs. Rudolph Hirsch of New Jersey. Birney spent considerable time in Mexico, where he had at one time large real estate holdings. His later days were spent on his portion of the Burrell ranch. He was frugal, modest, and very industrious, and had considerable inventive talent. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 266; and Birney Burrell's diary.

45. The letter was written Christmas 1851. Apparently this family gave slight emphasis to many of the holidays.

46. Clarissa's younger sister, Mrs. Lucy Wright Lewis ("Wright Genealogical Chart").

47. Belle Prairie was located about eight miles north of Little Falls, Morrison County, Minn. (Johnson's *New Illustrated Family Atlas of the World* (New York, 1867).

48. Clarissa consistently used the comma for the apostrophe.

49. Probably anti-slavery meetings. Her brother, Elizur, who was then the editor of the *Commonwealth*, was under indictment for assisting Shadrack, a fugitive slave, to escape from the custody of a U. S. marshal.

50. Martha Burrell was born about 1843. Early photographs show her as a rather small, straight, clear-eyed, unsmiling girl in her teens. She never married, but made her home on the portion of the Burrell ranch which she owned. It was she who collected the letters and other material of her family and gave them to Judge Harry Norton.

51. Clara Burrell was born June 30, 1845, at Elyria, Ohio. On Nov. 15, 1864, she married Hiram C. Morrell, a native of Maine, who had come to California in 1854. He was engaged in lumbering, first in Placer County, then for a year around Humboldt Bay, and from 1859 to 1900 in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Morrells built their home in 1867, a short distance northwest of "Mountain Home." They had five children: Lizzie M., who married Judge Harry Norton; H. Clifford, Jr.; Jesse B.; Minnie C., who married — Thompson; and Albert E. (Guinn, *op. cit.*, pp. 1286-7).

52. The Chippewa Indian Reservation was located about 15 miles north of Belle Prairie. J. H. Colton, *General Atlas* (New York, 1859.)

53. In May 1852, Wright and List quarreled over editorial policies, and the latter, having more influence with the directors, had Wright dropped as editor. P. G. and E. Q. Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

54. Wright's outspoken championship of Louis Kossuth was one of the factors that caused the dismissal of the former. *Ibid.*, p. 202.

55. Burrell was renting a farm near Santa Clara from Cary Peebels.

56. At different times Clarissa considers the relative advantages of the four principal routes to California: the overland; via the isthmus of Panama; via Nicaragua; and around the Horn.

57. For a cattle drive to California in 1853, see "Diary of Dr. Thomas Flint," reprinted from *An. Pubs.*, Hist. Soc. Southern Calif., Los Angeles, 1923, pp. 12-72.

58. Clarissa's brother, James R. Wright, was the minister at Sheffield.

59. Oberlin College. Founded in 1833, it was coeducational and one of the first institutions of learning to admit colored students. It was one of the strongholds of anti-slavery sentiment.

60. His sister-in-law, Mrs. Edwin Hall.

61. It would appear that the Trust Company held a mortgage against the farm.

62. In a deficiency judgment, this might happen.

63. See note 66 below.

64. The Vanderbilt Independent Line. For details of the wreck of its steamship *Independence* off coast of Lower California on Feb. 16, 1853, see E. A. Wiltsee, *Gold Rush Steamers* (San Francisco, 1938), pp. 97-103.

65. Special community taxes, voted for the purpose of securing local improvements, still prove to become unpredictable burdens.

66. Elyria must have been full of this type of bargain-hunter: (1) get the very lowest offer on the basis of being a close friend or relative; (2) ask if a price a few hundred less would be accepted; (3) don't accept this new offer, but act as if you might at some future time—this will disarm the seller; (4) at a later date talk in a very pessimistic manner; (5) wait until the last moment, then buy the property at your own price and terms.

67. It appears that the Burrells owed her sister and husband an undisclosed amount, probably \$1500.

68. James F. Wright.

69. The Burrells had a small soap factory in connection with the candle works.

70. Innumerable cases of pulmonary sickness are mentioned in the papers of the pioneers.

71. Probably Sally (Owen) Wright, the wife of her half-brother, Philo Wright.

72. Elizur Wright, Clarissa's brother who lived in Boston. The paper was the *Commonwealth*, an anti-slavery journal.

73. See note 49 above. Wright was tried before the U. S. Circuit Court on June 4, 1852. The jury stood 10 or 11 for conviction. In his second trial, which began October 23, 1852, he was acquitted. P. G. and E. Q. Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-7.

