Wed. Forwarded Mar. April 15 Paid 1

Mrs. Lydia A. Morse,
San Diego,
Cal.

W. Amesbury. Sept 12. /57

Sarah

My Dear Sister Lydia.

Joseph wrote you the last mail and I will take it upon me to see that you have a letter, or rather to see one written for you, for according to your statement, you do not receive all our letters. I cannot think, what the reason can be, why the letters we write, do not reach you as soon as yours do us, we receive one from you every mail with scarcely an exception, My school has closed, and I am at home suffering with a severe cold and cough it seems rather strange to me to have a cough for I have not had one for 2 or 3 years it is time for parties to the beach I am trying my best to cure it so that I can go in a few days. Laura has gone to Hampton Falls to attend school, I received a letter from her last week, and she likes very well, her roommate is a Miss Knight, a daughter of Mr Knight, who used to preach at the Rocks, Probably you remember him, if you do not, I can assure you I do, for dont you remember, he called at our house one day, and we ran for the barn, and would not see him, how foolish it was in us to

act so, but to return to Laura, First I will relate a spicy affair, in which Francis Heath was the principal actor. Laura received a letter from the gentleman just mentioned containing a declaration of love, he had repeatedly sought an occasion to disclose to her verbally his wishes, but his plans had been frustrated, he was quite pathetic upon the subject, he hoped she would not be indifferent to his appeal, but would graciously ease his soul of that anxiety, which was weighing it to the earth, I saw him pass the house a few days since, he walked as straight as ever, and I reckon his soul has regained its usual height, I advised her to write a favorable answer (over the left) but she would not listen to me, he has been anticipating all summer, the pleasure of carrying Laura to the beach, but "poor fellow" he is obliged to meet with a disappointment, so much for Laura's love affairs, I have not had the pleasure of informing you of the increase of the population for a great while, but am now able to gratify you in that respect, Ann Lizzy Reed, has got a little girl, and also Hezekiah's wife, and Marcia Hoyt Adam and to <u>crown all</u> old Charlie Carter's wife has also, Angeline was down to our house, when it was only a few days old, and never lisped a word of it, they say she is as mad as she can be, I would advise her to become reconciled to such a <u>catastrophe</u> as soon as possible, as it can't be helped. We all send our love to you, and <u>brother</u>.

I must now close for my cough is very troublesome,

From your sister Sarah

West Amesbury Mass Feb 16 / Paid 6

Mrs. Lydia A. Morse,
San Diego,
Cal.

W. Amesbury, Oct 15. 1863.

Dear Sister.

According to request I will write you a few lines, although it is so lately since you left us, that I fear I shall not be able to write much that is interesting and new, You wish to hear particularly about Mother's cough, I am happy to be able to say it is much better, and will probably soon be entirely well, I hope you are in perfectly good spirits, and will soon be gratified by meeting with your dear husband in San Diego, Joseph says you must keep a stiff upper lip, Father says he misses you very much, but does not feel so ~~bad~~ unreconciled as he did at first, and Mother also is as pert as a pigeon, we all miss you very much, you filled quite a place in our hearts, as well as in the house, I went to Haverhill Thursday, and was very fortunate in finding Dr. Howard, at home, as he never has stayed longer than a week, and he was going to leave that evening to return to Boston, he is a nice dentist, I should rather pay him double price, than not have my teeth filled by him, Laura has changed her boarding place, but she says she got in to the wrong ~~hut~~ hut, she is not suited yet and is going to

by again, You must write and give us a description of New York, and all that you have seen. The next time I write I hope I shall have more to write. we all send our love to you, and to E when you see him,

Yours forever,

Sarah.

Dear Lydia, While you are exposed to many allurring temptations ~~as you have provided your~~ I hope you will endeavor to shun them, as you have provided yourself with good books you will proffit by them, and store your mind with useful knowledge Is the sincere desire of your Beloved Mother

L Gray

PS Write every opportunity & fail not I persume their was quite a party to Mrs Sawyers Thursday P M ~~P and Mother~~ old and young Mrs Morse and Maria P and Mother

Mrs. Lydia A. Morse.

we all send love to all
do not let this be seen it is full of mistakes
bad writing W. Amesbury, April 2. Sunday Morn.

My dear Sister.

I received your letter Mailed March 1. in due time, did not have to wait so long as usual to hear from you. I am glad that you are so well contented in your new home, for it is very desagreable to be discontented,

Mother is afraid that you will become so attached to California, you will always wish to live there, and not care ever to come home to reside permanently, You must not let your affections be so set on a wilderness, to prevent your prefering a civilized country,

Maria is at the Mills, visiting at her friends Jone's, she wished me to carry her down, but father would not consent, he was fearful that the horse would become frightened at the old tannery, you know that he is apt to be a little wild at that place, Maria teased him until he said. if I dared to go, I might, the opportunity was not to be lost, so of course, I went,

We miss you very much, in dess making and driving the horse for us, for Father will not trust us 4 inches, from his eyes scarcely.
On our way to the Mills, we called at Jonathan Morrill's, who lives in Daniel Morrills house, formerly owned by Daniel Weed, saw all the little children, 4 in number, Willie is a little beauty, he resembles Sarah Maney, only a great deal handsomer, the youngest is a little girl, they have lived there a number of weeks, but Clara said they had not seen little Flo, Mrs Morrill said, she heard they were going to move, but did not know for certain,

every body pitys Daniel for losing his property, but Phoeny, they says, is all to blame, and that Daniel got cheated, when he married her with her thousand dollars, for now he has lost as much as that if not more, but to return to our ride, when we arrived at the tanners, I really thought the horse would be frightened, as there were, I should judge, nearly 100 hides hanging on the fences, and buildings, it did look comical enough, but he took no notice of them, I shall expect to be trusted oftener in future, and I think, there is no danger, for our Good Snip is getting old, and lazy.

