

**19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

**COBB AND SICKELS LETTERS**

## Introduction

This packet of transcribed letters was found among papers passed down from my mother Emily Josephine (Bates) Haynes. As described in Bion Bates's prefatory letter, the letters had been saved by generations of Cobbs and Sickels, all of them dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The original transcriptions, although typed, were in various states of semi-legibility, so I've decided to re-transcribe them — with all the risk of error and omission that entails — so future generations have access to them in modern formats.

I do not know where the originals may be. I did not encounter them in any materials inherited from Mother, nor in packages from Rolf or Richard Bates, or Martha Nield, although Rolf may possibly hold the originals in another file not sent (because they were correspondence, not photographs).

Since these are transcriptions, perhaps from the originals, I cannot tell if misspellings are accurate reproductions of the originals, or typographical errors introduced by Bion Bates or whoever made the transcriptions. In general, therefore, I am correcting misspellings.

Stephen Haynes  
Minneapolis, MN  
May 11, 2012

3/24/1969

Dear Kinder:-

The enclosed are copies of letters my mother had saved as her mother had done before her and I found them in the little old home made trunk used by her father, Job Durfee Sickels when he came to Michigan in 1847.

The original letter written by Henry P. Cobb who was a brother of my grandmother Sarah Jane Cobb Sickels, was written while on his way to the Red River, a tributary of the Mississippi River\* where he hoped to find a teaching job — was talked about whenever members of the Cobb-Sickels family met. It was referred to Uncle Henry's letter.

He must have had friends in Northville, Michigan, as that is where we first hear of him. He was born in Bennington, New York, 1820.

Just how he came to Michigan we do not know but probably by horseback. His trip through Ohio to the Ohio River side-wheeler may have been by the same conveyance. The other letters are interesting and partially explain how our forebears migrated to what is now the village of Elsie. He must have been a man of some means as he purchased 80 acres of pine timbered land one-half mile west of Elsie and I believe and 80 east of the village now belonging to Andrew Cobb which is now called a Centennial Farm.

As the letters show, Henry influenced his parents to move to this wilderness in 1844, away from relatives, friends, churches and schools. There were but three log cabins in the settlement. Our grandmother was only 13; for playmates she had but two Indian girls, Wapazoom and Mixaquay. Years later these two ladies came to visit her while they were camped by the river making baskets.

This is a rather long introduction but it may make the letters more meaningful.

Bion L. Bates

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\* - Two Red Rivers are found within the continental U.S., one of which is a Mississippi Tributary, but which flows from the Texas Panhandle and Oklahoma eastward into the Mississippi. The other Red River forms the border between Minnesota and North Dakota, and in fact flows north into Lake Winnipeg in Canada, not into the Mississippi. As his letter dated December 2, 1842, indicates, Henry Cobb was headed to the Texas-Oklahoma Red River.

## Henry Cobb to Family, March 10, 1839

[Sent to Mr. Joshua W. Cobb, Attica, County of Genessee, NY; mailed from Northville, MI, March 14. Paid 25. Henry was 19 when this was sent.]

15 minutes before 5 p.m.

Novi, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1839

My dear Father, Mother, Brothers and Sisters,

Why have I not received a letter from you!? I have been expecting one about three months but have been disappointed. You may be surprised when I inform you how I have occupied my time since I wrote but this is a world of changes. You will therefore not be quite as much surprised as you would otherwise.

