

# Letters Written By: Janet Ralston Chase

to her father, Honorable Salmon Portland Chase

Written between 1865 -1872

The letters detail her travels and they contain  
several unique hand drawn illustrations



South Pier  
August 29<sup>th</sup> 1845

Dearest Father

Cousin Jennie, Mr. Jewett, Alice, and I made a grand expedition yesterday, to the mills at, and around Providence. We had intended to go to the Baltic, but when we arrived at the depot, we found we were too late for our train by a half hour, and as the Providence train was nearly done, we concluded to change our programme, and visit the mills, and foundry in that vicinity. Reaching Providence we first went out to a large wool delaine factory, belonging to a Mr. Chapin, and Mr. Hoyt. It seems as if one could never weary of watching the machines. How odd it is that this vast extent of power, almost titanic in its might and strength, is owned and controlled by so puny a creature as man, yet was generated. It seems rather to be some great giant working out a penance for sins committed; the great power Steam controlled and put under subjection by the mightier power Intellect. After having done the delaine factory we went



out to Granston, where the Governor made glad the hearts of Alice, and myself by giving each of us a couple of calico dresses, with the proviso that one of them was to be made by ourselves. We picked up his gauntlet of defiance on that score, however, and the dresses are to be made. After my former success I feel equal to any thing in the dressmaking line. After the mills

Mr Amasa Sprague's stables, and horses came in for their share of the admiration which cousin Jennie and Jack bestowed on every thing. The Governor at last became mischievous and took us to every small manufactory he could think of, until at last we cried for mercy for we began to feel very sensibly that man could not live by ~~bread~~ <sup>sight-seeing</sup> alone and that as we had had breakfast at seven and it was then four, dinner was not to be despised. The Governor at last relented and we went to Mrs Sprague's where dinner had been waiting for us since two, and I can assure you we did full justice to it. After dinner more factories, and then at last home, and if I may judge <sup>the</sup> others by myself we were all very glad to get there. The Amos are as funny as usual. Alice Bell one day was opening a

drawer, and Alice told her rather sharply, to come away  
and let it alone. "Wait till I go to heaven" said the  
wite "and God will let me make open his drawers"  
Daisy came running towards us the other day, crying  
"Come, klein Gurly hat ein gross fit". This morning  
we all went down to the bowling alley, it requires great  
skill in playing here, for the alley instead of being  
straight, meanders about in the most perplexing way.  
as in order to be successful it is necessary to adapt  
one's ball to the alley, it is no easy matter. We  
procured some green peaches and a wretched water-  
melon with which we beguiled the time ad interim.  
Purf proves himself fully worthy of the ~~time~~ name,  
and dashes into the water with all the boldness  
one could desire, speaking of the water I must  
tell you of my own success in that element,  
I can swim a little, float with the most perfect  
ease, and dive like a duck. the two latter accomplish-  
ments I have learned within the last few days  
only. Mr Jewett says I learn quicker than any one  
he ever saw, and pleasantly suggests that perhaps  
it is because I am so light headed agreeable is it not?



Ma Jennett Gossin Jennie and the babies leave Tues.  
of next week and Alice is to remain longer.  
The arrangement is so pleasant for me as I  
should miss her greatly.

How is Willie getting on? I need hardly ask  
if he is good and efficient. We talk and  
think of you so often it seems so desolate for you  
to be there all alone. Take more love than my  
pen can express our my paper contains.

From your own loving  
Bethie.

Frontenac  
July 21<sup>st</sup> 1868



My own dear Father

I am on board with  
Minnesota - We have just returned from a  
most perfect trip to St Paul and vicinity.  
I say perfect because my enjoyment of it was  
without a drawback. Do you know I think  
that I have inherited a coupon of the old  
pioneer spirit, for when I feel myself beyond  
civilization, a kind of wild delight comes over  
me, my Indian wakes and gives a war whoop.  
Do you remember Burnet McLean? a son of the  
Generals, he went with us on our expedition  
and was a great comfort to me, for he is even  
more venturesome than I am, and Jap is rather  
lasy-lasy, but so good natured and thoughtful -  
So he and Anna stayed in the inn, and  
Burnet and I tramped and explored to my  
heart's content - St Paul is an exceedingly



