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D-329 2:71: Transcription of Letter from Elizabeth Lewis to John B. Lewis, October 19, 1857

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.

Libby to John Lewis in San Francisco

Staten Island Oct 19th 1857

My Dear Husband

I was very much disappointed not to receive a letter from you to-night, but I know there is some good reason or I should have received one. The steamer came last Friday – and I thought my letter would go to Farmington and come down to me to-day/. I hope you are not sick dearest or your eyes wee weak to write. I thought perhaps you were at Petaluma and steamer day was forgotten – I received your other dear letter the next day after I sent your last, also one enclosed for Mother. I think perhaps she will be here this week. Ed and Rob are at F.--- and she told them she could return with them if she was able. She is not well – She is at Fathers, says everything about Jane, James and every body in the house. I do believe she is half crazy. I have very little news to write you this time. as I have hardly been out of the house since I last wrote. Last Saturday Cate and I went over to the city to do some shopping – It was almost an impossibility to get into a store or get anyone to wait upon you – all the banks have suspended, merchants, large & small dealers have failed, so that in many places goods are cheap, and those who have money are laying in for a stock now – I went over expressly to get me a black silk, but came home without it. I purchased a hat for Charlie, I could get nothing which suited me but took up with a felt hat, which will be very useful. It cost \$5 It can be dyed and trimmed over dozens of times and then make a good play hat. I also bought tweed for his pants \$2.50 and a cheap silk for myself to take place of my old blue and brown. I thought best to get it now because goods will probably be higher in the spring – It is a small plaid green and black – 75¢ per yard, narrow 14 yds for a dress. That was the extent of my purchases. It was a lovely day, every body was out. We went over at ten o'clock and returned at four –Last week Kate and I went over to Bergan Point to see Mary Dodd Williamson. We reached the dock just in time to see the steamer leave us. So Cate asked some men near by if we could get any one to row us over – but all the boats were out fishing – C. said if we went up to Port Richmond we could go over in the return boat, So on we went, C. stopping where ever she saw a row boat and trying to get some one to row us over – I begged her to come on, for I was too timid to go with a boy, but at last we did. I trembling like a leaf all the time and when I got out of the boat, I lost my balance and came near getting a little ducking. Kate laughed at my awkwardness, and I presume you would have done the same. Mary was here the day and brought her little nephew with her. He is very fair and has very light hair almost white. At night while I was undressing Charlie, he asked me if Georgy put cream on his face, “What do you mean Charlie” said I? “Well he puts milk on his face then”. The other day he was talking about the clouds asked if there were clouds in San F.--- too. I told him yes. “Are they fastened to-gether Mama? He finds P for Papa, and D for Dan yet, and U for

Uncle. He is very well, plays out a great deal, is as fat as ever. Tonight when I put him to bed he kissed me twice and says "Tell Papa I stole two kisses – and I have got some books to learn my letters in. He is a decided character. No one can speak to him but he has an answer ready. He sends a kiss to Papa & Uncle Charlie and Dan – I dreamed last night of meeting Charlie in F---I thought I put my arms around his neck – The dream was so real that it awoke me – Will is on the lounge asleep, Kate is in the rocking chair, Hattie is on one side of the table nodding – while I am writing to my dear one – Reed returned last week much improved – Sarah and family are all well and send love to you – I was very glad to that you got through the election so well. I know you must have been completely worn out. Dave sent Will a paper with returns showing that he was elected Sheriff. I congratulate him and hope that he will do well. His mother will be delighted to hear it. She is now in Schuylerville – has not been very well, but is in usual health now – We all attended church yesterday. Wm has a horse and carriage and we rode – bought recently – I rather think, purchased low to sell again. I do not know however, I had a few grapes this evening, have had very little fruit this year, no more than I should have had in San F---. It does not seem so plenty as formerly. Chestnuts are in market and pretty soon I'll have some nice apples out of Fathers cellar. They are all well at F—Aunt C. wants to know if I am ever coming back. I have not yet visited her, and she is getting rather impatient I think, I shall go up about the first of Nov -- stopping at Mrs Taylors and at New Haven I have not heard from her since we went to the Chrystal Palace. Kate had a lunch party the other day. Mrs E Bement, Mrs Hoyt and Mrs Winthrop, Johnson and Miss Winthrop, Albertina Rush is spending the winter in Switzerland among her husbands friends. Mary Jane & Mrs Witherspoon was here the other day, inquired after you ec I attempted to finish a pair of shoes for Mrs Bacon's baby – and worked until my floss gave out. It is not very convenient to store so I shall have to leave them until next time. Give my love and kiss the baby for me. Give my love to all our neighbors and friends. I hope you are well my own dear husband – and as comfortable as you can be. I wish I was with you. I do feel very lonely at times. I do not see that I gain any strength at all. I am just good for nothing and always will be. I have a good appetite all the time – why has Dr and wife gone to the Islands – just for a pleasure trip? is it not a sudden move? I saw the list of passengers of the Central America but did not see any more names that I know. The Northern Lights also met with some accidents. I see Mrs Beck is among the list of passengers – we have had a dull dreary day and to-night it rains and blows dismally enough. You asked me how your note to May Garraty was – I do not remember exactly. I thought one was for \$150 and one \$180 Mary will know. You paid \$30 interest long ago and after she was married I thought you paid the small note. I know Mary will remember. I have not sent Mother's letter to her. Perhaps you will blame me, but she has been in such a state excitement. I thought it would only add fuel to the flame. She will probably be here this week, and I will give you the result by next mail – I wish I could borrow of some one and send directly to you. I know you need it so much, I know you would think I did right if you was here – I think you can trust your own Lissie. Kate has woke and brought in a plate of gingerbread, says she wishes you was here to help eat it. Reed has just come from visiting the girls saying he would like to see you, to tell you he does not bother me and is telling me what to write – says he hopes you can read what Reed told me to write all send a great deal of love to you. Matters seem to be progressing between Hattie and Mr C. I believe I have sent all

the news, and with my very best to you. I will say good-night dearest husband. I hope you are not ill and that I shall get a dear good letter next mail. Lots of love to Charlie. Good by dearest from your own affectionate wife Lissie B Lewis

Do please send your measure, you may get a present if you do. Remember me to all the neighbors, Dan and all.