A day or two after I wrote, I took a notion to go to school and there being a good one near by, I quit working on a farm and went [?] at a different kind, it was more laborious and I think more profitable I hope so at least. I hired my board for which I gave 12 shillings per week. I studied Arithmattick, Grammar, Geography and "Human Nature" and I continue to study the latter yet and I always intend to. In arithmattick I made a considerable progress. I went through Cobbs\* and part way through Adams. I made out to get a corner of the grammar book into my mouth and if I do not spit it out in trying to speak too properly (as many do) I think it may do me some good. I got in sight of Oneys [?] Geography and if I do not loose sight of it by looking too far beyond it for something of more importance, it may prove beneficial to me and as for "Human Nature" I attended to that strictly but I find that I have not yet found the bottom of that study yet. I attended school nine weeks: 40 scholars, and the most of them were the most agreeable persons that I ever met with. One reason of my going to school was this. I was somewhat fearful that my employer would not be able to fulfill his engagements so I thought that I would go to school in the winter and work this summer. You may think that I had better have got me a farm and went to school afterwards. But what do I want of a farm? Answer that question, will you? I think, however, that I shall get one next fall if I have my health. I mean to have a farm at any rate, to which I can resort if necessity requires. I can easily get one if I have my health for which I must trust to the Ruler of all things.

I have hired out to a man by the name of Samuel Rodgers twenty-two miles North West of Detroit and about 18 East of where I worked last summer and from where Hiram lives. The man for whom I worked last Summer is able to pay his debts and is willing but he is not in circumstances favourable to doing it just at present and he has a large family. The man for whom I work has a wife and child, and his is rich, too. He has a large farm and he is a farmer, too. I am as sure of my pay as if I had it already. I have \$.14<sup>†</sup> [sic] per month which will amount to \$112, with which I must have a pa—[?].

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\* - Probably reference to one of Lyman Cobb's textbooks — he was Henry's uncle.

† - As you will note, there is a disconnect between "\$.14" per month and "\$112." \$14.00 earned for 8 months comes to \$112, so I think that must have been what was written, or at least intended, or perhaps mis-transcribed.

And as for clothes my old coat and hat with a new pair of mittens must do for another winter and I must try and go to school again. I think more of my head than my back. I have no occasion for any fine clothes at present. I cannot think of living so ignorant. I barely know how to appear in company and that will not do for me. If I do not live but a little while I shall be as well off, and if I live long, I shall be better off. I left Hiram's folks last Monday who were all well. I have been here 5 days and like it well. I think that Hiram is doing well. How are you doing and what have you been doing since I left Bennington. You wrote that you had sold your farm and I want to know all about it, what do you intend to do? Do you think of coming to Michigan? I want to know all of the particulars. I do not like to pay postage on blank paper or coarse writing, "that's a fact," now mind this time you cannot write too much. I want to know all about the neighbors, all of them, "no exception." How are they getting along these hard times?

(9 o'clock) To be particular this time. I want to know a few things which you may think are not important but which will be quite a consolation to me, viz., I want to know the age of all my Brothers and Sisters, your also and when you were married, my grandparents, where they were born, married, and died. Please to gratify me in these requests and I will be much obliged. It is getting quite late and I must close this letter soon. I have enjoyed the best health since I left Bennington that ever I did in all my life. I think I like the country well. I had rather have 100 acres of land here than the whole town of Bennington to get a living from "no mistake."

If anyone comes to Michigan this Spring (and I think that a number would do well to come) they must not forget to call on us. If you wish to find Hiram and come by way of Ann Arbor you may easily find him by enquiring first for George Sutton, then for Philander Murray. If you come by the way of Northville (not Northfield) you may find me by 4 miles from that place by enquiring for Samuel or Stephen Rodgers. I shall look for some of the most enterprising young in Bennington as soon as the lake opens. Wm. Hadley talked some of coming and I shall look for him at any rate. I want to see the Benningtonians very much but it is not probable that I ever shall unless they happen along this way. How is Friend Dryden and Lot's boy? And how is Lot and his family? How is Uncle John Hadley's family? How is Nancy? And finally how [are] all of the B e n n i n g t o n i a n s? All well I hope and doing well.