74. Clarissa's sister-in-law, Mrs. James R. Wright.

75. Indicative of the family's love of mathematics are the problems which accompany many of their letters.

76. See note 67 above.

77. Re-statement of fallacy that if once given more ample means, the heretofore less amply supplied would, immediately thereupon, become benefactors and act differently from those they had made a practice of criticizing.

78. Clarissa and her family were at her brother's (Elizur Wright's) home in Boston.

79. See note 95 below.

80. "... a fine clipper vessel of 1650 tons, very sharp and supposed to be the fastest ship afloat." Amy Requa Russell, "Early Years of William F. Herrick," this *QUARTERLY*, XXVI (Sept. 1947), 227.

81. It sailed Oct. 16, 1852.

82. It is probable Burrell made his first trip into the Santa Cruz Mountains at this time.

83. Cary Peebels was born in Lexington, Kentucky, April 12, 1808. He lived in Missouri for many years; married Miss Teresa Cavanaugh in 1843, who died three years later. He started for California in 1849 with 43 wagons and 3 carriages loaded with merchandise for the mines. On reaching Salt Lake City he disposed of his interest in the train and started on horse-back, accompanied by a man and boy, for San Francisco. He carried with him \$4000 in gold coin from Brigham Young's mint. In San Francisco he found the other merchandise he had shipped around the Horn and which he took to Sacramento. The floods of that year destroyed his goods at a loss of \$4000. Later, he mined in Grass Valley and then came to Santa Clara County where he purchased 126 acres between Santa Clara and Alviso at \$7 per acre. In the spring of 1852, he engaged in the produce business in San Francisco, but sold out in 1855 and moved to his farm, which he had increased to 400 acres. He was one of the most energetic and progressive farmers of Santa Clara County in the 1850's and 1860's. J. P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Santa Clara Co.* (San Francisco, 1881), p. 671. The original Peebels' ranch was located in Sec. 27, T6S, R1W, M.D.M. Thompson and West, *New Historical Atlas of Santa Clara Co.* (San Francisco, 1876).

84. This was the day of departure, and Birney Burrell begins his diary. He writes:

"Saturday October 16th 1852 This morning was a scene of bustle and confusion.

About 8 o'clock my uncle took me out to a clothing Store and bought for me an overcoat which cost 4 dollars he also bought 3 cakes of shaving soap which was to shave pa when we got to California. We then went down to the wharf where we got on board a steamer which was to pilot us out of the harbor. In a short time my mother Sisters my aunt cousins and a few friends arrived in a coach my uncle and cousins tiny and Mary accompanied us to the ship The steamer piloted out of the harbor where we took leave of our friends We had a very good sail the remainder of the day the wind blew a nice breeze It was very cold on deck so I staid in the cabin most of the time. I was not seasick."

85. Indicative both of a brother's love and the articles which were thought to be appropriate gifts at that time.

86. Capt. William B. Graves was in command of the *Westward Ho*. See Russell, *op. cit.*, note 80, for estimate of Graves.

87. Birney Burrell in his diary goes into details: "Fri [Dec.] 3 [1852] Lat 45. Lon 57.23. Our direction is N.N.W. the captain has turned the ship around this morning he has drank a good deal of wine lately he called the steward into his room and after giving him a good scolding about talking with the passengers he told him to clear out. he then came out into the ladies cabin and spoke as follows ladies as you call yourselves I wish you would let alone talking with that rascaly steward if you can't get any one but a nigger to talk with I wish you to come to me and I will try to furnish you with Some one he went on to say that it was against all the rules of the ship &c. &c. In a little while although us children were unusually still he came out and made us a speech as follows. aint there any body to take care of these brats I can't have this noise nor I wont have it if any of you children aint got any mother come to me and I'll be a father to you All. for breakfast he ordered 5 or 6 plates full one after another sending them all back in their order except one At dinner he ordered 5 plates sent them all back and went without Once when he heard the Steward talking to Jonny he came to the cabin door and roared out "Steward look here less noise there I dont want to hear so much of your tongue going do you hear. I have got an Epipath which aplys to him which goes as follows

There was a man who died of late
For whom angles did impatient wait
On wings of love
To waft him to the realms above

But while disputing for their prize
Still hovering around there lower skies
In sliped the Devil with other knaves
And down to Hell he kicked old graves."