A number of ladies from the Mills are going to Cala, Mrs. Williams cousin, Matilda Osgood, is going out, as a governess, with a family at the Mills, to reside in San Francisco, Mrs. W. would like to go out west, but she says, her old man wont hear a word of it, she says, the height of his ambition is to die in old Amesbury, Walter and his wife, board at Rhoda Merrills.

One day I was washing in the back room, a gentleman called, and when I heard him speak, I thought, that must be E. W. M. I took a peep through the door, and who should I see, but Ephraim, or, somebody that looked, and talked, very much like him, he proved to be a gentleman, travelling around, to solicit subscribers for a poetical Geography, the history of Geography written in poetry, he stayed, and talked, some time, and I could think of nobody but Ephraim, I dont believe, you ever saw a person that so nearly resembled him, in your life.

I understand, your friend Elijo A Guild,

was married, soon after you left for California,
to, I dont know who, but I expect it was a man,
what do you think of that? just as though
she was in earnest, talking of going to Colla
with you, Thomas Colby. (Laura Tom) is
April 9. married, poor fellow, he has got somebody to bind
up his bleeding heart, Maria Hoyt has returned
from school, and what is better she has got a
beau, she found him at Hampton school, his
native place is New Market, he is here now, he
came on Friday to spend the Sabbath, it is raining
to day and I am afraid they will be deprived of going to church,
Maria took him out to show him yesterday, I suppose
they walked to the river, I will tell you how
he looked, like F. Cogswell, and Haze Haze
his hair is drab, and bushy, his nose is long,
and ~~[illegible]~~ violently red, altogether, he is
the very image of Haze Haze, isnt this quite
a caricature, you must excuse it, for I really
want you to know how he looks, and another thing
you wished me to write every little circumstance,
and you must accept, whatever I write, whether
it suits your fastidious taste or not,
Joseph and Laura were at home on Fast Day,
Laura has had her likeness taken, by the
same one who took yours, it is perfect, by the way
Mr Gould called in on Fast day, and looked at
your miniature some time, he said it looked
so natural, and seemed just as though you was
going to smile, if he was a widower, I should certainly
think he had serious designs, I heard it said
the other day, that Charle A would have given
all he was worth, (and I should not value that much)
to have married you, after his first wife died,
they didnt think he offered himself, because he
thought it would not do any good, I should hope not,
A number of times when I have been from home,
Charles has asked me to go home with him, I have
got so sick of it, that the last time I told him I
didnt think it would pay. Truth! Truth!
as Mr Tommy says, so i think. Sarah

I went to church to day at Newton and Mr Cook
who is preaching there informed me that Eliza A Guild
married a Guild, brother to her first Husband
so that she is still a Guild I am not sure that I spell it
right the singing is pretty good at Newton the Bittle
Tucker's set in the seats James is talking of going
out West to teach Elisebeth Tucker died of
Consumpton in N York she was a sister to the twins
you remember her remains were brought home to be
buried beside her father and Mother

Carlton Martin has moved to Groveland
George Hoyt has taken possession of his New House
Ruth Nichols health is not good every one thinks
excepting herself that she will not live long
she grows very poor and looks very pale
and is very much pressed for breath but she
is just as lively as ever

S

Newton N. H. June 28. 1854.

My dear Sister.

As it is a long time since I wrote you, I will endeavor to improve this opportunity to the best of my ability. You must excuse me for not writing you oftener, on account of my time being so occupied in teaching, and enjoying myself, although I should certainly have made an extra effort, and write you, were I not sure of some one of our family writing you every mail, and of course it makes no difference to you from whom you receive letters, if you are only so fortunate as to get them often. I can assure you, I never before enjoyed myself so nicely keeping school. My health is prime. I board at Mr Harrison Gale's, the prudential committee, and it is quite a walk, but I walk it 4 times a day, usually to and from school, and sometimes oftener including walks for pleasure, and enjoy myself finely, there is scarcely an evening, that I am not out somewhere, either visiting, walking, riding or attending prayer meetings, and what could I be doing better than the last, surely nothing. I never knew what it was to enjoy such good health, when I was teaching, and I think it essential to the prosperity of the school, I am sure I feel very thankfull for it. I wish I could see you

and have one good talk, it would be delicious,
I hope you have begun to think about coming home,
I have begun to be impatient to see you, I trust you
and your worser half will prosper in all your undertakings,
so that you can return to old Amesbury in due time.
I do not know but I shall go out west, I am expecting
an offer every day, and if I do I shall want you to
come home first. How do you think that will do?
I will say in the first place that I ~~to~~ shall not think
of going out to teach). I have had 41 schollars, this term,
(you see I have got on the old subject again) and am
very much disappointed (agreably) in the school, it is
not near so hard to keep as I expected, I have been
teaching 9 weeks and have not heard one word of complaint,
dont you think it stranger than fiction, and they all
say I am the first teacher that was not found fault
with before this time, by the way I must tell you a
pretty little story. I heard about Mr Sanx, it seems
he made application for the school for Laura, after I
had engaged it, Mr Gale told him he had had some
talk with me and expected I should keep it, but
Mr Sam did not like to give it up so easily, he said
that I was a good girl and had good learning, (I thought
it was strange he should say as much as that) but I
was either too strict or not strict enough, he would
not say which, Mr Gale thought either was a bad failing,
but as I had engaged the school I should keep it, if I
could, he said he never told any one of it, and so it
has not injured me any, but is not that real human
nature, certainly it is Mr Sams, he has never forgiven
me for treating his dear Eunice so awfully, I think it
is strange that Fred Nichols schould fancy her he is such
a beauty you know, you never saw a peson allie so in your
life, her face is not much thicker than the blade of a knife,
(over the left) she is all fell away I have heard a number
of persons say, that she did not look so happy as when Mr
Jones was paying his addresses to her, well I dont wonder
at it do you, it was a great sacrifice doubtless,

I am goiney home to day, to stay a week, and
have a little rest, although I do not feel the need of it,
but the schollars thought it would be best, I expected Laura
to come after me but Father called this morning on his way
to Rochester, and told me I must get home as I could,
therefore I shall walk, John has gone with him, his health
is very poor, and he thought it would do him good, I think
it is a good plan for he will not have a chance to go
to Newburyport, they are goiney to have a great celebration on
the 4th, I shall not go to Newburyport for the reason that
I am otherwise engaged.