I wish to say a few words to you my brothers and sisters and is giving you a little advice which I might well have taken myself, and that is I want you to read not do as I have done in fooling away my time. I am sure you will never regret it for just what little I have read has done me more good than all of the tin whistles and jews harps that I ever saw. If you wish to be wise read and meditate. If you wish to know the ways of the world read. If you wish to gain respectable company read, and if you would appear respectable in company you must read and improve yourself. All this I know by observation. If you will observe closely when you are in company you may easily find out the person who is fond of his Book and may also find who is not and I wish that you would be particular and notice the difference if you will remember this. If you are fond of your book you will find folks enough that will be fond of your company and those who are the most respectable too. If you dislike to read I will tell you the reason it is because you are not used to it. That is the only reason that I know of. Think of it. I want you to write me a long letter, Elira, Amanda, Adelia, Lyman, write your name if nothing more.

It is 10 and I must go to bed. My respects to all enquiring friends, and believe that these few lines are from one who loves you.

Henry Cobb

I shall look for a letter at Northville Wayne County Michigan in the course of a week or two. Do not neglect to write it to me and I shall have a chance to send it to Hiram.

Henry Cobb

[Letter written by Henry P. Cobb, brother of my Grandmother Sarah Jane Cobb Sickels. Henry was responsible for the Cobb families coming to what is now the village of Elsie, Michigan. Bion L. Bates

[SLH Note: a portion of what follows I typed from Bion Bates's original transcription; the remainder was scanned and OCR'd from Richard Bates's transcription found in the Bates Family History "Blue Book."]

Village Post Office  
[Point Coupee](#), Louisiana

Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1842

Respected and dear friends,

Through the goodness of God, I am permitted, in tolerable health, to set down and address you. And I feel truly thankful to God for the privilege of telling you that I have set out to serve the Lord, who made me. You will ask what has stirred me up to a sense of my situation. It is this.

When I left you, and started for this country, I began to think that I was going into the wide world, and far from my friends. And I found it to be the case. Almost every person I met, on the lake, canals or river, if I heard him say anything, I heard him curse his maker. Indeed you do not know what a sinful world this is. It made my heart bleed to see so much wickedness, and hear so much cursing and swearing, as I saw and heard on my journey. I became fairly disgusted with the world. The farther south I came the more wickedness I saw.

After I left Charles and George,\* I found that I was indeed friendless, and in a strange land. But in my distress, I thought of One Who is always a friend to those who seek His friendship. And many times did I almost resolve to seek, and court His friendship, but it seemed as though my heart was so hard and selfish, that it would do no good. But I read the Bible, which says "knock and it shall be opened unto you," "seek and ye shall find," therefore, one noon I went out into the field, and fell upon my knees and tried to pray, but it seemed as though my heart was adamant, but I have continued to go by myself, and call on God for help, and I often, though not always, feel a kind of satisfaction that I used to think I never could feel. And I am determined, God being my helper, to spend the remainder of my days, be they few or many, in His service.

And now I do humbly ask an interest in your prayers, that I may never forsake the resolution I have taken. Do not forget me in your prayers, for I feel the need of your assistance. I feel that I am weak, but God is mighty. I never before felt the need of Christian friends, as I now do. In this place there are no meetings, the Sabbath is hardly observed at all, and once in a great while I find a professor of religion, but most of the people are in a wretched state of sinfulness, and the poor slaves how they suffer. Often have I thought of what you told me. That as long as my money lasted, my friends would last, and that is surely the case in most parts of this country. I must acknowledge that I

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\* - I can't determine who these might be. They can't be Henry's cousins, Charles Frederick Cobb and George Whitney Cobb, because Charles wasn't born until 1848.

have been somewhat homesick, and in fact I am yet, though I try to be as contented as I can. Well, you will think that I have began at the end of my story. I will now tell you the first of it.