88. First Mate, G. W. Johnson; — Spear, second mate; — McKennon, third mate; — Annis, fourth mate or boatswain; G. A. Lans, steward. Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

89. Birney Burrell's diary reads as follows: "Jan 1 [1853] . . . this morning the air was filled with tropic birds most of them marlin spikes We are in a dead calm about noon 5 of the gentlemen passengers viz the 2 Mr Herricks Mr Lucas Mr Smith and Mr Fensinton got into the star-board boat lowered it and took a sail around the vessel it is needless to say that I wished to go Mr Herric who has been a sailor took the oar to steer with and Mr Lucas Smith and Fensinton pulled at the oars."

90. Birney lists the passengers in the after cabin thus: ". . . there are 4 families including ourselves. next door neighbor to us lives Mrs Turner her sister and her children Fredy and Charley. Next comes Mrs Hamlin and her children Amelia and Ralph. then comes Mrs Staples with her children Fanny Frank Ellen Susan and Alpheus. There are 10 gentleman passengers the names of those whom I know I will repeat viz Mr

Hiland Mr Dane who reside in the after cabin. Mr Atkinson Mr Smith the two Mr Hirrics (brothers [see note 80 above]) Mr Lucus Mr Luce Mr Whiteman, and Mr Fensinton."

91. Birney Burrell's diary for Jan. 31, 1853.

92. Daniel Webster died on Oct. 24, 1852.

93. This was Caius Tacitus Ryland, son-in-law of the first American governor, Peter H. Burnett. A Missourian, he was born June 30, 1826, the son of Judge John F. Ryland of that state. At different times he served as clerk of the Court of First Instance in San Francisco; private secretary of Governor Burnett; speaker of the state assembly; commissioner to locate the state university; and trustee of the San Jose State Normal School. In private life he was an attorney and banker. He left a large family, members of which are prominent citizens of present-day Santa Clara County. W. F. Swasey, *Early Days and Men of California* (Oakland, 1891), p. 282 and Dedication.

94. Probably Julia Upson Loomis, Clarissa's niece, born July 3, 1818.

95. Another clipper ship, under command of Capt. Edward Nickels, which made the trip from New York in 92 days and 4 hours and beat the *Westward Ho* on elapsed time. Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

96. Capt. Edward Nickels, the captain of the *Flying Fish*. *Idem*.

97. Spear, second mate.

98. Wm. F. Herrick, one of the passengers on the *Westward Ho*. See note 80 above.

99. It was almost three months after the election.

100. Perhaps F. A. Atkinson, member of the Vigilance Committee of 1851.

101. Indian Valley, an important section of Plumas County, including Taylorville, Greenville, etc. Fariss & Smith, *Illustrated History of Plumas, Lassen and Sierra Counties* (San Francisco, 1882), pp. 295-311.

102. Mrs. Staples, also a passenger, who with Mrs. Turner and Mrs. Hamlin, were the three ladies mentioned by Clarissa.

103. "Dock" (?)

104. The *C. M. Weber*, a side wheeler of 144 tons, was built in 1851 and named for an early merchant of San Jose who later became the founder of Stockton. Jerry MacMullen, *Paddle Wheel Days* (Stanford University Press, 1944), p. 135.

105. "From 1850 to 1861, Alviso enjoyed its greatest period of development. In 1865, the railroads began to divert trade." M. B. Hoover, *Historic Spots in California. Counties of the Coast Range* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1937), p. 465.

106. Birney was walking across the Rancho Rincón de los Esteros. In 1876, J. Guererro and R. Alviso lived along the route he traveled. (Thompson & West's historical atlas, as in note 83 above.)

107. Birney was now on the Ulistac Rancho granted originally to three Christianized Indians. Title was confirmed to Jacob D. Hoppe in 1857. In anticipation of favorable action, however, much of it had been sold by 1853. A part belonged to James Lick, at least 120 acres to Cary Peebels, and more went to E. Burrell and Wm. Hannibal shortly thereafter. (From records in possession of William B. Weston of San Jose.)

108. This was J. T. Clarke, the second husband of Mary Graves of the Donner party. McGlashan, *op. cit.*, p. 239. Mr. Weston (see note 107 above) identifies the Peebels' homesite as westerly from the present town of Agnew. It is probable that the Burrell potato patch was located on ground now occupied by the Agnew State Hospital.

