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Title: Letter from Harriet Lane to Lily Macalester

Date: July 14, 1853

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Wheatland. July 14. /53.

My dear Lily,

Your truly gratifying
epistle was received by me
whilst taking a most romantic
stroll with the fair and fragile
Amos L. - your expressions of
tenderness served as a balm to my
wounded spirits - whereupon I
indulged in the luxury of a
laugh - which luxury I had
been most barbarously and
unjustly deprived of, by the
hearing a number of certain tender
lies, by two cruel damsels - forsaking
me at a time when loneliness
only was my portion. You are

Uncle was in Philadelphia but
for a day - I was truly glad
to see him return as Miss
Fletch. left yesterday morning
to accompany Mrs. Weare and
her children to Washington -
so that I was entirely alone -
but my good, dear Uncle, did
not forget me in my loneliness -
but returned to cheer his loved
one. He has not yet fixed
the day for his departure for
England. Your friend Mr
Lightner was here this morning
making many inquiries for
the "absent ladies" - as usual
I made a mail-agent of him.
During Miss Fletch's absence
the housekeeping duties
devolve upon me - I hope to
acquit myself honorably as

the distinguished degree is
 only conferred upon me
until Saturday or Monday.
Lydia's movements puzzled me as
much as they possibly could
have done you. - James wrote me
"Lydia's has gone" - but the idea
was so appalling to him that
he could not tell me where
she had gone - several days
after I received a letter from
Pittsburgh without any name
annexed; but from the contents
hand-writing, etc, I judged this
I fear was the composer - and
immediately set down both
individuals as having arrived
at that state, when, neither,
were in any way, accountable
for their own actions. Have you

from home, it is of no importance
I receive my cheering and
tender intimations of William R.'s
fidelity. My sister-in-law is
still on Staten Island. When
do you go to Chicago? - Farewell,
thou consumer of my heart's best
affections! and let her who feeds
upon thy every look, hear
cheering and loving words of
consolation from thee; and that
right speedily. Love to all, ever
and as ever, your own,
"Henrietta"

Wheatland. July 14./[18]53.

My dear Lily,

Your truly gratifying epistle was received by us whilst taking a most romantic strole with the fair and fragile Amos S. - your expressions of tenderness served as a balm to any wounded spirits where upon I indulged in the luxury of a laugh. which luxury I had been most barbarously and unjustly despaired of, by the tearing asunder of certain tender bias, by two kind damsels - forsaking me at a time when loneliness only was my portion. You are all alone at Louisdale, and I alone at Wheatland. Idol of my heart!! Stronghold of my affections! why is it fate deals so harshly with us? have we dove ought to visit such treatment? - alas! us the innocent suffer with the guilty. I must rouse my philosophy and submit. - Thank you from my heart my own "drooping Lily" for your wishes to see me at Louisdale - my spirit is ever with you but the body can emigrate is beyond my powers of clairvoyance to fix upon decidedly. Mary and Mr Neil are doubtless with you now, and I cannot feather myself so much an to think - with other powerful attractions I will be so much missed. I have faithfully and religiously delivered all your tender conjurements to my much honored Uncle - he was much pleased, and sends you a perfect heart consider in reply - he says "my love to Miss Lily, and tell ^{^ her} if her lands were not worth a cent (one cent) I would think more highly of her (if possible) than I do at present." You are fortunate my disinterested friend - you receive some replies to your boring suggestions - more fortunate than some of your friends, who have to submit to its being entirely a one sided affair, in the way of messages - ahem!!! Uncle was in Philadelphia but for a day - I was truly glad to his return as Miss Hetey left yesterday morning to accompany Ms Weaver and her children to Washington - so that I was entirely alone- but my good, dear Uncle, did not forget me in my loneliness - but returned to cheer his loved one. He has not yet fixed the day for his departure for England. Your friend Mr Lightner was here this morning making many inquires for the "absent ladies" - as usual I made a mail-agent of him. During Miss Hetey's absence the housekeeping duties devolve upon me - I hope to acquit myself honorably as the distinguished degree is only conferred upon me until Saturday or Monday. Lydie's movements puzzled me as much as they possibly could have done you. - James wrote me "Lyddie's has gone"- but the idea was so appalling to him that he could not take me where she had gone- several days after I received a letter from Pittsburgh without any name annexed; but from the contents handwriting etc, I judged Miss Speer was the composer - and immediately set down both individuals as having arrived at that state. when neither, were in any way, accountable for their own actions. Have you ever been in that situation ??? Jim Reynolds has been out several times since your departure and I have failed to excite a little curiosity in your behalf. I told Kate of the summary manner in which we had disposed of her family. She seemed quite well phased. Last night after Uncle's return we regaled ourselves with the highly intellectual amusement of shooting owls. and in our eagerness dispatched these - and as Uncle has "placed a price upon their heads" I imagine many more will share the fate of their mangled companions. I called to see the Misses Porter last week, but to my disappointment found they had left for Easton and parts unknown, & for a time indefinite. Your lover will be true to his promise about the daguerreotype - my Uncle understands his duty. ahem!!! I hope you will appreciate the exertion I am making in your behalf this after noon - for you know of old my aversion to letter writing after dinner - The task has been ^{^ to me} an agreeable one, and if it gives you any pleasure, dear Lily, I am amply repaid - but if you find [me] dull and stupid - this time, at last, I have an apology. Mrs Danforth's letter has never yet been dispatched - but if she is

away from home, it is of no importance. I receive very cheering and tender intimations of William R.'s fidelity. My sister in law is stile on Staten Island. When do you go to Chicago? - Farewell, thou consumer of my hearts best affections and let her who feeds upon thy every look, hear cheering and loving words of consolations from thee: and that right speedily. Love to all ever and as ever, your own,

“Henriqueta”

[letter sent to Lily Macalester]