We left Detroit on the evening of the day we started from home. Had a very rough time on the lake, we were all sick enough, but landed in Cleveland next morning and left the evening following, for Portsmouth.\* We were on the canal about a week. We took a steamboat to Cincinnati and found the water of the Ohio very low. We found no boat at Cincinnati bound for New Orleans, and thought best to ship from St. Louis which we did. Our progress was very slow, on the account of low water, but we arrived there safe I think about the last of Oct.

In this place we enjoyed ourselves very well although we were obliged to wait some days for a boat. I think this is the finest city for a new one, I was ever in, and we had time to take a fair view of it.† We bought our box full of provision and started down the Mississippi. We were on an excellent boat, but our progress was, as it had been on the Ohio, very slow, on account of shallow water. We enjoyed good health and good spirits. Or I might say the other boys did, for, although I enjoyed as good health as I ever did I was not at all times exactly contented. The report was that Red River was so low that boats could not go higher than Natchitoches, and we wanted to go about 70 miles above. Therefore began to make some enquiries about school teaching in other parts of the country. I was advised by a number who were passengers on the boat, and were acquainted, in different parts of the country, to stop at Bixburgh‡ in Miss. And after thinking on it some time, I resolved to stop. I was sorry to leave the boys, very sorry, for they had been very kind to me all the way.

We arrived at Bixburgh on Wednesday evening at 12 o'clock. I took my trunk and went ashore with such feelings as I never had before. There I was, more than 2,000 miles from home, and not a friend to give me one cheering word, or one pleasant smile. I went to a tavern and was soon in bed (if it might be called a bed) and in a few minutes I heard the loud puffs of the steam boat that separated me from the boys. There I was, but I will not tell you how much I slept that night. The next morning found me up in good season, and I left my trunk there and started into the country. I had not gone far before I found that I was in the wrong place entirely. The country was very thickly inhabited, and school masters were plenty. Therefore I resolved to return to Bixburgh and turn my course up Red River as I told the boys I would, in case I did not find employment.

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\* - Southern Ohio terminus of the Ohio Canal, on the Ohio River. From his description, about 32 miles per day. From there down the Ohio to where it joins the Mississippi at Cairo, IL, and then up the Mississippi to St. Louis.

† - To give you historical context, he is in St. Louis only 36 years after Lewis and Clark returned there from their expedition to the Pacific, and still 18 years before the Civil War.

‡ - No place exists named "Bixburgh," Mississippi. The Red River empties into the Mississippi in a wildlife area south of Natchez, MS, and the only city on the river that sounds at all like "Bixburgh" is "Vicksburg," 140 miles north. Pointe Coupee, Louisiana, from which the letter was mailed, is now shown on maps as a large land expanse that lies between the mouth of the Red River and Baton Rouge, LA.



It was nearly night when I got back, a boat soon hove in sight and in a short time I was floating down the river again.\* I thought I would land at the mouth of the Red River, where I was in hopes of finding the boys. Friday afternoon I arrived there but the boys were not there. As there was no boat there they went on to N. Orleans, I suppose, as they intended. They probably took a boat at N. Orleans. They intended to go up Red River as far as they could, and go to work til the water should rise, and then go on. I understand the water is rising very fast. I have been very sorry sometimes that I did not stay with them, but it may all be for the best. I will trust in God for the result.

At the mouth of the Red River I had to pay \$2 per day for board and did not know how soon a boat would come along to take me up the river, I thought it would not do for me to wait. I heard of a vacancy down the river 25 miles, and I thought I would go and try my luck again. I started about 11 O'clock on Saturday and at night I was there, but was not wanted. They could not even keep me over night, so I started back again, and stopped at every house, but no one could keep me and had there not been a kind of boarding house near by I should have been obliged to lie in the streets as many have had to do. That is the kind of hospitality that you will find in most parts of this country. O, how I thought of your hospitality, and I wished myself with you again once again. How little do we value our friends, till we are separated from them.

