

1879

Jan 10

Mrs. Albion M. Bourger  
No 227 West 6<sup>th</sup> St

Erie

Penna

Greenboro N. C.

Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1879

My Darling Wife:

Your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst was rec'd tonight - I had known, in a vague way, both from your previous letters and from some hints in the Observer - which is the only paper I see now; and indeed, I hardly even find time to read that - that you were having a severe "season" at the North; but I did not think much of it, until your last, because your letters had come to me, with reasonable regularity. The one of the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. was rec'd on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> inst and the one of the 4<sup>th</sup> on the 7<sup>th</sup>. I presumed, that, as letters could get out of Erie, they could also get in; and indeed, I am quite unable to account for the phenomenon, now. I am sorry Lodie had to wait so long for her New Year's letter. It was duly written and sent according to contract and I have amused myself, not a little over the fun which I thought you would have over it. My remembrance of it is, that it was quite a humorous letter, which I thought would please her and cheer you not a little. I may have seemed a little lazier about writing but I have been straining every nerve to get through with my manuscript. I have not been out of the yard but once since the new year and, for that matter, not for a week or two before; and you know, dear, that when one has sat from 10 A. M. until one or two o'clock the next P. M., with pen in hand, at the table working all the time, he does not feel exactly like writing many letters. I was sorry to seem to neglect you - neglect you I have not - but I have set my heart so, on finishing this that everything has had to bow to it. During the

past week, I have written only with ex-  
treme difficulty. My right hand has for-  
got its cunning at times, I don't know what  
it was. Dr Gregory said a slight touch of  
scrivener's paralysis. Some sort of neuralgia  
I guess - I have treated it as well as I could,  
to everything but rest. Today it has served me  
better though almost every few strokes since  
dinner has brought a twinge. However, it  
will have a rest now, for the manuscript  
- the measurment opus - is done! Today  
at 7.22. p.m. we wrote the last case!  
Already, I begin to feel tired and  
almost lost. I could almost hug the  
great pile of craggy manuscript of  
1800 cases which lies opposite to me on  
the table. I did not know how dear my  
work had become to me, but my ach-  
ing shoulders and back remind me that  
it has cost something; so I may well prize  
it. There are now 304 pages printed. The  
cases will make 600 - I know you will  
be glad to hear that it is done. I feel as if  
I had been emancipated. I shall rest until  
Tuesday morning. Then I propose to begin the  
Index. I am going to disperse and prepare to  
move tomorrow. Shall go down on Monday -  
I am going to town tomorrow to get some  
money. I have finally got something which  
I can get some money on, as I believe. It  
has been awfully slow times. I have not paid

the butcher even since Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>. He  
sent in his bill today #1750. Is it that big  
economical for three in the family and two  
servants? This includes potatoes too. We have  
lived right well too, but I took the matter in  
my own hands and directed just what we  
should have and what should be done with  
it, and Rosa has been invaluable to me.

I expect to send you some money tomor-  
row, and have reasonable grounds for such  
expectation. I am sorry to say that Judge Kerr  
is not dead. Having quite made up my mind  
to endure the affliction, it is annoying, indeed,  
to know that one has shed his tears for nothing.  
I have no objection to his living but I hate to have  
my feelings harrassed up for nothing. Mrs  
Burwell, of Raleigh died last week, also, Col.  
Curtis whom you may remember.

Henry Mendenhall is married to somebody,  
I have forgotten the name, as usual, a stranger  
and a drummer I believe; and Cyrus P. is in  
Washington hunting after White's old shoes, we  
doubt think he will get them but "Doubt" is dread-  
fully uneasy; and in truth, I don't blame him  
because he knows as we do, that Hayes has a  
gift at doing foolish and inappropriate  
things.

I enclose here a dollar. Lizzie wrote  
me a very distressing letter of her afflictions  
and asking for "a quarter or more or half a  
dollar", I can't get the change and so send

a dollar, God bless her bright eyes! I wish it was a thousand! I would write her a letter but am too tired to finish this even. Give her a lot of kisses and tell her that if I let her hum her mamma all to herself she must be brave and happy for my sake. I will write to you or her on Sunday. I have a pretty little story about half-written which I am going to send her as soon as I am finished.

Love to all - God bless you. I am sorry Millie had such bad fortune but she must not be discouraged. The light will shine again sometime. Please which let us be glad that we are all well and have enough to eat, something to wear and a roof, at least, in cold weather. God is better to us than to many and we should keep up brave hearts for the future. I think this will be a happy new year for us all, if it did begin with a snow blockade between us - Thank God there is no blockade between our hearts, and we can all work heartily and bravely I trust for a new success, which will surely come, if we keep on.

Yours ever

Abigail Howard