July 7th Independence has passed, and I will finish my letter;
it has been excessively warm this week, especially on the 4th
the heat was so intense that there was no comfort to be taken,
scarcly, quite a number of ladies fainted at N. P.
and fell down in the street, and under the fences and

no notice taken of them, they were so intent upon seeing the elephant, they would leave the poor creatures to recover as they best could. I went to see the fireworks in the evening, I had heard so much said about the beautiful fireworks, that I was really disappointed in them, they were not so good as the fireworks 2 years ago, it was beautiful riding, so pleasant, and such a nice moon, I do admire riding by moonlight.

Father and John returned from their journey on Wednesday. Our friends are all well as usual. Martha has 8 children, her last is a little girl, quite a fortunate circumstance, dont you think. your Mother Morse and Sister Neal met with quite an accident a short time since, they were on their way to pay a visit to Mrs Hannah Dawes and collect to take Julia Hoyt's Mother with them as Mr Davis was turning the horse, he began to back down the bank, threw them all out, and the horse and carriage rolled over 3 times before it reached the water side, they were all injured some, but I believe have recovered with the exception of Mrs Hoyt, the last I heard it was not thought she could live, she is in great distress and suffers continually, it is supposed she has received some internal injury, accidents will happen in the best of families they be in ours

Mr Thomas Carter is married, and who do think to, why no less a personage, than Harrison Nichols young widow, he is only 80 years older than she is, it is all the fashion for old superannuated widowers, to spruce up and get a young wife, and the fun of it is, they never get refused, and to prove it I will give you another example, Miss Laura Atkinson is engaged to marry John Whittier, about as much difference in their ages, as the other, is it not strange that Beauty should throw herself away, but then he is wealthy, and they expect to be married this month, and are going to take a tour to Saratoga, afterwards they will board in Boston, Oh such exquisite felicity, such inexpressible Happiness. O I cannot write any more, I give up.

love to E.

and remain the same Sarah.

Sarah

West Amesbury Oct 14th /54

Sister Lydia:

You see I date this letter from the humdrum town of W. Amesbury and of course you cannot expect to be very much interested in any thing I can write of the transactions here, in this still county place. I presume you know I do not like West Amesbury any too well. O! I should like to take wings and fly to some more congenial clime. Should not you like a servant-girl? I think I had better come to California and get rich dont you? I do not know but I shall at any rate if you do not give us a favorable report of soon coming home. I think you will like your native town as well as ever. I do not wish you to think it has grown less pleasant because I have become discontented. but to change the subject. I will try to collect a few items for your benefit if I possibly can. let me see. time is passing rapidly away, and you are growing older every day, while at the same time you are probably not aware of the changes you meet with. You are now a great Aunt I suppose, as Ephraim is a great uncle. perhaps you have heard and perhaps not. that Miss Annette has assumed the title of mother. can you realize that she has settled down so young ~~to become~~ a staid matron. dont you pity her? I do think she is really an

object of pity, how foolish girls are to give up their liberty so young, and become slaves for life, when they might enjoy a life of single blessedness longer. I think have their experience in a married life sufficiently long. Laura has a situation in a store at Danvers. I have just received a letter from her which informs me she is very well contented, but is fearfull she will come home a perfect old maid, as she is a little tinctured now, owing to the circumstance that the other girls in the store are members of that class. Laura closed her school in Phippsburg in triumph. I never witnessed so good an examination in my life. The teachers in the town have made a practice of visiting each others schools at the close, & some of them pronounced Danvers examination to be the best of all. You never saw George Nichols looke so pleased before, he fairly grinned all the afternoon.

Oct 12. I have been very busy all this week, so that I could not find time to finish this letter, & now I am so tired and hurried that I fear you cannot read this miserable writing. Mother is sick, and I have all the work to do with Olivia's help. She has been failing for a fortnight and does not seem to get any better, she says she is growing old and feels her infirmities. I do not know what ails her without it is old age. she look very pale and grows poor. But I hope she will recover her health again and soon. I watched with Mrs Wm Hoyt last Thursday night and if ever I saw a pitiable object she is one, she cannot live long, she has the ~~[illegible]~~ dropsy, she is swelled from her toes to her neck as hard as a rock, and of course she is in continual misery. Last Sunday Mr Sindall told me to tell you he was eating an apple as usual, and I wished you were there to help him eat, and he says it is high time for you to come home and if you will set up your Ebenezer you will ~~come~~ be at home next spring and Ephraim with you. Mother says it is no use for you to stay there any longer deprived of so many privileges and she wishes to see you very much, you had better be content with a little money, perhaps it is not for you to be rich, and she thinks you have had sufficient experience to come home among your friends & try to take comfort. We have got quite a good lot of those beautiful winter pears & Father says if you will let him know at what time you will be at home he will save some of them all ready for you. Charles Nichols is married to Delia Cochran, she is 34 years old & looks very much like Mrs Poole, she says she has had a number of good offers, but has never found one she liked so well as Charles. Both — Our singers are having another tantrum, have all left the seats and singing is minus until they conclude to start again. Reed and Rhoda become dissatisfied with Levi's playing, also they wished to have a select choir and be the choosers. They will not sing without. Levi is a member of the church and the committee declared he should not be treated so and he should play his time out. I do not know how it will end, but I think Levi will be obliged to give up to another player if they can find one. I am ashamed of this writing. I would write it over if I were not afraid you would be obliged to go without a letter. I hope I shall have more time to write when Mother health

improves. our familie is large. Amos is here & he is an enormous eater, and with the rest keeps us cooking about all the time. I cannot think of any thing else to write, and will close by wishing you

Good Bye,

Sarah

West. Amesbury, Mass. Nov. 15th Paid
6¢

Mrs. Lydia A. Morse.

