

he now wishes to make himself more worthy of by some brave deed—

*Friday, July 2nd* Wrote a long letter to Mama this evening. I do wish I could have a letter from home; how lonely it is, week after week & month after month, and I hear nothing more than if I never belonged to their numbers. 'twould indeed give new energy to my being to hear from them, quite a new creature I should feel but as it is I am perfectly isolated.

*Sunday, July 4th* The second one passed from home and out of the U. S. tho' in quite a different way from the last, and in a much more agreeable one. I wish they (the officers) had deferred the celebration til the 5th, they would have shown more stamina of character in observing the Sabbath religiously, and establishing the customs of the U. S. here, instead of following the example of this people in making it a feasting day.

Gen Kearny I am sure would have deferred it, and by his own example have taught others the propriety of remembering the Sabbath to keep it holy. Gen. Wool had a grand review of his command at Buena Vista in the morning. To avoid complying with an invitation to dine with the officers we accepted one to dine at Dctr Hewitsons with his family only. We had a variety of dishes all served in Mexican style, vegetable, beef, fowl, a nicely stuffed and roasted *cabrita* [kid]—and a good dessert, the recipes for making which I must get of Mrs. H. after dinner which lasted an hour, in true Mexican *modo* we were shewn into a nice bed-room with an invite to a siesta; at 5 o'clock we came home, with a promise to return after tea to see

the rockets to be thrown up in the public square— Here we met with several gentlemen—one Cpt Webster<sup>98</sup> who tells us that Maj. Hunter<sup>99</sup> the quartermaster at Monterey has written to him when we intend leaving for the U. S. that he wishes to place Mrs. H, who was bold enough to follow her husband to the wars, under the Magoffins protection, she has seen

<sup>98</sup> Lucian B. Webster was born in the state of Vermont and appointed to United States Military Academy, August 28, 1819. From there he went into the artillery, and after several promotions became captain of the 1st Artillery September 30, 1836. He was engaged in the battles of Monterey and Buena Vista. Brevetted major September 23, 1846, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the several conflicts at Monterey, and lieutenant-colonel February 23, 1847, for gallant conduct in the battle of Buena Vista. He was made major of the 4th Artillery August 3, 1852, and on November 4, 1853, died at Fort Brown, Texas, aged fifty-two years.

<sup>99</sup> David Hunter was appointed to West Point, September 14, 1818, from the District of Columbia, where he was born. From there he went into the infantry July 1, 1822. He served on the frontier from 1823 to 1835 and resigned July 4, 1836. On March 14, 1842, he was reappointed with rank of major on the staff of the paymaster. He was chief paymaster of General Wool's column on his march through Mexico in 1846, and of the army of occupation 1847-1848; was colonel of 6th Cavalry May 14, 1861, and was wounded in the battle of Bull Run, Virginia, on July 21, 1861; soon afterwards was made major-general of volunteers. Brevetted major-general in the regular army March 13, 1865, for gallant service in war between the states. He served on the military commission for trial of alleged conspirators in the assassination of President Lincoln, May 9 to July 6, 1865. He retired July 31, 1866, being over sixty-two years of age, and died February 2, 1886.

quite enough of the elephant,<sup>100</sup> and is now anxious to return to the U. S. The Cpt speaks of her as a lady with whom I can enjoy myself. dear knows I am glad to hear of a *lady* again, an American, with whom I can sit & converse freely, and about things that each of us are acquainted with. An other individual at the detrs, was an Irishman named I cant say what, for I cant recollect it—but he is worthy of a remark, having as he says been in every place, is one day a British subject, the next a Louisiana Irishman, and many other changes, he is as gray as ever man can be, and tho' he says himself that he is only 45, I'll venture to say he'll never see sixty again. he is an incessant talker, and tells of his leaving Erin when a mere boy, of his having lived many years in Kingston Jamaica, a long time & dozens of other places, and is climated everywhere. his age tho' is the worst point with him as he wishes to get married, and as he must know too well that his looks speak nothing in favour of his youth, he makes his tongue do the business, and broaches it on all occasions he is not a little tormented either by his countryman the Dctr who invariable gives him a rub.

*Friday 9th* Cpt Prentice<sup>101</sup> called with Cpt. or

<sup>100</sup> "I've seen the elephant." When a man is disappointed in anything he undertakes, when he has seen enough, when he gets sick and tired of any job he may have set himself about, he has "*seen the elephant.*" (Kendall, vol. 1, p. 109.)

<sup>101</sup> James H. Prentiss was born in Massachusetts, and appointed to the United States Military Academy July 1, 1826, from the state of Indiana. He served in the Florida war against the Seminole Indians as first lieutenant and aide-de-camp to General Eustis, being in the skirmish of Okihumphy Swamp March 30, 1836. During the Mexican War he was assistant ad-

Lieut. Rucker,<sup>102</sup> to hear our final decision in regard to leaving for Monterey, as the only hinderance (the wagons) was made known to him, they may possibly be disposed of thro' his instrumentality to government. I long to see the day when they are sold, now for the last fourteen months I've seen and heard more of wagons than in all my life before.