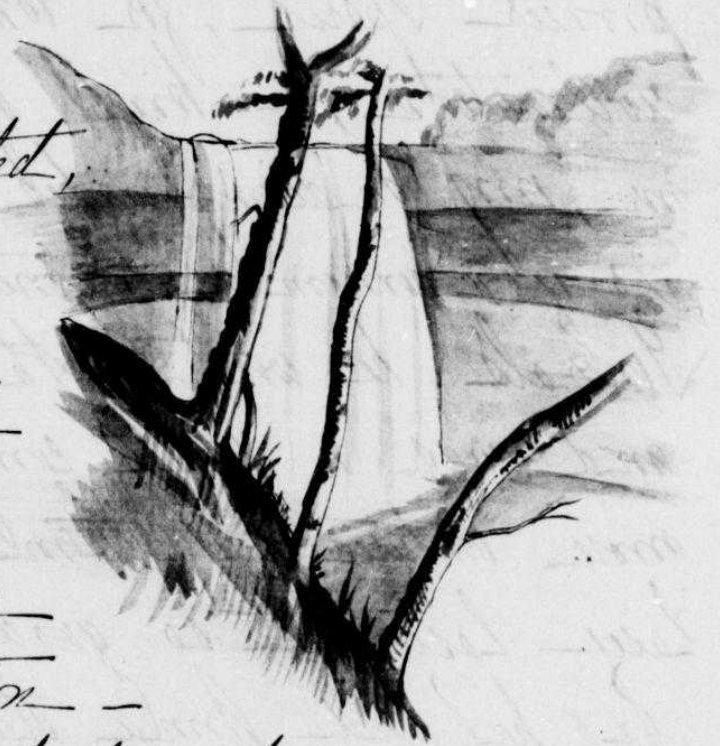
pretty town, the good taste that was displayed  
everywhere astonished and delighted us, even

The little frame cottages are pretty and varied  
in their architecture and some of the larger  
houses are beautiful. They use a light grey building  
stone, which is quarried in the neighborhood,  
and which is very effective, particularly when  
rough hewn. Some of the churches too are as pretty  
as any I ever saw, and on one or two of them  
the ivy is already quite well grown. Of course  
our first excursion was to Ft. Snelling, and  
the falls of Minnehaha.

The latter were rather  
larger than I had expected,  
but quite as romantic.

We followed the stream  
through thicket and marsh  
to its mouth in the  
Mississippi, and the scene  
was well worth the exertion.

I sketched it on the back of a note  
book with the end of a burnt match, as both  
pencil and paper were wanting. But most







as the East after supper we drove on until  
dawn rise. Was it not complete! Sunset moon  
Aurora and sun rise!

They are very anxious that I should return  
in December to see the winter here, Will you  
let me come? I feel guaranteed me a return  
escort. They wear muskies, the lake is all  
frozen over, and the air they say is perfectly de-  
licious - Northern lights nearly every night and  
sometimes four suns & four moons! I should  
so like it. I think then that I should be  
satisfied. I should only care to stay through  
December. Please don't think that I am erran-  
ding please don't say so -

I received the letter you sent me last morn.  
I liked the envelope best of all  
Do you think that this is a very gushing letter

Lovingly ever and ever  
P. H. H.

I will write once more before I leave

2490  
Conway Wales

April 30<sup>th</sup> 71

I was so ever so much disappointed  
my dearest Father, I find on letters at  
Larnarvon, thoroughly disappointed, al-  
though Will said that there was not  
more than one chance in ten that  
Lords first army. as unless letters were  
sent four days after we sailed they  
would not reach us until we travelled  
up to the Chester busset. but I wanted  
and longed for my home news so much  
that it made Mrs. Conquins of finding  
something - now I am so anxious to reach  
Chester that nothing seems too slow -  
so our man drives back the horses  
& wagon from here, and we go back  
by rail. for the rail road runs into



This queer, quaint little town, directly  
under one of the most beautiful animal  
castles I have ever seen, and strangely  
incongruous it seems, for the railway  
bridge is coming across the river & the  
castle walls, and they have given the old  
architecture in brown and white stone,  
so side by side they stand, the old and the  
new - it looks like a jarring, that  
railway bridge, and jars upon the  
melancholy dignity of the old ruin.