San Diego.

California.

Sunday Eve Nov 12. 1854.

My Dear Sister Lydia.

We have had a few days of extremely pleasant weather, the last of October was almost equal to July weather, very hot and oppressive, but now we have a change and it is reviving, although it is rather too cold for comfort, every one almost looks dreadfully blue and pinched up, I attended church to day, at the usual place, I was in somewhat of a quandary to know whether I should go or not, as I knew there would be no fire, and it is exceedingly cold today, I presume that as the change is so sudden from such pleasant warm weather we feel it more than we otherwise should, The furnace has been lighted, and Mr William Burtett has offered to put in another, warranted to warm the house well in the coldest weather for $40.00 and if it is a failure he will remove it, they have decided to try it, for, as John

Sanborn says, Squire Morse, Gray, and Fullington are so nice, they will not consent to have those old black stoves stuck in them,

Well, to be sure it will be better if it does work well, because it will be so much neater and cleaner, The church was very cold today, it seemed just like going into a prison, to go from the bright sun into so cold and dreary looking a place,

We shall know how to appreciate it, if we are so fortunate as to have a warm church this winter,

Dave Williams, the organist refused to play, unless he could have pay, he asked $50. for a few weeks we had no singing, but at length they concluded to give him 50 cts a day, that would be 26 dollars a year,

You mentioned in your last, that you should like for us to give you a description of the changes, we make in our apparel,

Times are hard, and we do not find it convenient to make many changes; however you shall be welcome to know all I can think of, I will tell you what new clothes, I had while I was teaching at Newton last summer, leaving the other girls to give you all required information in regard to their own affairs, I had a black silk, white muslin, brown gingham, and dark calico dresses, a green crape bonnet, and it was called the prettiest one out, This fall I have had my straw sewed over, whitened, and pressed,

I trimmed it myself, with that beautiful cherry ribbon, we had alike so many years ago, and would you believe it, it looks so well, that I think I shall wear it all winter,

I have bought me a Lyonese dress, a sort of a chestnut color, and have altered my delaine dress that you cut for me on purpose to attend the union at Hounsly, buttoned it up on front, by the way, I make all my dress so, they look a great deal better, and I intend to make over that green Thibet if I can pattern it,

Mother has had her green velvet bonnet altered in style, and she also bought a delaine dress the first of the fall, I have had my likeness taken by Mr Doe, the same one who took yours after, so much talking, I was determined to wait until I was the possessor of a suitable one, and am happy to be able to say, that I have arrived at the desired ultimatum, I should like to send it to you if it was practicable, that you might see it, every one says it is perfect,

Mary Ann is up from Lynn, at present she is at Uncle Hosts, we are expecting her here soon, and I wish you were here to help entertain her,

George Hall wished me to say that he sent his best respects to you. Timothy Sargent of Newton has lost his wife, and his daughter Abba also. Moses has been sick, and George Powell's wife has been sick a great while; she was not expected to live for a long time, but is rather better, her Mother and sister has been dead some time, a number of weeks, and she does not know of it yet. I think they have done very wrong to deceive her so. They have all had the same fever. The typhoid. Dock Ben was employed at first, and he managed to keep them along some time, until at last, they became so low, that they could not be raised. Mrs I, and Abby died, which I expect, frightened him so, that he advised them to send for Dr Bassett, and wished him to take them off his hands, he was unwilling to as they were run down so low, but he would assist Dr Ben, and it was not many days before there was an alteration for the better. now Enoch Nichols has lost all his children but one, and that is Mrs Morill. Fanny Rand died also this fall of Consumption. I must close for I cannot think of any more to write, by sending our love and good wishes.

From Your Affectionate Sister.

Sarah C. Eng.

West. Amesbury Mass Nov. 16 } Paid - 6

Mrs. E. W. Morse,

San Diego.

California

and Thomas, kiss Mrs Poole little babe for me as soon as it gets to be kissible, do not hurry.

between Myra and Mr Eastman has been dissolved. A lady in Easton, to whom he tried to pay his addresses previous to his acquaintance with Myra, has changed her mind, and is now desirous and willing to receive him, and I presume he is willing also, it must be quite a disappointment to Myra, after holding so long a correspondence with him, and I suppose her primary object in passing through a graduating course of study, was to qualify herself to become the wife of the Hon Mr Eastman.

Your Sister

Sarah.

My Dear Sister.

I received your letter ~~dated~~ Mailed Sept 16, in due time, informing me of some particular circumstances, of which I have been thinking a great deal, and wondering who would be the most fortunate in that respect, How disappointed Uncle Hoyt, and a host of others will be, if you do not have a twist of Babies to bring home with you, disappointed in their expectations I mean, not of course to regret, that you are saved so much useless care, and trouble.

I should think Mrs Poole, and Whaley would wish and wish. I dont know what

you should care to have and the rest especially to Sherman

but perhaps they are like good Jemima Carpenter, that was, but now cousin Jemima Kimball,

I am extremly glad to hear of your good fortune so to speak, for it will not add to your happiness and felicity one iota, to have Olive plants, or rather, I should say Mass plants, growing up around you, as some foolishly imagine to their sorrow, and I sincerely hope you will continue on in the good old way, at least until you return home, for I do not call California your home, but only a place to visit, although I must confess, I scarcely ever hear of such long visits as your are making, however we must have patience some time longer, You have been gone just one year, and it has has passed away very rapidly, I should not think it had been so long, although when I look back at the time you started for Cal, it seems a great while since I gave you the parting hand,

I have some unpleasant news to tell you, Mr Pinkham has lost his wife, she has been sick a long time, and has left 3 little motherless children, the youngest, a little girl, was 6 weeks old when Mrs Pinkham died, Mr Pinkham has been here to Amesbury, to see if he could obtain a housekeeper, he tried to get Mrs Offutt to go, but failed in his endeavers,