109. The San Jon or Campbell Creek was a half mile west, and the Guadalupe River a mile east, of the Clarke home. (Thompson & West, as above.)

110. J. Quinn Thornton, *Oregon and California in 1848* (New York, 1849), pp. 95-246. This reference is interesting as showing what the pioneers read.

111. This may have been \$5. The entry in Birney's diary is almost illegible.

112. Probably his cousin, Howard Burrell, who lived in Ohio.
113. This was undoubtedly Clarissa's letter of Feb. 12, 1853.
114. The postmaster at Santa Clara on Aug. 1, 1853, was F. Cooper. (M. H. B. Boggs, *My Playhouse was a Concord Coach* (Oakland, 1942), p. 172.
115. For the description of another strawberry picnic see W. H. Davis, *Seventy-five Years in California* (San Francisco, 1929), pp. 187-88.
116. Alexander Combs Erkson, a pioneer of 1849, owned land adjoining James Lick on the north, which was less than a mile from the Clarke place. However, Mrs. Erkson's maiden name was Caroline Millard. Mrs. Welland may have been married twice. Munro-Fraser, as in note 83 above, pp. 709-11.
117. This was Robert F. Clarke, born in 1852, who later made his home in White River, Tulare County, Calif. McGlashan, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
118. This may have been the wife of Mr. Saunders who kept the Frémont House at Mountain View. The hotel was built by Palmer, Cook & Co. Mary J. Gates, *Rancho Pastoria de las Borregas* (San Jose, 1895), p. 19.
119. The place was old Mountain View. Richard Karr built a store there in the spring of 1852. It was managed by Jacob Shumway who named the place Mountain View. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
120. The party had reached San Antonio Creek which flows in a northerly direction from Los Altos, crossing El Camino Real a few miles west of Mountain View. Probably lunch was eaten near the site of present Alta Mesa Cemetery.
121. The route would seem to be along what is now called Arastradero Road.
122. This must have been in the Woodside-Searsville Lake-Portola area. The little valley bears the name, Cañada del Corte de Madera. It had one thing in common with Mountain Home—it was on or near the San Andreas fault line, with its numerous lagoons and pasture land.
123. At some place on the present Skyline Boulevard.
124. These were sea lions (*Zalophus Californianus*). There is still a rookery of sea lions on the island at Point Ano Nuevo. See Albert S. Evans, *A la California* (San Francisco, 1873), pp. 72-75.
125. It is difficult to determine the exact trip from Birney's description. After going over much of the area and talking with many pioneers and local historians, one is led to believe that the following route approximates the Burrells' journey: they camped the first night at the southerly end of the valley; ascended the mountain near the route of the present Alpine Road; then, from the summit, they continued on down to the ocean, following the hogback north of Pescadero Creek. The strawberry patch was and is along the coast somewhat south of the mouth of Pescadero Creek. Eliza W. Farnham, *California, Indoors and Out* (New York, 1856), pp. 213-47, gives an interesting account of a picnic trip from Santa Cruz to this same strawberry patch during the spring of 1853 or the previous year. The return trip of the Burrells may have been somewhat further north, along the ridge which parallels San Gregorio Creek and reaches the summit near where the old Portola road leads down to Searsville. This would be the night's camping place on the return trip. Assistance in the location of the route was received from Theodore J. Hoover, James Humphry, and Eric M. Alsford. Since the party had a wagon, the trip would be, of necessity, along the ridges or hogbacks, which were then chiefly free of underbrush due to the custom of annual burning. The canyons, along which most of the present roads run, were then impassable jungles. J. D. Whitney's Map of the Bay of San Francisco, 1867, shows many of these pioneer trails.
126. See Note 119.
127. This was Mountain Home, at the summit of the Santa Cruz Mountains, a few miles southeast of the Los Gatos-Santa Cruz highway.

128. The Charles McKiernan (Mountain Charley) house.

129. "Recollections . . .," as in note 12 above.

130. Six years later he discovered that his claim was a part of the Soquel Augmentation Rancho. For \$1000 cash and a note for \$500 he bought a $\frac{1}{27}$ part of the rancho which proved to be some 3500 acres. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 263; and "Recollections . . .," as above.

131. This may have been the home of Sebastian Peralta, one of the grantees of the Rancho Rinconada de los Gatos, whose adobe house formerly stood one hundred yards from Roberts Road near the bridge across Los Gatos Creek. Hoover, *op. cit.*, p. 474.

