

It is said Mrs H. Olin means to go as Priscilla Tomboy and a little insignificant frenchman
 Garschee as Watty Cockney first then as Donna & Count Almaviva in the barbers de Seville
 but I can not vouch for the truth of any thing that is said of her. adieu beloved I write
 in haste & hurry give my love to Joseph & kiss all the darlings for me excuse & burn this
 scrawl as soon as you have read it
 Dear Ellen

Your last letter had distressed us all so much, that although
 in the midst of preparations for one of the most brilliant parties that ever was
 given in Washington, no less than a fancy ball at which all must appear in
 character, I have thrown aside Mary's sun, & Septimia's dew spangled
 veil, to write to you. ~~although~~ Cornelia's insisting upon answering your letter
 was the first cause of delay, yet I acknowledge that nothing can even palliate
 the continuance of our silence when we, ^{and she} did not do it; particularly as you
^{also} mentioned the coming of dear little Nell and Mr Coolidge, or went that I
 hope I need not at this day say what unqualified pleasure it would have given
 us all; and a change in Joseph's plan has disturbed us the more as appearing
 connected with our unpardonable silence under such circumstances. yet I
 think dear Ellen you ought both to know us and our bad habits, in writing
 too well to have thought seriously of ^{your} doing now what we have so often done
 before; the only thing in my mind that ^{made} it worse than common was the
 circumstance of Joseph's promised visit; the pleasure it would have given us
 was a self evident truth, but one that ought to have been repeated, and
 the heart being right ought not to be accepted as an apology for the
 indolence which neglects "the small sweet courtesies of life". if any thing
 could cure an inveterate habit brought on by living crowded together as we do
 children ^{during the winter one room} and all, the uneasiness this business has given us all would do it
 but while the days are short and the whole family occupy one room which
 serves for a nursery as well as work shop, and each in turn, but more particularly
 my self ^{as my nurse} ~~cannot~~ ^{are} ~~unable~~ ^{unable} we can not be punctual: in writing this page I have put my letter
 down

six times, three of which I had to take the child up in my arm, to quiet her
screaming, and three more to attend to some childish sport. Ellen has a baby
of her own, consequently the nurse & nursery are nominal luxuries only
my room being the real nursery and myself the nurse, not from any want
of will in the girls, ^{to relieve me} but because as Peel & Tom would have done if I
had had more to say to him, Pefferer has attached himself to me so exclusiv-
ly that even Tim his real favorite is but endured by him in any attempt
to bend him. we have no good Mrs Cox to relieve us in any thing but
washing and dressing the children, that Ellen still continues to do, and
with the addition of the month by nurse & a white workwoman in the house
also working in my room we are nineteen persons in family servant,
included: still that would not have interfered with Joseph's visit we have
a spare room that has only been occupied since V's confinement and Lewis
could have occupied Nicholas's, book room and Joseph have had his room
Nell of course would have slept in mine or with one of her Aunts
the house is a large three story one with 5 rooms 20 feet square and 4 smaller
beside, two large good garret rooms, one of which only is occupied by
our servants, their being an oat building. ~~and~~ ^{and} two very nice yards, one
common to the two tenements with the pump in it, the other private
but large and well turfed surrounded with a good pavement and large
enough to ride the children and exercise them in any way. we pay \$1000 \$
for it this year & M. hopes to get it for 380 here after should we keep it
the neighbour hood is good & even fashionable, we are next door to the
english church whom however we do not visit, a stones throw from
Mrs Lear & her young daughter in law a sweet light hearted girl, very
near the deserriers and almost equidistant between the C & T building

perhaps a little nearer to the former. Old Baron Stakelburg is also
 only three doors from us but Mr. Dis likes him so that there is no communication
 I do not know if the girls mentioned that Boer was settled in Halle/face court
 near Danville, poor fellow he writes with a good deal of feeling at the distance
 at which he is thrown from his friends and early haunts. he says "it is a
 black day in a young man's calendar, the one of separation from his friends
 to fix among, & strangers totally indifferent whether he fails or succeeds, lives
 or dies" No one who has been accustomed from childhood to live in a
 large family where, I may say with truth ~~in~~ all interests were
 common, and every one feels so deep an interest in the affairs of the other,
 in youth when the feelings are warm it is a real misfortune to be thrown
 off to a distance, ^{from one's friends,} amongst strangers, to whom you & your affair, a matter
 of perfect indifference, and who for the most part look upon a ~~young~~ young man
 struggling with ~~poverty~~ as a needy adventurer peeping nothing in common
 with them. of George I hear very good accounts. Mr. Hodgson who went
 out with him tells me that although the youngest midshipman on board,
 the others being 18 & upwards, he is said to be the best informed amongst
 them, and has a character of undaunted intrepidity & integrity —
 I know him better than they do, he has weak nerves, & such are always
 liable to alarm; but he has a pride and quick sensibility of character
 that would make him rush in to the mouth of a cannon rather than
 disgrace him self. he has a great deal of observation and a desire for infor-
 mation which makes him visit every thing worth seeing he wrote to
 me twice from Constantinople where however they were not suffered to land
~~twice~~ from Voula Smirna and Gibraltar which last I never received
 Mr. Hodgson will leave us immediately after the fancy ball to return to
 Constantinople
 if he sails from Boston I will give him a letter to you he is a virginian
 I believe from Bluanne, or Orange perhaps, a little too much of the dandy
 but a very genteel and rather handsome young man; his having seen so much