The next morning I heard of this place and started with rather of a faint heart. But I found employment here, and in a week went at it. I have taught two weeks, I have a small school, and a poor house to teach in. I commenced Nov 21, and my engagement runs till 1 of June. But, if God spares my life till the middle of April, on the first day of May I shall leave this country and if I am ever so happy as to get back to Michigan I think I shall, as I told you before I left, be contented to stay there. My employers say they will let me go whenever I think there will be any danger of staying. It is said to be very healthy here, till about the first of June.

I have always had a desire to see more of the world, but I have seen as much as I wish to now. For I find the more I see of it, the more of its misery I see, and the more I am disgusted with it. But I believe I have learned one good lesson, and that is this. I have learned that to err is human, and I have learned to overlook the few imperfections I have met with in persons who are generally well disposed. I know I have lacked charity, and I pray God that I may hereafter be blessed with a good share of it. As to my health it is not very good at present although I think it is better than it has been. The day I left the boat I was taken with a diarrhea which has continued with me ever since. Although it is not very bad, yet, it has taken away a considerable of my best. I am thinner than I ever was before I think. I have taken some medicine to stop it, and I believe I am getting along very well. Persons coming to this part of the country are almost invariably troubled with it for a while. It is caused by a change of climate, diet, water, etc. We drink rain water here altogether. Our diet is corn bread, sweet potatoes, pork, turnips etc. With bear meat and venison. I think Uncle Stephen would like to spend a week or two here. The weather is quite warm, but we have plenty of rain.

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\* - "... Floating down the river again." This supports the conclusion he had landed at Vicksburg, MS.

I have written to my friends in York State and also to Charles and George. They told me to write to Natchitoches and if they are near then, and have got it, they know where I am otherwise. I was to write to you where I am and they were to write to Tommy, and if he has got a letter from them, I wish you to write where they are and what they are doing, etc., etc. I also want Tommy (I might say Mr. Pinkerton, but it seems better to say Tommy, and I wish I could see him) to write to them where I am. Tommy, I wish you would write to Charles that I did not get employment at Bixburgh, and came down about 4 miles below Red River on old river and about 3 or 4 miles from the Mississippi on Bayo Letsworth,\* at William Rodgers, tell him to send a letter as soon as he finds where I am to Village Post office, Pointe Causes, Louisiana. I commenced this letter on Friday but did not have time to write only two or three lines. Yesterday I was also busy, this morning I saw a gentleman who was going to the post office, which is some distance, and I seldom have a chance to send, therefore I commenced but did not know how long I would have to write. For that reason my thoughts have been very much confused, and I have been in such a hurry, that I have written in a bad stile, what ever I happened to think of first, and therefore it appears to me to be a heap of fragments, and I have not been able to write all that I wanted to either. I wish you to write as soon as you get this for I am very anxious to hear from you. Do not neglect it one day. As we have often talked about writing the particulars, I feel confident you will do it. Let me know all about all of the neighbors, and everything, for it will all interest me, if it is good news.

Let me know how mesmerism<sup>†</sup> flourishes. There is not much said of it in this country. How are Watsons, Stephens, and Tommy's folks, etc. How do you get along with your house? It seems a long way to Michigan: a longer journey than I should wish to undertake again for the purpose of making a fortune, for I believe the desire of getting money which I left home with, has left me. I used to think if I had money enough, I should want nothing more, but I now believe there is no happiness to be compared to that of a clear conscience, and that happiness I wish to gain. No possession is so great as a contented mind. O how I pant for the company of Christians that I may converse with them, and gain instruction. What privileges I have lost, that I might have enjoyed. Pray for me. That is the wish of your friend.

Henry P. Cobb

Give my best wishes to all enquiring friends. Tell Daniel and Willy I often think of them and hope they will be good boys. Tell Mr. and Mrs. Waldron that I very much miss their

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\* - At the [northern edge of Pointe Coupee](#).