Sarah Pillsbury gave some encouragement, that she would go, but could not decide until Saturday, I hardly think she will conclude to, as I suppose it would be rather more of a confined life than she would like, she is at Uncle Hoyt's at present, has been keeping house, while they were gone to attend the Association, and also to Lynn,

The Association met at Danvers port, and Father and I were expecting to attend, but Amos came here Sunday night sick, and has had one of his crazy fits, so that Father could not leave home, he is getting better now, is as rational as any body,

There is a very extensive revival at the Rocks the oldest persons say it is the most so of any ever witnessed in the place there has been toward 75 persons converted from the gray headed person of 60 to the youth of 10 years Mr James Davis says that now all the members of his family are Christians

There has been about 45 baptized and others are expected to follow their example I will name some of the recipients of the blessing

Perhaps it will be interesting to you, as you used to know some of them, Mr John Nichols the returned Californian and wife, Jimmy Davis and wife, and his little brother aged 10 years, and a number of Daniel Hoyts children, Sam Browns wife, wild Mary Frank Chase (dont you wonder at that) and a number of others strangers to me have been baptized, they have been holding meetings for 2 or 3 week, which have been very fully attended, assisted by Rev Mr Peacock, a refformation preacher, who goes around getting up revivals, according to Martha Nichols, she asked me the other day who got up the revival at the Rocks, she wanted to know if it was Mr Brown, she appeared sober and serious about it, and I really think she did not know any better. I attended the teachers Association at Scituate it was in session 2 days, I was invited to make my home at the Revd Mr Beaman the Orthodox Minister, in company with Benjamin Evans, also two Boston other teachers stopped there, we had a fine time, beautiful weather, and saw more teachers than I ever saw before in my life, saw Frank Lagsdon, Mr Todd, Tyra Billy, by the way she is a teacher of drawing in Ipswich Seminary, and it is currently reported, and from a reliable source, that the engagement existing

West Amesbury, Jan 1. 1866.

Dear Brother & Sister.

It is with pleasure, that I embrace the present opportunity of wishing you a happy "New Year", and to express the earnest and sincere wish, that the coming year will witness your increasing happiness and prosperity to such an extent, that instead of being obliged to wish you a "Happy New Year" by means of the pen, it may be our happy fortune, to meet and greet each other as in days of "Auld Lang Syne". Another year has passed, and our familie circle is yet unbroken, for which we ought to thank the "Giver of all Good", who has so mercifully preserved us, and bestowed upon us many blessings.

We have been favored with most delightfull weather, during the season of autumn, & until the present time of winter, it has been remarkably mild

and pleasant, now we have a heavy snow-storm, which makes it seem doubly cold and drear. I should like above all things, to reside in a warm climate during the whole year, it must be salubrious, although there are many things, which render the season of winter pleasant, of which the principle one is sleigh-rides, gliding swiftly over the snow with the sound of the merry bells is delightful, (not to speak of the driver.)

A few days since, we received a note informing us, that Mr J. H. Chase, and Miss S. G. Perley, would receive their friends on Thursday eve at 7 O'clock, Gilman took Laura and started for Lynn, for the sole purpose of witnessing the ceremony and returned home the next day, the wedding was a splendid affair, but it would be impossible for me to attempt a description, as I was not present, I will leave it for ~~you~~ Laura to give you some idea of the splendor and wealth displayed on the occasion.

I am fearful if you remain in California much longer, you will be strangers to your own relatives, you have now quite a number, whom you never saw. your cousin Eliza has another little stranger for you to become acquainted with when you come home.

Frank Cogswell is married, I do not know but I have written you before, he has at last found a lady accomplished enough to suit his taste, a teacher in the same school I believe where he is teaching. Otis Skinner Currier has also taken a wife, & he is as poor as a church mouse, he bought a suit of clothes last summer, could not pay, and was obliged to give them up, it seems when they were married, her father went to forbid the marraige, and take her home, but to his disappointment he was too late, they had been married ½ hour, Otis used pretty considerable hard language, and threatened to kick the old gentleman out of the house, if he touched his wife, how flattering their prospects are, to be sure, now Miss Lydia, I am goiney to give you some, I shant have you crowing over me, because you think you are more fortunate than your sisters, on the contrary I should not consider myself fortunate, to be dragged thousands of miles away from home, & from all the blessings with which I am surrounded, then you think we had better be looking about before it is too late, I should like to have you inform me when it will be too late, and also what particular quality, I should be most anxious about; if you should say riches then I already know of some one who is blest with a plenty of the needful, and that is all, if you think I had better, perhaps I will come out bedecked before long, with silks & satins, feathers and furbelows, but enough of this, you enquired after Snip's health, I am happy to say he is alive & well, but feels the infirmities of old age somewhat. we have a new sleigh, quite showy, which make old Snip look a little better, The Union met at your sister Hannah's, & there was Annette looking as with her baby

Sarah

motherly as a young girl could look. The Union will meet there next week, & I should really like to have you present, as when Mr Tilton conducted the services. You will please excuse this miserable writing, for I am entirely out of pens, with the exception of this one I am writing with, which is a poor apology for one.

Time presses, and I must bid you Good Bye, for the present, and remain your

affectionate sister,

Sarah.

West Amesbury. March 28. 1866.

My Dear Sister.

