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D-329 2:54: Transcription of Letter from John B. Lewis to Elizabeth Lewis, April 29, 1851

This transcription contains language contemporaneous of the time and is being presented as part of a historical record. Please note that the transcription has not been reviewed for final editing.

J B Lewis to Elizabeth Lewis S F to Farmington Ct

San Francisco Apr 29, 1851

My Dear Wife,

I know dear Libby you will feel very much disappointment when you hear that I cannot return home this spring as I anticipated. Since I made up my mind to return, Business has completely changed. It has now settled into a steady regular business, and we have been compelled to change with the improvements. We have completely changed all of our stock for Large American animals our carts for drays and consequently been at a considerable expense, our business is increasing every day and bids fair to equal and exceed any other carmen in the city. In fact we have the name of being the most and giving the best satisfaction. Pacific Street Wharf is now finished and two vessels are there to discharge. George will now attend to one and I to the other. We shall buy 2 more horses & drays probably next week, or we have to hire more or less every day. I have purchased a house and Lott for \$750, 2 stories with 2 rooms each and are now building a Stable & Barn 25 by 30 ft. The men sleep in the old house. This house & Lot was sold at auction and was very cheap, as our business continues to increase, and I cannot leave it with out a great sacrifice. I have, for various reasons determined to remain here until next fall or Winter. I have thought strongly of sending for you and making this my home for a few years or as long as I can make as much in a month as at home in Five Years. I can live here now nearly as cheaply as in the states, and the society is now as good as at home, and if I could return now my creditors would take all I have earned and I would be as poor as ever and I am completely unfitted to go at any business there. Now I have a good established business and reputation, which if I should leave I never could reclaim again, and would be folly to lose, It seems as if I could not stay away any longer and do want to embrace my dear wife once more, and fold her to my heart. Now dearest I wish you to think of it and not to decide hastily, whether you will come and be with your husband or remain where you are until I return which will be uncertain. By the next steamer I shall send money, sufficient for you to come with or if not keep until I return. Use your own judgement, and dont be influenced in your decision by any light matter, I dont wish to influence you to do anything, that hereafter you may be sorry for. If you decide to come Wm will probably know some one that is coming, and will take charge of you. When I write in my next, I will give all directions and tell you what to bring. You will want very few things as every thing is cheap as at home. Feather beds and such things are a nuisance. Furniture is cheaper here than at home. The house I shall paper as soon as I get time and if you come the men will all be in a house by themselves and only you and I and George live together. Our neighbors are close by and the First in the city. Let me know if you come, when you will start so that I may meet you aboard of the Steamer. I know how bad you will feel on reading this, but I have thought of it for

some time and did not come to the conclusion until I had well considered what was my duty and for the best under the circumstances. All will no doubt be very surprised and perhaps think I am wrong, in sending for you. By the last Steamer I received a letter from Fred & Wm. I am glad he has so good a situation and he appears to like it. He wrote me considerable news from Northumberland in fact all that I have heard form there was through him. I do not have a word from Sarah or John R. I will now leave this until morning and may rub up my eas a little. Tomorrow we have got topay Warfage Bill of about \$1000 & so we have the Bills to make out & collect to-night. Wm thinks you only made him a flying visit. Cate has another baby. How they come. I shall not know half of them of the news. By Freds letter I heard of the death of Augustine. Write all of the news. The Whigs have just gained the election and are highly elated in consequence. It is now beautiful weather and I am as well and hearty as a fish. I will commence my next letter a little sooner and have more time to write you all the news. If you were here I should be perfectly contented, but as it is I am rather lonesome. Give my best respects to all. Love to Jane Aunt C and all the children. Tell Lewis he is old enough to write Uncle John a letter. I dont know when I shall get time to write to all my relatives as I do not write any evenings now if I can possible avoid it. George is well and sends love.

From our affectionate Husband

J B Lewis