† - From [Wikipedia](#):

**Franz Anton Mesmer** (May 23, 1734 – March 5, 1815), sometimes, albeit incorrectly, referred to as **Friedrich Anton Mesmer**, was a German physician with an interest in astronomy, who theorised that there was a natural energetic transference that occurred between all animated and inanimate objects that he called *magnétisme animal* ([animal magnetism](#)<sup>[1]</sup>) and other spiritual forces often grouped together as *mesmerism*. Mesmerism is considered to be a form of [vitalism](#) and shares features with other vitalist theories that also emphasize the movement of life "[energy](#)" through distinct channels in the body. In 1843 [James Braid](#), a Scottish physician proposed the term hypnosis for a technique derived from [magnetism](#) but more limited in its claimed effects, and also different in its conception. Mesmer's name is the root of the English verb "[mesmerize](#)".

company and kindness with which I was blessed last winter. And I wish you all good  
bye.

H. P. Cobb

I feel very anxious to hear from Charles and George. They were, when I left them, in  
good health & spirits, and if I were with them, I should not feel so lonesome, as I do at  
sometimes now. I make it my home with Mr. Rodgers (not Sam) who appears to be quite  
a nice kind of a man. My expenses here amounted to about \$27, with what clothing I got,  
I have \$45 left and have not been sorry that I fetched as much as I did, for I would fare  
rather poorly if I should be sick without money. And we are liable to be sick anywhere.  
Life is uncertain.

Elsie, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1860

Dear Sister and Brother

It is a long time since I have written to you. I will admit that I am getting very negligent of late but I hoped that you will excuse me. Adelia mentioned in one of her letters that Richmond was about selling his farm, and talked of moving west. We were much surprised to hear such news, but were greatly rejoiced. Durfee thinks that there is some very good chances to buy here. How I do wish that I could have one of my sisters for a neighbor!

If Richmond<sup>\*</sup> does not intend to come out and see the country before he moves, I should advise him and would be glad to have him fetch his family here and leave them while he could look around and find a place to suit him.

Hiram [Cobb] is here. He said that you had written to him in regard to coming west, says that he would not advise any of his friends to move near Williamstown. He says that it is the worst place this side of purgatory. I suppose that the society there is very bad.

Hiram has got to be Grand Father. Emily has a little girl. Tell Adelia<sup>†</sup> that he said that he had written her a letter but had received no answer, neither had he received an answer from Eliza. He intends to move to Lansing this week.

Ma's health is not as good this spring as it was last. She had not ought to do any hard work at all but she will be obliged to until John gets married. I suppose that he intends that will happen next fall.

Lyman's and Elijah's families are well. There has been quite a good deal of sugar made here this spring. We can buy it here at the store at six and seven cents a pound. Tell Henry that the children have got a little cake of sugar for him also one for Kate and Frank. It is some that Mary Craven gave to them for Kate and the other children. It is quite healthy there at present.<sup>‡</sup>

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\* - Sarah's sister Eliza's husband, Richmond Johnson. They apparently never moved to Elsie.

† - Sarah's sister.

‡ - Names: "Lyman" is Lyman Cobb (1826-88), Sarah's brother and named for his uncle, the elementary school textbook author. "Elijah" is Elijah Cobb (1829-1905), another of Sarah's brothers. Both had settled in Elsie. "Henry" may be "Henry Parsons Cobb," author of the first two letters above, who married Phoebe Sayre, but whose children are not known. "Kate" and "Frank" are not identified, but may be Henry's and Phoebe's children. This is countered by the fact the letter is written to Cobbs remaining in New York, and by this time Henry is presumed to be living in Michigan.

The reference to "Mary Craven" is curious; Mary later was wife of Henry Bennett of St. Johns, Michigan, not far from Elsie, and her relationship to the Cobbs is distant. She would have been only nine years old at the time the letter was written.

We do not hear a word from Amanda.<sup>\*</sup> I do think that she is getting very careless about writing. I hope that you will answer this letter immediately for we feel anxious to hear from you. Now do not put it off. Tell Adelia not to forget to write often to us for we want to hear from you all often.