The time to write you comes round so often, that I really cannot find any thing new and interesting to entertain you with, however, I will try and see what I can do, we are all well as usual, and I suppose the knowledge of that would be as acceptable as any thing I could write,

It is now nearly the time for us to engage schools that we may not rust in idleness. I really hope we shall be fortunate, as our folks are very desirous to get rid of us, I presume they would be very glad to have us take a step, something similar to the one you took not many years ago, perhaps you do

not recollect it, and then perhaps you do. I do not
doubt ~~it~~ in the least, but they would like for us
to form some matrimonial alliance, with some one
who, I do not know, and perhaps they would not much
care, if they were only likely and respectable, with
all the good qualities requisite to make a person
happy, but where we could find such a character
is extremely uncertain. I should as soon think of
hunting for a needle in the haymow, as to think
of ~~think~~ ever meeting with such a paragon, and
the present prospect is, that we shall be dependant
upon them some time longer, however, I do not much blame
them, for it would be dreadful would it not? to
have so many old Maids in one family. I must
congratulate you in escaping from such a fate,
and I would seriously enquire if you would
advise your sisters, to follow your praiseworthy
example, and accept (if they should be so unfortunate
as to have an offer? Do you realize there is
one almost in the Old Maids Row? I do declare
to you in confidence, that I feel somewhat uneasy
when I reflect how old I am getting to be, and
you know how most every one fades as they increase
in years, it is a fact. I must awake to my miserable
situation, and begin in earnest to fix up, and try
to catch a beau, before it is irremediably too late,
although I have one consolation, for last summer I
was complimented considerable about my young
looks, a number of persons, when I was teaching in
Keeler did not think I could be older than
nineteen, or at any rate twenty years, do you not
think there is a little hope and encouragement ~~for me~~
yet for me? We have reorganized our union,
and it is quite prosperous, some of the members are
strangers to you, persons I presume you have never
heard of, and their names are as strange, for instance
Crow and Barnhill, Toothacre and Mogg, queer
names are they not? Father has just returned from
a call on your father & Mose, they are well ~~and~~ as
usual. I must confess this is a queer letter, and
the times are as queer, there is no news flying, and
it has a bad effect on me, but you must excuse
it. By the way I had almost forgotten to mention
that I attended the Convention of the Sunday Schools
belonging to the Salem Baptist Association which met
at the Mills Village. The forenoon was devoted to

reading the letters. they were exceedingly interesting, in the afternoon An Essay was read, followed by discussions on the leading topics by the pastors and superintendants, Mr J. H. Pillin was present, and enquired after Lydia, he has quite a revival in his church at Lynn, baptised six last Sabbath

I think your great Editor is a great genius, I have enclosed a letter to him, but you may do as you please with it, if you do not think it worthy of notice, please consign it to the flames, I will leave it entirely to your own judgment, the fact is I did not feel exactly at ease, knowing that it was to an old Rack I was writing, and ——— I must now bid you Good Bye,

From your Sister Sarah.

W. Amesbury April 25, 1856.

Dear Sister.

What a delightful privilege it would be, to meet and interchange our thoughts and ideas verbally, instead of being obliged to resort to the expedient of useing the pen, However pleasant and agreable the latter may be, when debarred from the society of near and dear friends, yet in my opinion when contrasted with the former, it seems but a cold and indifferent way of conversing, but as we cannot at present be permitted to meet together, it befits us to have Patience, as Poshua Carrier used to say, even if we do not want her, and hope to soon enjoy the real happiness of welcoming you home from the "Land of Gold," with a pile of the same valuable metal, to reward you in some measure, for so long being deprived of the society of all your friends, with in your estimation,

the exception of Rome. By the way, give my love to Ephraim, and ask him for my especial benefit, when he intends to appear in old Amesbury with his familie for I do want to see you both very much indeed, do commence in earnest to think of coming home; it is high time I tell you.

I am happy to be able to inform you, that the citizens of West Amesbury and the small places adjoining are improving in some respect.

The Ladies of the First Baptist Society, gave a Levee, but owing to the large quantities of snow in the roads, making it difficult to travel, there were only 200 present. since then we have attended a Levee at the Rocks Village, on a lovely evening, the sleighing was quite good, so that nearly 500 took advantage of it, to meet on the occasion. The exercises were interesting, consisting of addresses by the Rev Mr Thatcher, and Fletcher, who is supplying the pulpit at that place, and others; Singing by the Groveland Glee Club was excellent. They provided a Grab bag, post office, prize cake, prize tea, and &c. to help increase the proffits, the object for which they are trying to raise money is praiseworthy, viz, the improvement of their old fashioned house of worship, could you find a more worthy object? I presume you still retain a lively recollection of it's former appearance, and I can assure you it has not improved in any respect since.

Mr Thatcher is paying attention to a lady of Beverly, he intended to be married soon; but owing to some cause he is obliged to postpone his marriage until autumn. Judith Colby has been boarding him for $3.00 per week, she has now raised the price to $5.00, which he cannot afford to pay, and there is no one willing to take him, which is a source of great anxiety to him. I do not know what the poor man will do, unless his Lady Love will aid ~~him~~ in making a home for him. The singing in our church is quite good at present, Mr James England is Chorister, Mrs Rhoda & Jane Bancroft on the treble, Sarah Hall & myself alto, Walter Williams & Mr Dow Base. Daniel Weed has been raising blood, but he has promised to ~~join~~ join the choir as soon as he is sufficiently recovered, upon the whole we have pretty good singing, considering the number. The Orthodox choir ~~have~~ left the seats two sabbaths since. At the annual meeting the society voted to hire Sam Schofield to play the organ, instead of Bailey Sargent, because he would play for ~~50 dollars~~ $1.00 per day, while Bailey asked $2.00, & he was one of our sort too, the choir do not like his playing, & declared they would not sing, but I think they will conclude to go back rather than ~~not~~ have no singing. Edward Bartlett spent the afternoon with us on Fast day, he is partial to our familie, but whether to any one particular I do not know unless it is Maria. now about schools, it seems as though there were more teachers I was going to say than scholars, but it is not quite so bad as that.

although there are a great many at present. I am going to teach school in the Highlands district, Laura in Southampton her school is at the village & is about 11 months long. Mrs Eunice Nichols still continues to teach at the Corner, Laura Bancroft at the Landing, Marietta the Lower school at the River, Mary A Stickney the upper school, Caroline Stickney at Birchy meadow, Sarah Sargent, (Cyrus' daughter) at Lion Mouth, Martha Nichols at Newton Village, Flora Severance in Uncle Thomas' district. Maria Hoitt does not teach, she is fixing to be married to a Palmer of East Haverhill she is doing the best, isn't she! I do not recollect as I told you that Elisabeth Hoitt has become Mrs Elbridge Carter, she has as nice a house and furniture as there is in Newton, Webster Hoitt is married to a lady in Brighton, it was quite unexpected to us, for we had no idea of any such thing until we saw it in the paper yesterday. I have told all the news I can think of, & worn out my pen & must therefore bid you good by.