What cares the nineteenth century  
Progress, for Edward's victories or Gwellyn's  
raids: and what can the old walls have  
to do with the bustling present. It is, as I  
say, incongruous. There is a high wall  
about this little town, with eight towers  
besides the castle, so it is thoroughly

picturesque surrounded as it is with  
fine hills, and on the borders of the <sup>river</sup> Conway

We were at church this morning - when  
we had an excellent sermon from a  
fine earnest faced young curate. Fortunately  
he preached in English, although he  
gave his text in English & Welsh. A week  
ago in Barmouth where I wrote you from,  
they had only a Welsh church & do you  
remember. Mary, a Welsh housemaid  
we had once in Columbus, and who after-  
wards died, poor thing - So many of the  
women here, remind me of her -

They are a pleasant civil people as far  
as our experience goes, and many of the  
women are pretty. good christly features,  
and once in a while we see a perfect com-  
plexion. Since Barmouth we have been



& several pretty places with magnificent  
views - It is extraordinary the amount of  
consonants they collect together & put into  
one word. You will never form the least  
idea of the pronunciation from the spelling  
or of the spelling from the pronunciation.

At Newcastle in took a guide & found  
and made the ascent of Mt Snowdon.

I enclose a leaf relating our sad experience  
there, with that exception our chief occupa-  
tions have been sketching and photography  
and joggling along Welsh highways <sup>with</sup>  
our steeds who have not proven themselves

& h. Buccellasi - Plutot Rasinables

eating fresh eggs and mutton chops for break-  
fast, one end of beer and bread & cheese & butter  
for lunch, and spring lamb for dinner.  
Will smoke his cigar, I finish up my  
sketches, will read out loud, I continue  
to sketch. At breakfast at mine lunch at

Ino and Ann at seven - I shall very  
soon have news of you now dear Father  
I pray God you are growing continually  
better. Do you still think of Michigan  
my dear dear love & all

Devotedly  
J. M. M.

Letter came to hand left me  
but a small share of the news,  
as she has given it all up  
to last night, & today our chief  
& almost only occupation has  
been sketching & photographing in  
the Castle, & a charming sub-  
ject it is - better than any  
business I ever saw. I regret so  
much not having had any  
opportunity yet of giving my



negatives to be printed, as I  
knew a good many of them  
would interest you, on account  
of a certain subject I have  
introduced whenever she would  
sit for me. Our last few  
days in Wales have been some-  
thing of what we had hoped  
for, & we are far better able  
to appreciate the bright blue  
skies, after our two days of  
clouds & rain. Tomorrow we  
go on to Chester by rail &  
shall probably leave for London  
on Friday. Our stay there will  
be very short, as the midnight

him will not wait for us  
in the North, & in default  
of Ireland we must at least  
be there in time - If Paris  
were not now in this fearful  
state of turmoil, we  
should go there directly from  
London & then down to Spain  
for about three weeks, but  
of course that is quite im-  
possible, so that we shall go  
at once to Dresden, reaching  
there about the fifteenth or  
fourteenth of May - As Weller  
has told you, we are very anxious  
to find our letters at  
Chester tomorrow night, as



it was a long time since  
that day we left you on the  
strawer - I join most sin-  
cerely with better in the hope  
that you have since then been  
growing continually stronger &  
with kind remembrance to all  
believe me most sincerely yours

Whitney

about 6 ascent Snoot  
went



The fog changes to a violent hail storm, I see - the fog continues and a violent hail storm is added to it, but we are exhausted and huddled, we reach the summit, and find a little hut where we dry our dripping garments. Guides pronounce it dangerous to descend the same side of the mountain we came up, so we go down on the other side take a key & drive fourteen miles to our hotel. This was the "last drop"

Went ten p.m.  
we reach  
a harem at  
last







Joyful start, blue sky, lazily sailing white clouds, sweet flocks, skipping lambs, birds singing, hedges in blossom, streamlets dancing, simply perfect in short



At each the mountain, a fog arises and grows thicker and thicker, mountain grows deeper & steeper, wind whistles chilly, our John Thomas wishes cotta voce that he was safe at home with a whole skin" general discomfort and no view for covering way being.