George will make him an interest in your eyes as it did in mine —
and now he tells you a word of this fancy ball which engrosses every thing in
the shape of a tailor makes her, and as the first ever attempted occupies
all mind, you will naturally wish to know the costume of your own family.
Lewis goes as Robin hood, a green coat cap bow, & arrows, all of which
have been well enough described to imitate. Noel's Dictionary which has
an article of Genealogy gives the costume of every character. The girls
have chosen the four parts of the day, Ellen as night will be draped in black
with a very long black veil spangled with stars of brilliant gold paper
gummed or pasted on I think they ought to be silver ~~and~~ that a crescent should
be added but Noel says nothing of the crescent and the Grand Mistress of the ball
Cornelia has decided for gold. Septimonia will be Aurora or the Dawn. a saffron
coloured frock with white & silver sandals, the morning star made of 6 of Mrs
Morris's jewel buttons really as brilliant as diamonds, in her hair with a long
white veil spangled in imitation of dew. Mary will be noon her dress will
be a poppy coloured gauze over a white silk petticoat white & gold shoes
and bell her hair draped with a beautiful little gold handkerchief sent her
by Mrs Stewart confined with a golden sun. her fresh complexion will make
the dress a becoming one to her. Cornelia goes as evening with a white
dress a long white veil a silver crescent in her hair the ornaments all silver
the dresses are all strictly classical, taken from ^{the} Genealogical Dictionary
nothing has been bought but the poppy coloured gauze & the gold &
silver tinsel which Mrs Abbott let us have very cheap. Louisa bears &
the Miss Bails will form the party. the peasants & flower girls say they ought
to form the suite of the goddess Aurora who calls them to their labours,
the company will generally go in groups, after the ball you shall hear
more in the mean time between this and Thursday the great day they have
3 invitations, which must be accepted by some members of the family.
Tim has taken the poor graph relating to her most tragically she has been in
hysterical excess how could Sister Ellen think so meanly of me? how can she know me so
little. "how can you say so brown Sally, you said you must think me mightily ~~richly~~ of me."

I can not bear to leave you a moment longer than necessary, My Dearest Sister, under so false an impression as Cornelia's letter seems to have made on your mind respecting our feelings for you. The truth is that I should have written to you immediately on Mr. Barrell's arrival, & returned my thanks for the beautiful frock you sent my baby, but when I spoke of writing Cornelia claimed it as her privilege to write the next letter to you, and I gave up to her, having first desired her to leave room for me to add a P. S. week after week passed, and I continually urged her to write, and she telling me she was writing a letter and promising to finish it very day. at last Maria wanted to write and was prevented in the same way by Cornelia's promises, and she finished her letter the morning I was confined, and I comforted myself for not being able to add the few lines I wished, with the pleasure of your being informed in the very first hour of the safe arrival of my fine boy, but I believe her letter lay a day or two on the mantelpiece before it was sent to the office. My Baby is a fortnight old this morning he weighed ~~three~~ ^{the day} pounds when he was born, and has been 30 for a thriving healthy child; and (as usual at first) I have an abundant supply of milk. I have been very fortunate in my nurse, she is very judicious in her management both of the baby & myself, and the most attentive creature in the world. Her knowledge is derived from Dr. Lovell, whose wife she has nursed in seven confinements. He has left me a little while this morning, and the baby is crying in the cradle and I am his nurse until Mrs. Gato's comes in. ~~I have never been able to hear any very direct account of cousin Ann's family.~~ Mrs. Bennet Taylor told Sister Jane that cousin Ann's youngest child died, and two of Mr. Jones's daughters, & as Mrs. Barton (Maury Jones) is still living I suppose Jane & Anna Maria are the two ^{who} died of Scarlet fever. Marshall Jones (the elder son) is on trial for life having had the misfortune to kill a man in Lynchburg. I have written to cousin Ann without further information & in a few lines. He wrote C. in various

to a letter announcing the baby's birth, she promised to write soon some. She says it is
two years since she got a letter from you, and that you must send her messages
sometimes when you write to us. The letter is sealed with black & some allusion ^{made}
to what you has gone through, but nothing from which we could form a con-
-jecture as to the particulars. Aunt Lucy says in a letter to some of her friends in
Florida that Cousin Ann had borne her misfortunes like a true Christian
but E. who mentioned it, took for granted that we knew all about it!

DD

Mrs J. Coolidge Sumner
to the care of Joseph Coolidge Sumner
Boston
Massachusetts

Feb. 1832?



Henry Beech.
Postman here.

I am doing well, but not yet quite strong, & subject to head ache. The
baby seems to have caught a cold & yesterday & today has been fretful & uneasy
he has but not been a very good child. Adieu dearest Sister, I feel fatigued, &
I fear my writing is very illegible. ever affectionately yours own
M. S. Frost