Your affectionate sister, Sarah.

Sarah

April 26. John Henry called to day with the sad news that Aunt Chase health is quite poor her disease is in her head. She complains of a dull pain in her head the Doctor says her brain is affected I should not wonder if she should lose her reason she has been sick since Jan & they are afraid she never will be any better she wishes to see Mother & I think she will go down soon.

Sarah
to Eliza Worth
Deising

W. Ames Pas, June 22. 1856.

Dear Sister.

Summer has in reality made its appearance, with its warm days and refreshing showers, at present the heat is very oppressive, ~~& much~~ so much so, it especially unfits me for the duties of the schoolroom, and causes me to realise ~~it~~ in some sense the command, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread" the heat never before was so troublesome to me, I was always delighted to welcome its return, but now I say give me cool weather in preference, I should really like to live in a climate neither very hot nor very cold, but mild and pleasant during the whole year, it would be a welcome retreat to me. to day is the Sabbath, and you must think it is not the coolest ~~of any~~ when I tell you it is so warm, I could not think of attending church, although my presence is of so much importance that I endeavor to attend

constantly. I am all their dependence on Allie, when I stay at home it puts them all out of sorts.

The story is current that Laura has got a beau. I should like you to guess who, but it would be useless to try. I must tell you it is Jim Colyer. I do think he is weak in his upper story. he has been tormenting her with his presence ever since she has been at Southhampton, the people there think he is her beau; and it quite provokes her. he took tea once at her boarding place, and the last time he called was one Sabbath Morning, just as she was preparing for church; and prevented her from going, as she had no notion of having Jim tagging after her to church, she was mad enough I can tell you, she merely said "good morning" to him & enquired "if we were well" then silence prevailed a long time.

Laura looked out of the window, and Jim looked straight at L all the time, after a while Jim threw a paper across the room at Laura, saying there is a paper for you to read, she picked it up and threw it back to him saying I dont want it, silence reigned for the space of one hour, when Laura noticed the horse appeared uneasy, as though he were tired of standing, and made a remark to that effect, thinking it would be a good hint, it did not take, another long silence, at last he said I guess I will go. Laura neither moved, nor spoke, and Jim disappeared. he has since reported that he went over intending to have the business all settled, but Laura was cold to him, and that he asked her to ride with him, but she declined for a bad cold she had, we have some sport out of it I can tell you, but at the same time it is exceedingly vexatious to have every one think it is a courtship, he told some young men at Southhampton they need not try to go with the schoolmarm for he had a mortgage on her, wasn't he very kind? by the way he is going to try it again, the little insignificant thing! will it not be too bad if she is as cold as she was before? You see I have not spared you in writing every little particular, as you requested that was of no consequence, I must now tell you of another affair, which is altogether different, but as interesting in its details. Will it not surprise you when I tell you that Mr Joseph Oak, that nice young man, he that was the Morning and the Evening Star, in the estimation of others, has turned out to be one of the meanest of all, he got in debt a number of thousand dollars, purposely it is thought, & then absconded no one knows where he is, although they have searched for him, at first his family indulged hope that he would be found; but have now lost all communication & think it of no use to search farther, you cannot think how his friends feel, his wife was almost crazy, but more recently I have heard she says she never wishes to see him again if he can act so badly, and it appears she is coming to her senses, it is thought Oak has gone to Canada.

Now I have got to babies and no knowing when I shall stop, and so the Mass has really sprouted in California after all, I was so surprised when I heard of it, and I must say sorry too, not because it is Mass, but it is I feel very doubtful whether you return very soon, and we had all begun to anticipate in earnest seeing you shortly, and I ~~should~~ ~~be~~ am very desirous to see my little nephew, how does the little fellow grow, & who does he ~~look~~ resemble, you wished us to select a name for the little stranger, I suppose he is one in your estimation. (tell me is he worth raising?)

I have thought of a name, but whether it will suit your california taste ~~or not~~ I know not, if you had always lived here, I should know better what name to select, but as it is I will try what I can do: I should think that Buena Vista might answer for a name, while in California, dont you think it a pretty one. Buena Vista Mass. I wish you to give your opinion of it; and if it dont suit you, I will try again, Perhaps it may suit Ephraim. Maria health is quite poor this summer, and with all she has the hooping cough, we hope she will improve soon, and regain her health.

The report is that Phillip Neal has bought William Haskell's place, & the latter Albert Sargent's nice house at the corner, it is a task for me to write a letter fit to read, you will probably think so when you get this, and I do wish you would come home, & so there would be no need of writing to California. you will excuse this for I do not profess to be a literary character

I ~~attended~~ the Orthodox circle at Mr Nichols & there were about 30 ladies & all the beaux stand at home what politeness! it looks as though the Ladies society was not worth walking a half mile, dont it!

I cannot think of any thing interesting to write about

I will bid you Good Bye and hope soon to see you in Amesbury from your sister

Sarah

do you care so much about coming home since you have got a niece

W. Amesbury Sept 13th 1866

Dear Sister.

