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D-329 2:76: Transcription of Letter from Elizabeth Lewis to John B. Lewis, December 18, 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

Farmington Dec 18th 1857

My Dear Husband

I received your letters again from you last Tues.eve I was at Lennie's Dick would not trust anyone to bring the package but just himself. Helen got the Pacific's in the afternoon, and I said then, there ought to be letters also, but he was so prudent,he never mentioned it – just at eve he came – and handed me those two great heavy envelopes, and I could not think what in the world it meant, Mr Llawson, wife and two daughters were there and the children all made so much noise that it was impossible to read anything, but after going over two or three times I found it was money for Aunt Julia. I wrote to Will to know if I should send it to him by Express or deposit it in the Bank here, until some of them came up. I received answer to-day for James to send draft. Aunt Julia is at Wills. I know she will be very grateful to receive it. It is too bad Dave lost so much by Stather & Church – will he not be able to get some if it back. I should not dare to send so much money that way – I hope Dave will do well in his new station. I have written to brother Charlie and will write to Dave if I have time. I intended to have done so this afternoon, but it was almost dark before I finished Charlie's, and I do not know if I can use my eyes much more than to write to you. They do not trouble me but writing tires them very much. I have not a bit of news to write. Farmington is the same old dull place. Miss Porters girls make the streets seem rather lively, and if we happen to have any snow this winter, I suppose there will be plenty of Sleigh riding. As yet the weather has been very mild, almost as much as is so in San F--- we have had but very few cold days and only one or two little snow storms. They turn to rain and then it clear off quite warm. The grass is Aunt C's yard is green like spring.

I received my new bonnet the next day after I wrote you last, also received a letter from Mrs T. saying she could not come up to visit me, so I packed up a few things and started in a real snow storm for Westport. Mother had an oil silk covering to put over my bonnet, I have my shawl and Lennie's cloak over it, then a warm worsted scarf and fur cuffs, and really they had bundled me up so, that I was "most roasted" as Charlie says. I left him with Mother. He was as good as could be. I left here at eight in the morning and arrived there about eleven, stayed until Monday afternoon, went to New Haven remained two nights and came home Wednesday in the rain. I was so protected that I needed no umbrella. I enjoyed my visit with Mrs Taylor very much – I received a letter from her yesterday, also come pretty cards for Charlie. I wanted to take him with me so she could tell you all about him. I answered her letter last night, and also sent some things to you. I hope they will not inconvenience her at all. I sent the seeds because I knew it would be about time to plant them. I was not here in the right time to gather and know there is not a very choice selection. The sweet corn is from sister Sarah's and is very nice for I ate plenty

of the same kind while I was there. The two black Cravats are from Lewis. The handkerchief marked J.B.Lewis is from Lennie The other two are from Lissie B Lewis – one for you and one for Charlie. I wanted to send you something pretty and useful, but could not tell what to get. If you had sent your measure I should have made up a small trunk, and sent you some walnuts and butternuts, I will try to send ere long if I can. I saw Mrs B's mother in New Haven and told her I should probably send a trunk, so she found some pink French calico and said she would send that, I told her if I did not send the trunk, I would take the calico when I went. It is for the baby. Give my love to them all. James Fake is here at school this winter, he wrote to his mother for her to send some black walnuts down to New York, and when I have god opportunity I shall send them to you. When I wrote you last Lenn was sick with Asthma, she is quite well now and we went to Hartford day before yesterday. She purchased some Christmas presents, gave me mine before hand, a pair of fancy hair pins, pearl & gilt for me, pretty plaid different for Charlie a sack, book ec for the children. Mother gave me money to get you a pair of gloves, but as I did not find the right number. I told her I would get them when I went. She seems quite happy now has not said anything about going to California. I believe Lenny has written you, she said she had commenced a letter – and I presume she will think of more than I have to interest you I hope dear Mrs Taylor will arrive safely at San F---. I know you will envy Mr T his happiness – but dearest it will not be very long before I come home too. I shall be on the lookout for good opportunities. There are Mrs Brooks, Mrs Lippingwell, and Mrs Thomas,if I can ascertain when they leave. it would be pleasant for me to be with some of them. It is now past nine o'clock Aunt C and Jeanette have gone to bed. The wind is whistling as though it would be cold tomorrow. It is lonely enough sitting here. My back ackes as if old times might be coming on. I saw G and Abby they are well, send love, the baby is fat as butter and good too, The children want to know if I am ever coming to visit them. Buck says “O yes, you are going to wait till the last day – and then you can't come at all” Master Charlie received a picture papers, I suppose from Dan, he was very much delighted, and we were all as much amused with it as he was. I told Jim to bring me up on one of Lewis papers, but he forgot it tonight, perhaps he will bring it in the morning. The other day we were at Jane's. Charlie was by the stand amusing himself. Jane said “Well I guess I might as well brush my teeth and dress myself” (It is near suppertime) Charlie never turned his head,but said “Lazybones” in a very quiet way. We took no notice of it however. He amuses me very much sometimes. He puts his arms around my neck and kisses me. “I do love you dear mama and I love Papa too” I think he remembers his home remarkably for so young a child. He sends a kiss to Papa and one to Dan. I had Mr Smith make him some nice smooth blocks and they amuse him very much. Abby gave me a little plush cap, trimmed with dark blue velvet and blue silk tassels, which Buck wore last winter. It just fits him and he is so pleased with it. My Christmas presents this year will not mount to much. I am knitting some worsted boots for Marion, Mothers and Aunt C., to wear in the snow and ice.

I do not flourish very extensive hoops. I guess you can get near enough to get a good kiss and whether you are able to give one or not – I wish my arms were around your neck now – dearest. I know it is lonesome enough for you – and unpleasant to be changing housekeepers so often. I will promise to stay when I get back. and roam no more without my mate. I feel sometimes as if I did wrong to come away – Experience is the best teacher I suppose. so I must learn all the

lessons I can – I wish I could help you out of all your troubles. I shall hardly dare to go on the farm near Mrs Bacon she is so smart. I shall be all in the shade. I did not tell you I liked my bonnet, and when I have a good opportunity will send you mine and Charlie's picture. His hair is not cut yet. He is very well. and so am I. Many of our old friends were home to Thanksgiving but I did not see them. I have had several calls. Mr Henry Lewis & Celia, Mrs Timothy Cowles, Mrs Skinner – Mary Julius, etc There is a workstand and six hairseat chairs here at Aunt's. Do you think it would be best to pack them and send them around the horn? By laying four chairs together you could judge how large a box they would require. I think four would go in a box and the other two with the stand and not make very large boxes. They are not as large as ones in San F---. The box would have to be about three ft one way by 2½ the other – and the thickness of the chairs. Someone said freight was low – Write me what you think about it perhaps it would be foolish to do so. You know best Aunt C. and Mother and all send love – The children talk a great deal about you, and Lenny does not give up on your coming home. God grant we may all meet again safely – Love to all friends. Mrs T will tell you all she can think of. It is almost eleven so I will bid you good night, pleasant dreams, a good nights rest and well in the morning. Have not time to write Dave. Good bye my ever Dear one, may God bless you and keep you is the prayers of your ever affectionate wife.

Lissie

E.B.Lewis

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy new Year. Poor Mrs T felt sad when she sent her Christmas present to Charlie. Everything reminds her of her little ones.

Good by dearest, one kiss good night.

Lissie