[FMS, Auburn, to WHS, Albany, NY, 16 January 1831]

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Auburn Sunday evening 16

My Dear Henry, your Thursday’s letter came this morning, it

seems to me my letters are forever getting to you, you have not

received my second yet. I have the vapours most wretchedly. The

destroying angel still continues to visit the dwellings of our neigh-

bours, and why shall we escape? Ambrose Cock[[1]](#endnote-1) lost another child[[2]](#endnote-2)

on Friday with the scarlet fever, the youngest, about nine months

old. Daniels[[3]](#endnote-3) babe[[4]](#endnote-4) was alive the last we heard but supposed to be

dying. Mrs. Gunn[[5]](#endnote-5) was buried on Friday the day after her

disease, what a barbarous custom this is of hurrying people under

ground the moment they have ceased to breathe. Catharine

McDonald[[6]](#endnote-6) spent the day with us yesterday, is still here, nothing

occurred by way of excitement except the chimney’s getting on

fire in the afternoon the remainder of the day Grandma[[7]](#endnote-7) and

Peter[[8]](#endnote-8) spent in examining the roof of the house to see that it had

not taken fire. Augustus[[9]](#endnote-9) too was very useful in that way, last

night it had snowed sufficient to make tolerable sleighing, so unpleasant

to day no one ventured out to Church. Teusday morning. I

had written so far sunday night when, while putting the children

in bed I hit my elbow against the bed post, I never had any

thing so trifling occasion so much pain. I think it must have

struck a nerve the chords became contracted and the veins very

much swollen instantly, it continued to pain me until

I went to bed, my wrist was so weak I could not write

any more that evening. I still feel the weakness when I write

but do not apprehend any other ill effects from the blow. Catherine

McDonald is still with us. She is a singular being but with all her

oddities has much good sense and quickness of apprehension.   
She is older than myself and can reccollect the rise and

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progress of the junto family as Mrs. G. B. Throop[[10]](#endnote-10)[[11]](#endnote-11) very sapiently

designates them. She has related to me many very amusing

anecdotes about them. I have wandered strangely since I commenced

this letter you must not imagine yours was less interesting to me

because I have said so little about it. I had the hypo when I

commenced writing Sunday evening and felt rather disposed to

quarrel with the post masters because I could not enjoy your

simpathy sooner. The sunshine of monday morning morning displaced

some of these feelings, but my apprehensions about the scarlet fever

still continue. Daniel Cock and his wife[[12]](#endnote-12) have just gone to bury

their babe it died yesterday morning. Dr. Pitney[[13]](#endnote-13) who like Augustus

thinks one remedy may be effectively applied to all diseases in-

creased the pain of the little sufferer by making an incision

in its throat, because he chanced to be successful when he operated

upon Mr Mills[[14]](#endnote-14) little girl[[15]](#endnote-15), who had the croup. He did the same

to Dr Vaneps[[16]](#endnote-16) child[[17]](#endnote-17) it died and Vaneps now thinks had he

followed his own judgement the child might have been living.

I would give the world there was one phisician in whom I ~~had~~

might have half the confidence I had in poor Dr. Tuttle[[18]](#endnote-18). But

the best phisician cannot always cure. After all the lives of our

babes are in the hands of Him who gave them, of Him who sees

not as man sees. It gratifies me to know that you think you

would be more happy were I with you but it cannot be. It would

be almost cruel to take my little ones away from a home where they

are so comfortable and happy this cold cold winter. I am

too foolish a mother to leave them, so it cannot be. I think

you will feel less lonely when you become more accustomed to your

new mode of spending your time. Thurlow Weed[[19]](#endnote-19) I like because

he likes you. Andrews[[20]](#endnote-20) I do not like neither do I like his wife[[21]](#endnote-21)

you could discover no point in her character because there is

none, none that is amiable. When she was 14 years old her

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most predominant traits were selfishness and vanity. Maynard[[22]](#endnote-22)

could not win a womans heart. But Tracy[[23]](#endnote-23), with his “genius”

his “acquirements,” his “eloquence” and “honorable principles” his fascinating

address and his ambition has he a heart. You appear to

have forgotten this in the calender of his virtues. Perhaps a

brilliant imagination occupies the place of one. Mrs Tracy[[24]](#endnote-24)

as you draw her I should esteem but where there is a lady

in the case I had rather trust my own judgement.

Dont think me cynical, you know I can and do love,

too much for my own happiness some times. The stove does make

the big room very warm. Gus has had no rides with his Grandpa[[25]](#endnote-25)

yet, but promises in profusion. Grandma says Fred[[26]](#endnote-26) has grown

to be very nice since he came here to live, but he will never

equal Augustus, with Grandma and Clary[[27]](#endnote-27), dear tired he sits

alone and plays on the carpet and looks very meek and nice in

his mother’s eyes [ripped] Augustus is devising all manner of ways to

keep him from Mr Tracy. I cannot persuade him that he will not be

taken perforce. I can tell you to which of the classes of members you do

not belong. Not to John C. Spencers[[28]](#endnote-28), not to Enos’[[29]](#endnote-29) I am quite sure. Not

to those who dress, dine, make calls and motions prettily nor to the

mulititude of cyphers I am very positive. If you do not belong to the

other class which is the only one that finds any favour in my eyes

I think you must be a distinct species. It snows again to

day and continues yet, our thermometer has varied very

little during the last week. Saw no one yesterday but Beardsley[[30]](#endnote-30)

who came for the little tin trunk, did not appear much inclined

to talk, as a specimen of my carefulness, when he went away I looked

for the key but Peter who was standing by said he saw Beardsley put

it in his pocket. I gave up the ~~seach~~ search very composedly. This

morning the key was found on the carpet, woe unto me if Pa

had discovered it first. Tomorrow I shall expect the Sunday letter. Your own

Frances

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William H. Seward

Albany.

Auburn NY JAN 20

Frances A. Seward 21 Jan. 1831

[alc]

1. Cock, Ambrose. (17790813-18500214). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cock, Solomon Veil. (1830-1831). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cock, Daniel Frost. (18061111-18501028). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cock, Charles Henry. (18291217-18310117). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gunn, Mrs. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. McDonald, Catherine. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. PTM. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Peter. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. AHS. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Throop, Frances Hunt. (1806-1872). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Throop, George Bliss. (17930412-18540223). [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Cock, Jane Merritt. (18100427-18840326). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Pitney, Dr. Joseph T. (1787-18530420) [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Mills. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Mills. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Vaneps, Dr. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Vaneps. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Tuttle, Dr. Erastus Darwin. (17911216-18290622). [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. TxW. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Andrews, Samuel George. (17961016-18630611). [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Andrews, Ann Floyd. ( -18390414). [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Maynard, William Hale. (17861123-18320828). [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. AHT. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Tracy, Harriet Foote Norton. (1800-post1870). [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. ExM. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. FWS. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. CMM. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Spencers, John C. (17880108-18550517). [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Throop, Enos Thompson. (08211784-11011874). [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Possibly Beardsley, Nelson. (18080530-18940115). [↑](#endnote-ref-30)