It is very rainy today, and I thought I would improve a few moments in writing to you thinking that you, would like to hear from home, We are all well John, & myself, have had the whooping cough this summer, but it is now some better, Mother has been wanting to answer the letter which she received from you last, but she met with quite an accident which has prevented her. one day she thought she would like a few berries to eat. she started to go over by Mr. Nicholses brook, and not finding them very plenty, attempted to cross over, and in doing so fell into the brook, and cut and bruise her face

so that she could not wear her spectacles for some time, we have not received a letter from you for four or five mails the last one brought us the news that I was ~~sick~~, not hearing from you afterward caused us to feel some anxiety until Blumy Weed received one stating you were well, which was quite cheering, we hope to receive one this mail at any rate. I do not like the name Sarah proposed for your little boy I shall see if I cannot do better, I admire the name of Horace Clifford ~~[illegible]~~ how do you like it, I should like to see my little nephew or nis which is it nis nis O no! nephew nephew as Mr. Nichols says Mr. Weymouth is building quite a nice house below Mrs. Brulingtons at the turn of the road, a very pretty situation the best on the street. Mother wants to know if you cannot write one cheering word about coming home. It is now almost three long years since you left home, and we think that it is time for you to be thinking about coming home.

Monday forenoon after washing, Sarah has gone to Lynn on a visit, and I am in my room alone trying to finish this letter in season for the mail. Mary Ann ~~and~~ John Henry, and wife were up last week and seem to be very anxious to have one of us go home with them, it being a good chance Sarah concluded to go. she is going to stay until after the association, ~~which~~ which meets in Lynn, I am quite desirous to get Mr. Morrills girls to stay with me, they live in Daniel Morrills house ~~what~~ what used to be Daniel Weeds, and attend our church every sabbath It is now a long while time since we heard from you I think that my motto applies to us very well we are puzzeled your friends are all well, and inquire after you quite often we all send our love I cannot write any more this mail So Good bye

Maria

P. S. Please excuse all mistakes, and kiss Horace Clifford for me

Marin

W. Amesbury. Jan 16th 1857.

Dear Brother,

Father and Mother mourn so deeply, they feel inadequate to the task of writing you, I will therefore write in behalf of the family. We received your letter containing the sad intelligence, that our beloved Lydia was no more. O how hard to realize, that we shall never more be permitted to meet her again on earth, shall never more behold that lovely form now mouldering in the ground, but so it is, She has gone to the grave from which there is no return. Death! Death! how terrible thou art! stern and unyielding, none can withstand thy power, the rich and the poor, the high and the low equally are thy victims. That evening when your letter arrived, we had company, friends of dear Lydia, Ellen Gould and others, during the evening we were speaking of her, and anticipating the happiness of soon meeting with her, but alas! how were we disappointed, suddenly were our ~~expectations~~ frustrated, bitterly were our hearts

lacerated, by the intelligence so full of sadness which has just reached us, casting a cloud over every thing earthly, and deeply inflicting a wound upon our hearts. But while we mourn the loss of her who was so lovely in life, we do not forget him, who is left companionless and alone; with only a dear but helpless child, far from relatives and all loved ones. Would you were here with us, that we might mingle our grief, and sympathize together in this sad bereavement. and little Edward Lydia was very dear to us, and her babe now claims our love; bring it to us and we will love and cherish it, as its dear mother would have done had she lived, we feel attached to it as the child of our dear departed Daughter, and sister, we know we shall never more behold her, but may its life be preserved that we may see it, and clasp it to our hearts. we long to see you and your little boy, we are ready and willing to render you all the aid in our power.

You have been sadly bereaved, but may you remember Him who has so sorely chastened you. It is neither sinful nor unmanly to mourn the loss which we sustain by a separation from those we love. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus his friend, but while we mourn for the departed, let us remember that she is far happier than she could possibly be in this world; she is released from earthly trials, and her freed spirit is now basking in the sunlight of Heaven's smiles. It is God who appoints the bounds of our habitation, and those only can feel true peace and rest who in all their trials can say, "It is my Father let Him do as seemeth to Him best" If He but gives us grace to live, so that all our trials here shall fit us for that bright world of joy; for that home, where we shall go no more out forever; for that society which without weariness or the least alloy of sin, is continually praising and glorifying our Redeemer; then we shall look back to those dreary disappointments, those sorrowful partings from those we love best, as so many portions of the discipline which our Heavenly Father saw to be necessary for us.

Father called upon your folks they were all well and wished very much to have you come home we would all like to have you come, dont you think it expedient for you to close up your business and come home in the spring?

O Brother Ephraim, little did I ever expect to be called upon to write such a letter to you. it is hard to give up my dear sister, hard to realize that she could die so young, cut down in the bloom of life, leaving a void

which nothing on earth can fill. O, how I pity you, from the bottom of my heart I pity you, and your little motherless boy. I can write no more, let us hear from you as soon as possible.

we all send love to you.

Your affectionate sister,

Sarah

Sarah Gray

Owned Oct 9th

Dear

Dear Lydia

I came home from Dedham yesterday and found a letter from you in consideration of which I will write you hoping you will excuse the shortness of it as I am in somewhat of a hurry and withall a little nervous so that I cannot write as long as I otherwise would. I suppose you have learned ere this of my being engaged in teaching in the town of Dedham and to confess the truth I never was domesticated in quite so mean and notoriously wicked a place in my life they have no more manners than the crows. My school is very large and quite unpleasant I have had 76 scholars and such an unruly and disreputable looking set you never saw and I hope you never will. I have 6 weeks longer to keep which will finish the term of 15 weeks and then for a time, heigho! I do not know as I can find anything interesting or that is of sufficient importance to write however I

shall jot down any little incident that occur to my mind without any regard to form or place and you may have it as cheap as I do. well old Aunt Betty has gone to the poor house Jake Fullington's old house has burnt down Sarah Powell is keeping Charles Nichols house but I suppose she will not long as she is expecting to be married soon to Otis Powell. Sarah

Wed As Sarah did not have time to finish the the letter I will try to although her composition will be much better than mine. Laura is having a vacation of ~~about~~ two weeks and today she has gone on a ride to the beach, and who do you think with some great gentleman of course, well it is no more nor less than Chelis Carter he is a perfect gentleman he has been gone to Milwaukie, Wisconsin two years and has improved very much in his looks, and appearance Laura went to Newton last week, and stayed two or three days, had a fine time Mr. Reid family are very sick with the scarlet fever all but Mary Ann they think she will have the consumtion