*Friday 16th* This P. M. with Mrs Hewitson in my carriage with myself, the *Dctr* and *mi alma* on horse back, we rode to the cotton factory of the former gent. situated six miles South of Saltillo; the road some times rough but pleasant and tis many days since I enjoyed a ride so much, after being shut up in town

jutant-general under General Wool on the march through Chihuahua, September 12 to December, 1846, and later in command of a battery of heavy artillery. After the war Lieutenant Prentiss was on frontier duty at Fort Polk, Texas, where he died September 22, 1848, aged thirty-nine years.

<sup>102</sup> Daniel Henry Rucker was born in Belleville, New Jersey, April 28, 1812. He entered the army from Michigan as second lieutenant of 1st Dragoons October, 1837, served in Michigan and against the Indians in the West and Southwest, and was promoted to captain February 7, 1847. In the war with Mexico he commanded a squadron at the battle of Buena Vista, and was brevetted major February 23, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct in that battle. He was commissioned major quartermaster August 3, 1861, and by further promotions reached the grade of brigadier-general of volunteers May 23, 1863. He was mustered out of volunteer service, and afterwards, July 18, 1866, was commissioned colonel and assistant quartermaster-general of the regular army, and brigadier-general February 13, 1882, retiring February 23, 1882. For diligent and meritorious service during the Civil War he was brevetted major-general of the United States Army and United States Volunteers.

for so long a time, the pure country air was truly delightful, and made me wish to be again travelling. Well we went through the Dctrs factory from the lowest to the uppermost room; tis by no means on a small scale. From this we proceeded to the village church, which like all others in the country, is adorned with a goodly number of saints, both figures and paintings all of which are time worn and indifferent looking; the alter is entirely gilded and has rather a glittering appearance; we found it dressed over with fresh flowers, the patron saint of the place is represented by a small wax figure inclosed within a glass door above the alter, around the sides of which are hung many small paintings, emblematic of our Saviors and the apostles lives. After visiting these places we went to see Mrs Bently an American woman, and wife of the mayor domo of the establishment, a plain good woman, from New Jersey. She gave us a cup of coffee with some nice light-bread and butter truly American, after a hearty repast we returned to town, arriving sometime after 7 o'clock.

*Saturday 17th* There is some talk of an other stampede report says that Cpt Rucker's company of dragoon scouts has been cut off by 3000 Mex., and a picket guard comes in in haste to the General saying they had seen some 3000 Mexicanos, but all except a few were without arms. I think they must have seen a flock of goats. a Mexican reports himself to gov. Washington, saying tis the intention of his countrymen here to rise and cut off the Americans, but I since the last stampede have grown too incredulous to any of the reports I hear.

*Wednesday 21st Dctr* and Mrs Hewitson came around about 4 o'clock this P. M. to take us, according to a promise, to see the church, which is pronounced a facsimile of all the churches of Mexico. The interior is truly magnificent and to describe it minutely requires the pen of a Kendall<sup>103</sup> or a Prentiss.<sup>104</sup> The form is a sala with two wings as it were each of which has in it an altar to different saints; over one of them is hung a large oil painting some eighteen or twenty ft square; it represents purgatory, and the Virgin Mary descending from Heaven attended by

<sup>103</sup> George Wilkins Kendall, journalist, was born in Amherst (now Mount Vernon), New Hampshire, August 22, 1809; died in Oak Spring, near Bowie, Texas, October 22, 1867. He went to New Orleans in 1835 and two years later established there, with Francis A. Lumsden, the *Picayune*. In 1841, partly from love of adventure and partly for his health, he joined an ill-fated Santa Fé trading expedition, was taken prisoner and carried to the city of Mexico, but was released after seven months of captivity. During the war with Mexico he accompanied the United States forces under General Taylor, and later under General Scott, and by means of pony expresses and steamers supplied his paper with the latest news. He published *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fé Expedition* and *The War between the United States and Mexico*. On his tombstone are the words: "Poet, journalist, author, farmer—eminent in all; clear head, stout heart, a man of many friends, best beloved by those who knew him best."

<sup>104</sup> George Denison Prentice, journalist, author, and humorist, was born in Preston, Connecticut, December 18, 1802; died at Louisville, Kentucky, January 22, 1870. He was editor of *Connecticut Mirror* in 1825, and in 1828 became editor of *New England Weekly Review*, in which he published many of his poems. Two years later he was editor of the *Louisville Journal*. Mr. Prentice wrote a campaign biography of Henry Clay.

