

Leicester, Mass.

July 3. 1868.

Dear friend Webb,

I came from Boston last
evening, in an effort of extreme heat, after an absence
of six days, longer than I intended. Among other
letters, awaiting my ^{reading,} I find your very interesting note
to my daughter, sketching of groups & comings &
goings (of which Garrison had given me previously
a little acct. so far as he knew, - but Washington &c.
were not included,) the reading of which I have greatly
enjoyed. Yrs. to me, respecting your daughter's coming
to England, was sent to me while in Boston by my
wife. The proposition you make, of her getting a
boardingplace in our town, is one in which I find
many difficulties about acting, - all to my great
annoyance. And I hardly know how to set before
you these various difficulties. We have one public
house, - in old building, - but situated in the very
centre, & least agreeable part, of the principal
village. It is well kept, as to neatness, & a
various & abundant table, but the charges are
unreasonably ^(40c. per week) high, & the landlord is determined to
sell liquor, law or no law; and we all agree

it w^d. be no place for your daughter. - There is
a great dearth, & a crying need, of good
lodging & boarding-houses in the town. After getting
home last evng., Mr. May & I spent considerable
time in discussing the various places where your
daughter c^d. be made at all comfortable, or
wh. w^d. be suitable to her. We could think
of not one, even if obtainable, wh. w^d. not be open
to ~~some~~ ^{in any such case,} objections, - and the fact of her being,
with entire strangers seems to us a very particular
one. As an example of the difficulty of finding
any tolerable boarding place, - my friend Prof.
Atkinson, of the Boston ^{School of} Technology, has been trying
to get his family placed here for the summer,
for several years past; this year he renewed
his application, & I set forth to see personally
what might be done. Receiving some little encourage-
ment, I advised Mr. Atkinson to come up here,
& see for herself. She came & we went to
a number of houses. The only arrangement,
~~at all~~ possible for her, was to establish herself
& children in a house where the owner could
give them rooms only, ~~to~~ ^{they to} walk 3 miles a day

to the public-house for their meals - & this, as
one of her sons ~~was~~^{is} in feeble health, she could
not engage to do; - & so ~~has~~ was obliged to abandon
our town, & has taken quarters, up in N. Hampshire
on Lake Winnepesaukee; - & this is only one case in
many. The want of a good public-house, for
visitors & summer-lodgers, is a standing topic
of complaint & regret here, & has been for
years.

What we sh^d. like - I mean Mrs.
May & I, & all my family - w^d be to ask
Deborah to come & make home with us.
We are debarred from this by many consider-
ations, wh. prevail over us & against us.
My wife's poor health is but one of these;
& this ^{expectation} may be, & we hope will be, entirely
removed; for we think she will soon be better.
But we are very short-handed in our domestic
force; & after long trying for better, have quite
come to the conclusion that, for this summer at
least, we are not likely to find them. We
depend on you as a visitor & guest, and
upon Mary Estlin. Not to have you, & the,

would be to mar all the past memories
of my Antislavery life, ~~which~~ ^{and} to sadden all the
future; ~~and~~ these visits we cannot give
& we are looking forward with great eagerness
them. And, I am thinking, that after the labors
of meetings, & night-seeing, - City after city, - &c.
May prove a welcome rest to you to get among
our green hills, & into the quiet of our home.
Miss Estlin fixes no time for coming into New
England. I suppose her to be with S. J. W., at
Syracuse, now. Nor do we know when to look
for you. And you do not say how we can
address a letter to you, - save that, in your
letter to Ade., you say "I go hence to Deborah
in Ohio; my future movements uncertain." - So I
write this to Mr. Sulist's care; & shall hope soon
to hear from you or from your daughter or both.
We are eager to be of service to her in any way
we can, & sh^d. rejoice to welcome her to Leicester
into any suitable family. We have always
hoped she would make us a visit, either when
you were with us, or at any more convenient
time, and we still hope she will. We can
think of nothing more suitable, in case you
decide it is not safe for her to continue much
longer in Ohio, - on which point you will best
to judge definitely from your own inquiry &
observation on the spot, - than for you to

bring her with you to Leicester. We shall welcome ~~you~~ her, with you, to our house, & will do all in our power to make it comfortable to her; & while here, you could look about, among our neighbors & over our town, & see if a more permanent home could be procured here, - or in Worcester, perhaps, wh. adjoins us. And, may be, the way will open for her staying with us longer than we now dare to propose.

I don't know that you know, that, from the 18th July, to 1st August, our family & house are so pre-occupied, and devoted, *etc. etc.*, that we cannot ask any one here, ^{during that time,} not even my own mother, - viz. by preparations for a amateur theatrical of ~~under~~ my daughter Ade's planning. It is a scheme of her own, formed in last January, & the corps of performers, (consisting ^{young} of friends of ours,) who did 2 or 3 little plays very successfully last winter in Dorchester, ^{engaged to come & perform the same here.} The object is to raise a portion of the funds needed for next year's support

Leicester Society
of our Freedmen's Teachers. During that
time every room, nook & corner, of our
house will be held subservient to that
one purpose, & a general state of
"topsy-turvy" will, I fear, prevail. But
it will be of short continuance. Before
the 18th July, & after the 1st of August, we
hope to be acceptable as usual to our
friends. — I have a letter from E.

Lunney today, in wh. he says he has not
heard from you since you left Boston; — &
that he hopes you will be able to spend
a few days with him this month.

I am expecting to remain at
home steadily until the 14th — then go to
Boston, to attend "Commencement" at
Harvard College, Cambridge, on the 15th —
attend next day (16th) the "Reception", annually
given in Boston, to returned teachers from
the Southern Schools for the freed people.
(Both wh. occasions would, I think, be pleasant
to you) — & so return home 17th or 18th. Should
you be "coming East" before the 14th, you might

stop at Leicester (leaving the Cars at
"Worcester City" [not "Junction"] Station) with
your daughter, who could remain here
some days while we (you & I) proceeded
to Boston for the above & other purposes.
Then E. D. W. doubtless be expecting you,
- i.e. prepared to receive you there.

My wife & daughters (for my
younger came home with me from her
school yesterday) join me in kindest
regards to you & your daughter. I am
glad you have such good accounts from
Alfred & Richard.

I have had, heretofore, a little
Correspondence with Mr. Sulist, and
wish to be kindly remembered by him.

Let me soon hear from you,
and I am, Ever truly

Yours

Saml. May Jr

Should you be soon coming on here, - & whenever
you do come, - please let me know a little in advance,
and I shall try to meet you in Worcester.

