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D-329 2:78: Transcription of Letter from Elizabeth Lewis to John B. Lewis, January 17, 1858

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 in San Francisco

Farmington Jan 17th 1858

My Own Dear Husband

It is Sabbath morning. The bell has just done tolling. Mother has taken Charlie with her, Aunt C. and Jeanette have also gone to church. I remained at home so that I could have a quiet time to write to you. You know I do not often write on Sunday, but I did not see when I could have the quiet I wished except to-day. I received your dear but very short letter last Friday and felt as if I wanted wings to fly to you at once. I had had the blues all day and then your letter came. I had hard work to keep the tears back, but conquered pretty well until the next night, when they would come in spite of me. Thursday eve I went to an exhibition of Mr Hart's School. The boys spoke pieces, ec It was good but not so good as Deacon Hart used to get up. Then I went down to Lennie's to stay all night. read my letters ec, had one from you and Mrs B. one from Mrs Taylor, one from Alice. I was very glad to hear from all. Mrs T's was from Aspinwall. I hope she is safely in San F-- long ere this. She had a tedious time at A. I should think. When you see her thank her for her letter, give my love to her – and also to Mrs B., I will try to answer them both soon. I know dearest you find it very hard to leave our pleasant home in San F-- I hope you may not have to sacrifice it. I was fearful that so much land would involve you too much, and then my coming too was an additional expense, but I had no idea that you owed so much for the land. I am sorry you bought but you dearest know what is best. Do not be discouraged dear husband. I hope we shall see the bright side sometime. We have always been very comfortable thus far, although you have often been obliged to work very hard for it, but I hope I shall come back to you with more health and strength so that I can be of some use to you, to help you instead of always hanging behind. There will be a great many little things I can do on the ranch to help you. I dont know as I can make good butter though. The months are flying fast, though to you slowly, but I am moving about so much, it makes the time seem much shorter, but as soon as the stormy month of March is past I shall be preparing to be on my way – you spoke of mortgaging the place in San F-- why could you not sell the lower half of the lot and not the whole or wouldn't it be sufficient. If you could leave thirty or forty feet on the upper side where the house stands unencumbered I think it would be a good plan. The rent of the house and barn will bring you in a little. I hope you have been able to sell your work to Dan for a good price. I know you are harressed almost to death, how you shall pay this and that debt. Do not give up to Copp, make him pay you every cent, if it is only \$5. or \$10 a month. I hope you name it off from that note as security for him to Dr Sheldon. Is not ten feet of our home which you bought of Dr White in my name? I wish there was thirty more added on to it, then you would be sure of one little place at least – Thus far I have written on Sunday. The people are coming home from church, so I will put off until to-morrow – Monday eve – Again dearest I take pen, ink and paper

to finish writing to you – I went to church in the afternoon and heard a very excellent sermon from Dr Porter from the text – “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” He was more animated than usual and all seemed interested in his subject. I cannot see that he fails much – Last Sabbath morn I went with Mother to the Methodist. Cate and Will and little Katie came up on Saturday left Monday. Mr and Mrs Howe board with them. William came to New Haven on railroad business. It rained like great guns when they left. we have as yet had no winter at all. The weather is mild, the walking and traveling is very good. There seems to be but little frost on the ground. The grass is green and it seems more like spring than winter. I do not think it is healthfull as good cold winters. We have rain instead of snow. I have had only one good sleigh ride. Since I wrote you I have attended the Sewing Society one evening at Mrs Frances Cowles. They had a very pleasant circle, but not the old one you and I used to go with. Some were new comers in town, others were the younger portion. After eight o’clock the young folks had a jolly time, singing and dancing until near eleven – As it was only a little past New Years, I suppose they thought they might as well play while they could. Most of them had attended parties for several evenings before. Lennie went with me. Jim Fake came for us. The younger set of Lewis’ age have a circle by themselves, meet once in two or three weeks. A short time since, one met at Mrs Lewis Hills and Lewis had Anthony come to carry the girls home – They were going past Mrs Gays store, Tony ran against that stone and upset them. The children screamed, which frightened the horse, He ran around the quarter, and dashed the sleigh all to pieces. No one was hurt. Lennie and James, Harriet & Harriet Phelps, Jim Fake, Ella and Charlie & myself spent the afternoon at Elisa’s (Mrs Rice) Aunt & Mother and all were invited. We had a very pleasant time, good supper, ice cream in the evening. It was past nine when we came home. I had no idea it was so late. Charlie was as bright as a button, and good as could be. He usually goes to bed about half past six. Tis nine o’clock. The bell had just done ringing, and Janette and Aunt C. are nearly ready for bed – Mother has been here twice. Lennie and Helen have also been here. They had been up to the old store which is now occupied by a son of Mr Dutton. He bought Mr Rowes or Myer Cowles old goods, and has been selling them for almost nothing. He also kept groceries. He is selling out to-night at auction is going to leave and go in business with his wife’s father in Massachusetts. I looked at a pair of pants \$12., but they were about a mile too big for you or Charlie either, so I did not get them – Lennie had seen and sent to get them for me to look at. Jim and Lewis have been here this evening. Jim promised to write to you. All are well at Lennie’s and send a great deal of love to you. Sara Bodwell was here last eve. Woodbridge is at work again. Father is well as usual. I shall either go up to Father’s or to Hartford next week. I do not know which just will be convenient for Abby. Lennie and Mother are hardly satisfied to let anybody have a piece of me except themselves. Little Charlie is well and grows wild everyday. I do not think it improved him to be with Mother for she indulges him too much – However he is a pretty good boy – He is fat as you can be and his cheeks as red as roses, his hair is still uncut. He talks about you as much as ever – The other night he woke and talked about you and Mary Gusher. He is a dear little fellow and I wish we were with you to comfort you. I suppose this will find you on the ranch with Charlie and you will be busy planting ec –

Do not go to much expense about the house dearest – I hope you will get through your trouble better than you anticipate. Give my love to brother Charlie. Take good care of each other, be

careful of your health – and keep up good courage. “Trust in Him, be of good courage and He shall strenghten they heart.”

Libby to John Lewis Jan 17th 1858

I forgot to tell you the news, Winthrop Wadworth has another boy, making four, in little more than four years. Mrs Ward also has a son. May Whitman (Mrs Macoreher) also has a daughter, all were born within a day or two of each other.

He often makes little speeches which I should put down, if I had pencil and paper close by me, but when I come to write, I forget half I wish to tell you. When are you going to send your measure – Lennie would make you a present of a pair of pants if you would. Tell C, to send his love too. again good by my own dear one. God bless and comfort you. Much love from your ever affectionate wife

Lissie B Lewis