132. Rough and unimproved as this early road appeared to Lyman Burrell, it was, nevertheless, an ancient trail, made first by the wild game in its passage from the Santa Clara Valley to the mountain fastnesses near Umunhum and Loma Prieta; then the Olhones used it in their trips from the valley to the coast; and, later still, it was adopted and renamed the Franciscan Trail by the padres in their journeys between the missions Santa Cruz and Santa Clara.

Although Burrell does not mention it, a settlement had been started in or near Lexington a few years earlier, and Zachariah (Buffalo) Jones had built one of the earliest saw-mills of the section. It was but natural that Jones should use this old trail to haul his lumber and fence posts to the market at San Jose and on to the embarcadero at Alviso for shipment to San Francisco.

Along this old trail, now rutted and deep with dust, the Burrells traveled on their way to Mountain Home. Up and over the grounds upon which Sacred Heart College now stands it led, and came down to Los Gatos Creek a short distance north of old Lexington. From Lexington it worked its way up the Los Gatos, until eventually it reached the ridge which led down to Santa Cruz. The Burrells did not follow it beyond Lexington. Months of hard work would have been required to get the wagons over this part of the route. Instead, they took a rough logging road which extended up the western hills to where the Evans family later lived. The camp for the second night was near present-day Idylwild. Next day they followed the hogback to the summit and then continued southeasterly, approximately along the present route of the summit road. The third night's stopping-place was in the vicinity of Charles McKiernan's first dwelling. (See note 128 above.) Later, he built a house on the shore of Laguna Sarjenta, less than a mile south of his original homesite. This is the lagoon which was found, subsequently, to mark not only the northeast corner of the great Soquel Augmentation Rancho but the same corner of the Burrells' own, later, ranch as well. McKiernan's second house burned many years ago; its foundation is perpetuated in the present structure. Over a large part of the yard a wisteria vine has run wild and has choked a number of walnut trees within its reach. It might be remarked here that one of the toll gates of the Santa Cruz turnpike, built along the old Franciscan trail, was located at McKiernan's; oak trees on both sides of the road show the scars.

On the fourth day, the Burrell party turned off toward the east and followed the ridge along which the present Mountain Charley road is built. They crossed the route of Highway 17 and continued on down the summit ridge to another lagoon where the Soquel road now branches off the old Santa Cruz highway. From here they broke their way for some three or four miles in a southeasterly direction, until they reached, at last, their Mountain Home.

Nevertheless, Burrell gives the credit for bringing the *first* wagon over the Santa Cruz Mountains to a woman, Mrs. Eliza W. Farnham. ("Recollections . . .," as above.)