Saturday

June 5<sup>th</sup> 1872



6853

~~er~~  
 Yours very welcome with  
 me that you had safely reached  
 Washington but not that you  
 had gone directly out. I do not  
 that I am in picture made to us  
 for from the nurse had an ac-  
 cident to her foot & sister made  
 for her maid, the two busy little  
 legs of Miss Ethel & Willie require  
 some one to follow them about  
 but of course you have seen  
 sister & the babies by this time  
 We are leading a very quiet  
 middum sort of a life. but I  
 rather like it. Miss Charlotte  
 had made two walks & dived during



you make me sorrier and with to me  
wonderfully how it all agreed with you - while  
to me I tell you that the advertisement  
The Clements speaks of we a publisher he  
-buying for the Windsor & that I did not  
answer the description of the last paper -  
by me the last - I am so sorry that both  
of the letters which should have been so much  
to you never any calls was sent in  
order was mine. I writes sent in  
on the morning with the children: and I did not  
see the signs & suppose she went on & the boys

the day & in the evening with  
comes I write and he generally  
reads to us until bed time.

He is reading now Lord Bantam  
an English satire on the existing  
state of things - and yet not an  
illustrated satire either, recognising  
the good where ever it is & he  
found - a book calculated to  
do good I think although the  
subject does not bring it so imme-  
diately under our own experience  
as I did the author's first work  
'Gin's baby' - still, I think he  
does it - yours please you

I do hope your wintering in the  
country will be as pleasant to  
you as mine, thus far has  
been so - How does it  
promise so far? Pray do not  
be too indifferent as I how





[Jan 2] 1872

Mrs. Hoyt



4. THIRTY THIRD STREET WEST.

605

My dear father

I got out with you the 15th forward

travelling - now come single & come  
back on the 15th & stay in it. The

name of my small troubles has  
by this certainly been given up

of course little of my sickness has  
been the only real unhappiness

but I really have been dreadful  
- by the way - you after a while

of my account - I have been  
sick. The doctor advised my

getting a new name but this



They did not appear of  
the proceedings at all

4. CHURCH STREET WEST



for a fortnight - refused to  
have my things to do with  
her ~~at night~~ or at meal time

~~was then~~ I cap the cleaning  
poor persons gone out till  
last Saturday & he appeared  
for a weeks' space. Will cap  
~~as well~~ not think of taking  
him back again so now I  
am making up notes  
better. He was ~~never~~ to  
you or sympathize with  
me. ~~But~~ more of the  
with few notes left as were

was asked by a gentleman sitting  
at the door which proved to  
be the telegraph boy - I was  
awfully frightened & rather  
startled & apprehensive if every  
thing but the telegram was  
gone - Aunt Charlotte & I  
then went there with me -  
wrote for Paris - She arrived  
the next day having travelled  
day & night from New Orleans  
the cause of her sudden  
departure was a telegram from  
Mrs. Rice & Miss Jones saying  
"tick, come" & date of my  
leaving France, since then  
Aunt Charlotte  
she has telegraphed me  
many times



to Jimmy, the Mitchells whom  
she believed Jimmy to be with  
in the bank where Jimmy  
custodian (she has no letter  
of credit) was received & she  
she called yesterday on the  
Governor's house to see great  
about the poor girl, about the  
sister in the fact movement  
went with her - it was

What a terrible time they are  
having in Washington with  
their investigations! and how all  
these "funds" everywhere shake  
trust -  
It's a shame for all  
Ever lovingly Mm

Jan 1872  
Wednesday evening  
4. THIRTY THIRD STREET WEST.



