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Title: Letter from William Wilkins to "Pet" Wilkins

Date: December 29, 1834

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St Peters buy, Dec. 29th 1834. My dear Let -This morning I sout by the Courin of the French Embapador to the can of Mr. Livings for in Lain a packet for your mother, containing a letter to herself, one to your under Dallar, Charly, Sophy & little Hett - And now I an. - swe your dear letter to the by the opportunity, of which I have just heard of a Courin to Lordon despatched by the Butish Minister-I reed your letter, my belovece Pet, so well and puttily withen, on this har, day, with there from mother, linde balley, Charles & dear little Hett - I am much oblised for you, and you must wike to me very often - your letty come rafely & notate looks into Mich. Tell let Biddle it was conficie in him to take a ranter of my abrown of Bommence to build at the Knoll - I think he has done it on purpose to get clear of buy festind with my plans & notions - you till on he is joing to take you all out with here there but summer . A

doubt he thinks of every then that would in whe you happy - and cannot continplate heaving a house of his own without hewing my pour Mildren under its roof. I hope you are all attentive to hein and love hein - the is the book - the only fried father has on earth ! Mother withy to Done how constantly good his to you all, of how dut of evaluating her patitude to him is - May goo bly him! Gad will bly him for his browden Lattention to the confortunal! I should like to know how you I he kop get along tryether now-ce-clay, - Do you still count, kip, but of fight? How du de. Watts und he. Bradford behave thinselves when they come ent to see you? live my love to Charly & tell him of the letter I

how witten to him - and that I have said to him, that if Sundersky trus out by be hand some of good temperal, I be like him, he shall be broken for him, of he I hall have him for a nicling horse whom my setterm, provided, his mother gives him no lad marks in her letters In me . He must answer my letter immeriably of till me what he thinks of the bayain - My mit lette shall be directed to my dear of excellent Maria - Extract calls me to my dinne at 5 welvek - I go to it alone - I have died. des dinne was - soup - beef shak - partion turky - eggs & spinach - canots - bokators bakide unitard - and - sweet cakes - & water -To day the weather has not been so cold it was a brantiful, dear day - & I saw the san! I walked for an how of a half - walked over the Awa on the ice, covered with show and on robide as the conthe. The cold weather is now by many - and the very coldent will last for about three weeks - After returning from my walk I drafted myself in my count drap, ance wint to court et the Winter palace to be fuscited to the young stemme Duter - the eldert som of the Empiror of him apparent to In Theone - " Son Altipe Impériale Monseigneur le l'esarcuicz et Grand Duc Hiretier "_ Heig about 17 - un ankably hands on -tall - intel. - light of speaks english very well - I have

celsa sum his sisters, the two wider claughter of this Majestin - they are on pretty, on pertal suited of modest in then appearated - the elder, the halfable image of her father - and when she was clancing in a catellion, her mother, the Creful, total 11- she was hash 15 - of course she is about the age of Maria, and about he size . The Empuls also bold the she was quite unasy about her size - she was afraid she woulde not be tall enough . The presump. -time is the will be - for the wither is tall of the father remarkable of chi, ting wished in his afe-- premane - finely formed - fully as tall as In frankl of entancy on of the hundonex men I ever saw. But, I must not tell you of what I have sun at low to, or you will only action me for answer - How face I am Makyon so happy "!" I am pleaned that you are in such file of chely he fall spents detil It as grand mother any fact amongshall my clear children? Tell hu she may take he choice of all but you - that I cannot frank

My dear Pet

This morning I sent by the Courier of the French Embassador to the care of Mr. Livingston in Paris a packet for your mother, containing a letter to herself, one to your Uncle Dallas, Charles, Sophy & little Hett_ And now I answer your dear letter to me by the opportunity, of which I have just heard, of a Courier to London dispatched by the British Minister

I rec^{d.} your letter, my beloved Pet, so well and prettily written, on Christmas day, with those from mother, Uncle Dallas, Charles & dear little Hett _ I am much obliged to you, and you must write to me very often Your letters come safely & nobody looks into them

Tell Mr. Biddle it was unfair in him to take advantage of my absence & commence to build at the Knoll _ I think he has done it on purpose to get clear of being pestered with my plans & notions _ You tell me he is going to take you all out with him there next summer _ No doubt he thinks of every thing that would make you happy _ and cannot contemplate having a home of his own without having my poor children under its roof. I hope you are all attentive to him and love him _ He is the best _ the only friend father has on earth! Mother writes to him how constantly good he is to you all, & how deep & everlasting her gratitude to him is _ May God bless him! God will bless him for his benevolence & attending to the unfortunate!

I should like to know how you & Mr. Ross get along together now-a-days _ Do you still court, kiss, box & fight? How do Mr. Watts and Mr. Bradford behave themselves when they come up to see you?

Give my love to Charles & tell him of the letter I have written to him _ and that I have said to him, that if <u>Sundusky</u> turns out to be handsome & good tempered, & he likes him, he shall be broke for him, & he shall have him for a riding horse upon my return, provided, his mother gives him no <u>bad marks</u> in her letters to me _ He must answer my letter immediately & tell me what he thinks of the bargain _ My next letter shall be directed to my dear & excellent Maria _ Edward calls me to my dinner at 5 oclock _ I go to it alone _ I have dined _ My dinner was _ soup _ beef steak _ partridge _ turkey _ eggs & spinach _ carrots _ potatoes baked custard _ and _ sweet cakes & water

Today the weather has not been so cold _ it was a beautiful, clear day _ & I saw the sun! I walked for an hour & a half _ walked over the Neva on the ice, covered with snow as solid as the earth _ The cold weather is now beginning _ and the very coldest will last for about three weeks _ After returning from my walk I dressed myself in my court dress, and went to court at the Winter Palace to be presented to the young grand Duke _ the oldest son of the Emperor & heir apparent to the throne _ "son Altesse Impériale Monseigneur le Césarevicz et Grand Duc Héretier" _ He is about 17 _ remarkably handsome _ tall _ intelligent & speaks english very well _ I have also seen his sisters, the two elder daughters of their Majesties _ they are very pretty, very gentele

genteel & modest in their appearance _ the elder, the palpable image of her father _ and, when she was dancing in a cotillion, her <u>mother</u>, the Empress, told me she was past 15 _ of course she is about the age of Maria, and about her size _ The Empress also told me she was quite uneasy about her size _ she was afraid she would not be tall enough _ The presumption is she will be _ for the mother is tall & the father remarkable & distinguished in his appearance _ finely formed _ fully as tall as Mr. [Israell] & certainly one of the handsomest men I ever saw. But, I must not tell you of what I have seen at Court, or you will only return me for answer _ "How glad I am that your [sic] so happy"! "I am pleased that you are in such fine & delightful spirits" &c &c!

Has grand mother any pet amongst all my dear children? Tell her she may take her choice of all but you _ that I cannot part