133. Solon, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

134. Sheffield, Ohio, the home of Clarissa's brother, Rev. James R. Wright.

135. Belle Prairie, Morrison County, Minn., where Clarissa's sister, Lucy, and her husband made their home.

136. It is interesting to compare the letter written by the Rev. Mr. Hanford with that of his sister-in-law, Clarissa; his is typical of the times.
137. Harriet Wright, Clarissa's elder sister, and her husband, the Rev. John Seward, who lived at Hudson, Ohio.
138. Polly Wright, Clarissa's eldest half-sister, and her husband, Dr. Daniel Upson.
139. This was Francis H. Wright, born Apr. 16, 1795. He married, first, on Sept. 18, 1823, Clarinda Fenn, who died Oct. 10, 1827, leaving a daughter, Eliza A. Wright, born Aug. 25, 1826; his second marriage was on May 21, 1829, to Eliza Fenn, who became the mother of Clarinda, born Apr. 15, 1830, and Harriet, born July 23, 1832. ("Wright Genealogical Chart.")
140. Probably the academy at Tallmadge which was organized by Clarissa's father.
141. The present Soquel highway crosses the lagoon near where the original Mountain Home was located. The balance of the pond has been filled as a part of the curing ground of a pipe factory.
142. The trail followed the Los Gatos canyon from Forbes' Mill to within a short distance of the place where Wrights Station was later located, then climbed up the west side of the canyon to Mountain Home.
143. At the mill of James Alexander Forbes, now Los Gatos.
144. Both Birney and Mr. Burrell recite this incident, but add little to Clarissa's account.
145. Mr. Burrell describes the preparation of the lumber: "... We camped out-of-doors, in company with another man who was building a house, about a mile from our location. We commenced by cutting down redwood trees, cutting them into proper lengths, and splitting them into bolts. We then hitched these bolts to the horse, and dragged them up to the spot where our house was to stand—which was near the place where Mr. Sear's house now stands. Here we split them into boards, and built the house. Even the window casings and sashes were made of split lumber. As soon as the outside and the roof were on, we slept in the house, without doors or windows." ("Recollections...")
146. Usually called shakes.
147. This was where the town of Los Gatos is now built. The road came down the mountain side (Jones Hill), about a half mile east of Los Gatos Creek, through the grounds of Sacred Heart College.
148. Probably above where the old town of Lexington was located.
149. We have two other accounts of this bear fight. Of the actual encounter, Mr. Burrell writes in his "Recollections...": "... Seeing that a collision was inevitable, and that she would be upon me before I could get over the fence, or out of her way in the brush, I turned back and ran as fast as possible in the trail, with the bear and cub behind me. I soon came to a short turn in the trail, where I stumbled and fell flat on the ground, a little outside of the trail."
- Birney relates the incident in a letter (without date but inserted in his diary) to the *Youths Cabinet*, a publication which began in Boston and New York in 1837 and ran, under varying fortune and name (*Woodworths Youths Cabinet*, *Merrys Museum* and *Parleys Magazine*, etc.), until 1851. (Library of Congress card.) As Birney describes the scene: "... What was to be done I knew the ferocious nature of the beast which was rendered doubly dangerous by their having young ones to protect. Pa had no chance to escape they would be on to him in an instant ah there they were. He raised his ax to strike at her as she advanced with her mouth wide open but before he could strike he was thrown down."
150. See note 94.
151. Clarissa's elder half-brother, Francis H. Wright, as in note 139 above.
152. This was the College of the Pacific, founded as the California Wesleyan Univer-

sity. It is the oldest incorporated educational institution in California, receiving its charter July 10, 1851. Its founder, the Rev. Isaac Owen, was affectionately known as "Father" Owen. Hoover, *op. cit.*, p. 525.

153. The Santa Clara Female Seminary was established about 1851. The Baptist Association of Churches in its report for 1853 mentions that "during the year a flourishing school has been in progress at Santa Clara under the able management of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton." *Ibid.*, p. 523.

154. "In that frontier town and early capital of California—Benicia—The Young Ladies' Seminary, forerunner of Mills College, came into being in 1852. . . . January, 1854, saw the management transferred to an Ohio school ma'am, Miss Mary Atkins, a graduate of Oberlin. . . ." Statement issued by department of public relations, Mills College.

155. Letter written from the home of Mrs. Zenus Sykes in the Santa Clara Valley.

156. The Vigilance Committee of 1856.

157. James King of William. See Dorothy H. Huggins, *Continuation of the Annals of San Francisco*, Calif. Hist. Soc. Sp. Pub. 15, 1939, for many incidents concerning King, Casey, and Cora for the years 1854-5.

158. King was the editor of the San Francisco *Evening Bulletin*.

159. J. Neely Johnson was elected governor of California, Sept. 5, 1855.

160. The San Francisco *Herald*. John Nugent, editor, tried to follow a "middle of the road" policy during the Vigilante rule of 1856. As a result, advertising was withdrawn and the paper was forced to suspend publication. John Bruce, *Gaudy Century* (New York, 1948), p. 59.

161. This was Sara Jane (Clarke) Lippincott, 1823-1904, a very popular writer of children's stories.

162. In 1864, after Clarissa's and Dr. Lewis' deaths, Lucy did come to California to be the third wife of Lyman J. Burrell. She lived at Mountain Home until her death in January 1875. Foote, *op. cit.*, p. 264

163. See note 160 above.

164. Probably Philip T. Herbert, Democratic anti-electionist congressman from California. Huggins, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

165. John C. Frémont may not have measured up to expectations, but to some he was the symbol of a new hope in American life.

166. Undoubtedly, Mrs. Alexander C. Erkson, who lived with her husband on the east side of the Alviso-Santa Clara road, about one mile north of its intersection with the Montague road. Her maiden name was Caroline Millard. Probably her mother had been remarried.

167. Mountain Home was about half way between San Jose and Santa Cruz, with a better road during the early years to the latter place.

168. This was Clarissa's last letter.

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