many angels, with the infant Jesus in her arms, and calling the saints through him to ascend from their transient abode to a home of happiness.—The principal altar is truly magnificent, reaching almost to the ceiling which is some                    in height; it is four immense pillars [pillars] against the wall, two of them on either side of the throne of the patron saint of the church, which is inclosed in a glass case decked with artificial flowers; on each side of the saint and between the pillars are some half doz statues representing different saints, the altar is a solid mass of gilt which glitters by daylight, and with the church lit up with those immense candles, it must be a dazzling sight.—To describe all the altars in the church would be too much, so I'll leave off with these two and say a few words in regard to the chapel adjoining the church and from whence a door opens to it, solely for the worship of Christ. The chapel is not large neither is the altar so much ornamented save with flowers, as the large one in the church, it is magnificent tho' and if anything richer than the other. The center of it is covered with a curtain and on sight contrasts strangely with the rich trimming of the altar, it was raised (by our attendant—a little boy) in a moment by means of a pulley, and opened to our view an image of Christ crucified as large as life, made of a highly polished wood, and inclosed in a large glass case gilded and decked with flowers, it looks so like a human figure I shuddered as I looked upon it: his accusation is written above on a plate of solid gold, some ten or twelve inches by six. When we had looked at it for

some time, the little boy lowered the curtain with deep respect—shutting the sacred image from our view.

From the Church we went to the convent now occupied as an arsenal by our troops; the officers took us through the different apartments and pointed out all the ammunition stores, cannon balls, grape, canister, &c, showed us their guns; then took us to see the church of Saint Antonio; it resembles the large church in the square, tho' not on so large a scale. In the meantime the evening parade in the convent yard commenced, we left the church to see it, and at its close retired to the *Dctrs* where we rested ourself after a long and to me very fatiguing walk, refreshed ourselves with a cup of Doña Josefa's nice chocolate and returned home at 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> o'clock.

*Friday 23rd* Took Doña Josefa out riding this P. M. in my carriage, the Dctr and Mr. M. on horseback, rode through the *alameda*, the Pueblo, and other precinct of the city called ——— Twas a cool and refreshing ride, the trees loaded with fruit at the Pueblo contrasted well with the tall shady poplars of the *alameda*.

*Monday 26th* This world is filled with trials and woes. God sends all tho', and dare we murmur even if they are hard? worse ones may come upon us. We receive intelligence this evening of the assassination of brother James, it comes so straight we can scarcely doubt its truth. An English gentleman just arrived from Guanajuata brings it, as received by a Spaniard of his acquaintance at Aguas Calientes, in a letter from Chi.[huahua] where our brother arrived from Durango about the 20th ult., the statement is that he

was murdered in his own house by some person who had a previous difficulty with him. *Mi almi* is inconsolable, nothing I believe could affect him more. He heard the rumor at 9½ O'clock A. M. and tho' it made him feel miserable enough, the severest blow was not yet given; late this evening I heard the straited account. After a long hesitation I summoned courage to tell him, and may the like task never devolve upon me again. At the words "I fear there's no hope," his pent up feeling burst forth in one groan, followed by tears. How my heart aches to write it, but it aches far more to see the agony of *mi alma*. Dctr. Hewitson has been down and offered all the consolation he could; he can feel for him for he knows well the attachment that years of a life together in a foreign land has wrought between the two brothers: though he endeavoured to cheer him with the probability of its falsity as being the news of Mexicans mostly, he told me at the door that from what Mr. Meeds tells him it comes too straight to hope. Oh, that I could see one little ray, one beam to cling to. *Mi alma's* grief poured forth in deepest sighs will undo me; tonight is one of misery to him.

*Tuesday 27th.* How hard it is to deceive my husband but the Dctr. charges me by the love I bear him, to tell him nothing of the news of tonight, at least a part of it, the better half he knows, and his drooping spirits raised a little. A Mr. Chapman from Parras, to which place all news flies quickly, has heard nothing of it; this the doctor told my dear, and I hope he feels something easier in mind, that is a relief to me, though I am intrusted with the secret of its confirmation by an

Irishman in Mr. Meed's employ who talked with the express man from Chi. and hears from his own lip that *he had seen my brother's body*, that he was murdered in his own bedroom just before daylight, but on what day Mr. Kelly did not ask him.

To tell him I cannot, the Dctr. warns me not, and yet I know he must hear it ere long. But I'll wait; the news must come and the way may be easier than I can contrive.

*August 1847.*

*Sunday 1st.* My gratification is better conceived than written, at receiving a letter this A. M. from sister Letty after a silence so long that I had concluded myself no longer thought of by the dearest of friends, and to hear too that all are well, no deaths save that of Aunts McDowell and Taylor each of whom we have every reason to believe has made the brightest exchange, that of sickness, earthly sufferings temptations &c. for peace and never ending happiness, we can better envy than bewail them. The marriage of several cousins and births of a few more children, among the no. sister Anna has an *Isaac Shelby*—meaning for taking the name from me, she might have waited a few months longer. I do think a woman *em beraso* [*embarazada*—pregnant] has a hard time of it, some sickness all the time, heart-burn, head-ache, cramp etc. after all this thing of marrying is not what it is cracked up to be.

*Sunday 8th.* A letter from Papa today all well, and since Letty's, answered it immediately.

*Friday 14th.* We had quite a fright last night from