Sarah J. [Cobb] Sickels

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\* - Sarah's sister.

[Note by Bion Bates: It seems that Uncle Alvah and Aunt Alice [Sickels], six year old twins [in 1863], were crossing the street from their home, a frame building where the present Elsie library is now being erected [1969?], when a runaway team of horses struck the boy, fracturing his skull. Grandma Sickels had a brother, Hiram, who at the time was a practicing physician in Williamston, Michigan. Since there was no means of communication, a messenger was sent on horseback for the Doctor. It seems incredible that in those days a patient could live following the crude operation the Doctor performed. No anesthetic was necessary for the unconscious boy; particles of bone were removed from the hole in the top of his head, the hammered-out bowl of a silver spoon inserted and the wound closed. The patient lived to be 83 years old. I X-rayed the area years later; the metal was still there.]

[At top:]       The sore on Alvah's head is all healed up now.  
                  It was sore for three months.

Elsie, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1863

Dear Sisters:

It seems a long while since I have heard from you. The last that I did hear, Amelia wrote that you were very sick. Amanda answered her letter. We have been very anxious to hear from you again but we have looked for a letter in vain. I do hope that you have recovered your health by this time for I know how bad it is to be sick. My health has been very poor for two or three weeks. I think that I have worked too hard this fall which has injured my health. We have had a large family to do for and it kept me pretty busy.

Amanda is now out to Hiram's. We received a letter from her last week. She appears to think that Hiram is doing as well for her as Dr. Lynch would have done. I do really hope that he will succeed in affecting a permanent cure. I can tell you that our brother Hiram has got to be a great Doctor. He is one of the best that the county affords. Still he may not succeed in this case. He writes encouragingly about her. I intend to go out there and see her when it comes good sleighing and O, how I do wish that you and Adelia could come and visit with us. It does seem as though we ought to meet together once more and if we do not while Amanda is so near, I fear that we never shall. She does not feel able to extend her journey any farther unless it should be necessary. If she should go, I should endeavor to go with her.

Ma's health is much better than it was last summer.\* She thinks that if she is as well in the spring as she is now that she will go to housekeeping in her own house. We all think it would be very imprudent for her to do so but it is of no use to say one word. I suppose that she is like all older people, she wants to be more by herself but I think that she will find it quite lonesome for there is one gone never to return again.† She will miss him

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\* - Susannah (Doty) Cobb lived another 18 years.

† - I had thought initially this was a reference to Susannah's husband, Sarah's father, Joshua Whitney Cobb, who died 12 years previously. A later sentence makes clear it refers to John Teachout Cobb, who died in service during the Civil War, in 1862.

-more if she goes back there.\* It is one year ago yesterday since John died.† It hardly seems possible that a year has fled since that sad day but so time passes. Soon we shall all have passed away.

Kate and Nontie [?]<sup>‡</sup> are both well. I wish that you could see the little fellow. He is an uncommon sweet child. He looks very much like John. Lyman's and Elijah's families are all well. Ma says tell Adelia that she would like to know when she is going to move in her new house.

Mr. Bates' son, Henry, was drafted this fall. He hired a substitute for three hundred dollars so he stays at home. There have been quite a number drafted in our town. Mr. Sexton that lives next east of Lymans was drafted. He hired a substitute. Another draft comes off next month. Lyman and Elijah say that they expect it will take them next.

Oh this horrid war! When will it end? I must close for want of room. I hope you will write immediately.

Sarah J. Sickels

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\* - Back to their prior home in Bennington, NY, perhaps, where John Teachout had been born.

† - John Teachout Cobb, d. 12/13/1862.

‡ - "Nontie" here I think is a misreading of "Montie," John Teachout Cobb and Kate (Keene) Cobb's sole child, John Montrewel Cobb, who lived only nine years.