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## Documents Online

**Title:** Letter from William Wilkins to Matilda Wilkins

**Date:** October 11, 1834

**Location:** I-Friends-1982-11

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St. Petersburg.

Saturday evening.

Oct - 11<sup>th</sup> - 1834

My dear Matilda,

I wrote to you from New York by the return of the Pilot - from Liverpool - from Newcastle - London - Hamburg - Lubek - and Travemünde - and I now have the satisfaction of telling you that I am here in safety and in excellent health. My journey throughout has not been attended by any accident, or unpleasant occurrence - yet I cannot say that when upon the water I ever had any comfortable feelings - not very sick - but always obliged to keep very quiet, & generally to recline - The journey from London to this place, quite a trifling one of course will be performed in eight days - a very different affair from what I had anticipated! From London to Hamburg the Steam boat passes in less than three days - then one day in a slow, dull and lazy gun - or coach to Travemünde Lubek - and from thence to this place we performed

in less than four days, without any roughness  
of the water & with a favourable breeze. So  
much for our terrors of the Baltic sea and  
the gulph of Finland! We sailed from the  
mouth of the Trave (the day I last wrote to  
you) at three o'clock in the afternoon of  
Tuesday and disembarked here this morning.  
We might have terminated the voyage yesterday,  
had we not been obliged to lie at night  
off Cronstadt (12 miles below) & then to  
remain there two or three hours in the  
morning for the examination of the luggage  
and passports of the passengers.

Upon the arrival of the boat at the English  
Quay (lined with a long row of beautiful  
dwelling houses of splendid edifices) I found  
Mr. Clay in waiting for me with a carriage - he  
carried me to his rooms, where I now am, &  
shall remain for a few days, until I finally  
dispose of myself.

After dinner I was joined by my two  
Aristocratic fellow travellers, & accompanied by  
Mr. Clay, we walked through many of the  
streets - This is truly a magnificent city - the

streets present to you continuous rows of beautiful  
buildings - of palaces - uninterrupted by old  
looking, low or ugly house of any description -  
Every thing is novel and curious - I have just  
returned, after breakfast: taken my tea - and  
the Russian tea is said to be the best in  
Europe - and before retiring to my bed,  
fatigued as I am, I perform the duty of  
telling you and my dear children of my  
safety - Embrace them over & over again for  
me - but you cannot convey to them any  
impression of my affection for them - I hope  
they are all very good & very obedient - Tell  
Charles how doubly dear he is to me, and  
that I hope he is an excellent boy - atten-  
-tive to his school & mindful of you - I  
know that Maria & my pet will be good.  
After this I shall write to the children -  
I hope you will receive the little articles  
I sent in a box to the care of Col. Swart-  
-wort, New York - and the bracelets given to  
the care of Col. Hayne who sailed from  
London on the 1<sup>st</sup> -

When I shall hear from my home God

only knows! The greatest blessing that at this  
moment could light upon my head would  
be to hear that you are all well! My  
present enterprise will, at all events, be  
attended with one good result, the knowledge  
of how dear & necessary to my happiness, are  
my family & my home. I know that on  
the score of letters, I shall be disappointed  
& unhappy - because my impatient desire  
continually to hear cannot be gratified.  
Make the children scribble to me. Tell  
Charles he must often write to me - and  
tell me every thing about home - but you  
must all keep from me every thing like  
bad news - Remember me with great  
affection to Mr. Biddle & Sawanion - they  
will surely write to me - What is Charles  
Evans about? Tell him to send me the  
news, the dirt & chat of the scandal of the  
town. I always repeat my hope to you  
that your mother is with you - my love to her.  
No winter here yet. The Conference & Conference  
are absent. Good night - and Heaven  
bless you.

Wm. Withers

St. Petersburg,  
Saturday evening,  
Oct. 11th, 1834

My dear Matilda,

I wrote to you from New York, & by the return of the pilot, from Liverpool, from Doncaster, London, Hamburgh, Lubeck, and [Travimi.indi], and I now have the satisfaction of telling you that I am here in safety and in excellent health. My journey throughout has not been attended by any accident or unpleasant occurrence, & yet I cannot say that when upon the water I ever had any comfortable feelings, not very sick, but always obliged to keep very quiet & generally to recline. The journey from London to this place is quite a trifling one & can well be performed in eight days, a very different affair from what I had anticipated! From London to Hamburgh the Steam boat passes in less than three days, then one day in a slow, dull and lazy german coach to [Travimiindi] Lubeck. and from thence to this place we performed in less than four days, without any roughness of the water & with a favourable breeze. So much for our terrors of the Baltic sea and the Gulph of Finland! We sailed from the mouth of the [Travi] (the day I last wrote to you) at three o'clock in the afternoon of tuesday and disembarked here this morning. We might have terminated the voyage yesterday, had we not been obliged to lie at night off Cronstadt (12 miles below) & then to remain there two or three hours in the morning for the examination of the luggage and passports of the passengers.

Upon the arrival of the boat at the English Quay (lined with a long row of beautiful dwelling houses & splendid edifices) I found Mr. Clay in waiting for me with a carriage. He carried me to his rooms, where I now am, & shall remain for a few days, until I finally dispose of myself.

After dinner I was joined by my two Aristocratic fellow travellers, & accompanied by Mr. Clay, we walked through many of the streets. This is truly a magnificent city, the streets present to you continued rows of beautiful buildings, of palaces, uninterrupted by old looking, low or ugly house of any description. Every thing is novel and curious. I have just returned, after dark, taken my tea, and the Russian tea is said to be the best in Europe, and before retiring to my bed, fatigued as I am, I perform the duty of telling you and my dear children of my safety. Embrace them over & over again for me, but you cannot convey to them any impression of my affection for them. I hope they are all very good and very obedient. Tell Charles how doubly dear he is to me, and that I hope he is an excellent boy, attentive to his school & mindful of you. I know that Maria and my Pet will be good. After this I shall write to the children. I hope that you will receive the little articles I sent in a box to the care of Col. Swartwout, New York, and the bracelets given to the care of Col. Hayne who sailed from London on the 1 oct.

When I shall hear from my home God only knows! The greatest blessing that at this moment could light upon my head would be to hear that you are all well! My present enterprize will, at all events, be attended with one good result, the knowledge of how dear & necessary to my happiness are my family & my home. I know that on the score of letters I shall be dissatisfied and unhappy, because my incessant desire continually to hear cannot be gratified. Make the children scribble to me. Tell Charles he must often write to me, and tell me every thing about home, but you must all keep from me every thing like bad news. Remember me with great affection to Mr. Biddle & Trevanian. They will surely write to me. What is Charles [Emert] about? Tell him to send me the news, the chit-chat & the scandal of the town. I always [impart] my hope to you that your mother is with you, my love to her. No winter here yet. The Emperor & Empress are absent. Good night, and Heaven bless you.

W<sup>m</sup> Wilkins