Secret & other

I searched Hill's pockets after  
he returned from Dewey & there  
found my letter and what was  
more an invitation to dinner  
of a young man from a lady  
who I did not know the name  
and see & of whom I had promised  
careful deliverance of the invitation  
I did not often trust & such a  
doubtful conveyance but I had  
been out of stomach lately & when  
he pocket them down I thought he



stomps them. I have been interested  
by you lately & know very little of  
the world that buzzes around me  
very one else however has been  
very gay it seems - Yesterday I  
kissed Guitard & then that we  
lunched with me - & we went for a  
ride afterwards in the park  
where we took down but managed  
a patch of matters enough to  
reach home. Will had had but

summers as they call them put  
in my Victoria



sort of amusement you know  
& they were not securely enough  
attached but it is an excessively

comfortable arrangement in carriages  
are always so much more comfortable  
than sleighs) - I'm glad you found  
sleighting in Washington  
little Janet is well again but  
the Dr. advises that she should  
be kept in the house until April  
so we are going to have the sick  
room story room as a play room  
as the sun comes on there  
all the afternoon & try to keep it  
both ventilated & warm. I can't  
say that I quite like the idea  
but I have great faith in the  
open air - but after having seen  
baby once so ill. I should have  
been courageous & disobey his directions



and was far sicker in her  
checks & still pale than  
the self-slightest sick of any  
of those dreadful attacks.

Mr. Tompkins & see children  
from both her ill from croup  
& bronchitis but not nearly so sick  
as Janet. This winter has been  
most trying - yesterday was warm  
& thawing for example & today  
biting cold with a biting cutting  
I was thankful that you are  
in warmer latitudes.

I must go now & help to  
cook tea as it is already at hand  
oysters. Both her & I all were  
dressed in heavy Amoskeag scarves  
the best of health

Victoria March 28<sup>th</sup>

9492

My own dear dear Father -

Your dear letter came today,  
and I can not tell you what a  
pleasure it gave me. It was so  
sweet, and like you - the girls did  
find him for a short account of  
their brings I am so glad that they  
enjoyed themselves so much. but poor  
Catherine must have been thoroughly used  
up. and she was so good & through  
it all. The children she writes  
are improving, dear fairies how  
I should like to see them! I shall  
always remember baby's 'Hight, Hight  
bulla-bay boy -' on Church, and  
shall have the pleasure of reminding  
her of it when she grows to be a  
dignified Miss - although she bids  
fair now to be a regular witch.  
We are getting on very nicely here  
I wrote to sister about our business this



morning, and how Miss Fenn cut  
us out - an excellent person no doubt  
but it is



rather inconvenient

I have a house  
maid who can  
not hear a  
word:

Passing thro'  
the hall this  
morning, I was  
present at  
the following -

(Wife) Is there any lamp oil in the  
house?

House maid paying no attention to his  
presence, he repeats -

(House maid finally becoming cognizant of  
his vicinity - Oh Sir?

Is there any oil in the house?) Oh! There!  
Oil! oil! in! the! house!!!

House maid placidly. Oh you sir I shut  
them all down.

Wife becoming excited Kerosene!! Lamp oil!!

Oil!! Oil!! Lamp!! for the Lamp!!  
oil!!! -

House smelt pleasantly - yes lit because  
it was getting dark lit -

Wife) weak & in despair - What  
an ass that woman is -

Father has omitted to mention  
one of the most charming peculiarities  
of this singular woman, viz. her manner  
of ascertaining whether it will be proper  
for her to enter a room - ordinary  
mortals knock at our door,  
but this creature, knowing that  
any call of "Come in" would  
never reach her consciousness,  
gently opens the door & peeks  
carefully through the crack -  
whereupon she uses her discretion  
about an entry. We should prob-  
ably have always remained in  
blissful ignorance of this little



idly quency, had it not been  
that I accidentally caught her  
in the act. We go in town  
dinner with Lucy Franklyn  
Thursday, and on Saturday  
with Minnie. Do wish the good  
& come on with sister - as  
although I long to hear you, I  
not for the words here you attempt  
it, unless you were sure that it was  
not to you harm.

Will you please ask Mrs. [unclear]  
& send me <sup>big</sup> some cards and  
direct cards & jam but I wish  
& like this morning so they will  
only. Think it some delay and I  
to the Toledo people. I think  
sent cards to Aunt Eliza but not  
not entirely sure -

Good night my own dear [unclear]  
cards for and I send more than  
I have room to write.  
 Lovingly Peter