

Frankfort-on-the-Maine

August 28th. 1847

Dear Sir -

I shall be compelled to make my letter a
short one. I arrived here last night, Colonel Manning with
me, from Paris, by way of Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hague,
Amsterdam, Bonn, Düsseldorf, Cologne,
& Mayence - up the Rhine, & crossed - M. Dubost
of the French Postoffice Dept., was not prepared
on the final day set, a week ago last Thursday,
& give him his final counter proposition & mine,
which had been previously submitted. He said
he must take time until the next week - I
asked him to send it to me at Frankfort if
prepared before the first of September; if after
to London - I left the next morning in company with
Mr. Chace - I satisfied myself at Antwerp and
Rotterdam of the impracticable nature of those places in
the winter as ports for the American Mail Steamers.
At ~~Amsterdam~~ ^{Camsterdam} I obtained some information
(to hope to have more communicated) while still

750.-
£ 500.

Selah R. Hobbie, Post Office Ambassador to Europe

A letter (plus fair copy) written by First Assistant Postmaster General Selah R. Hobbie to Postmaster General Cave Johnson while he was in the German states on official business in 1847.

Selah Reeve Hobbie [1797-1854] was a native of Newburgh NY. He practiced law at Delhi, Delaware Co., NY and married Julianne Root, daughter of General Erastus Root. Following in his father-in-law's footsteps, Hobbie was elected to Congress in 1826 and was appointed First Assistant Postmaster General on the accession of Andrew Jackson to the Presidency in 1829. His was a remarkably long tenure in this job, helping to keep the postal system viable over a tumultuous period of growth. Ill health forced him to resign in 1851, but he returned under Pierce in March 1853 to serve another year until his death.

In 1847, Postmaster General Cave Johnson sent Hobbie to Europe to negotiate agreements with some of the German states, with the Thurn & Taxis family, with France, and with England regarding trans-Atlantic mails. The US had just committed to financing a line of steamships to expedite mail - which would be in competition with British ships (see the listing of Congressional Documents, attached, that describe the history of the relationship between the federal government and the Ocean Steam Navigation Company.) Hobbie traveled to Europe on the maiden voyage of the first of these vessels to be finished, the *Washington*. He and the vice president of the Ocean Steam Navigation Company landed at Bremen and were treated royally as the harbingers of increased commerce with the United States. He had just begun his negotiations with the Bremen officials when he was called by the American minister in England to London to try to negotiate a settlement of what was then a reciprocal fee charged for letters in transit (the shilling tax referred to in the letter.) The Lords of the Treasury were too occupied with upcoming elections to meet with him and so he thoroughly inspected the British postal system, before traveling to France and entering negotiations there.

According to this letter, the French post office department was delaying over final compromise - but he pushed on up the Rhine to Frankfort to negotiate with the Thurn & Taxis posts.

It is not known why Hobbie's descendants acquired this letter which was mailed to Johnson. But it is curious that there are very few letters in the Library of Congress of any of the postmasters general. Perhaps Johnson returned this one to Hobbie knowing he would want to keep a record of his European adventure.

[address leaf to Hon. Col. C. Johnson, Postmr. General of the U.S., Washington, D.C. with red cds of Boston and "FREE"]

Frankfort-on-the-Maine [sic] August 28th 1847

Dear Sir -

I shall be compelled to make my letter a short one. I arrived here last night. Colonel Mann with me, from Paris, by way of Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hague, Amsterdam, Honheim, Dusseldorf, Cologne, & Mayence - up the Rhine, of course. Mr. Dubost of the French Post Office Dept. was not prepared on the final day set, a week ago last Thursday, to give me his final counter proposition to mine, which had been previously submitted. He said he must take time until the next week. I asked him to send it to me at Frankfurt if prepared before the first of September; if after to London. I left the next morning in company with Mr. Mann. I satisfied myself at Antwerp and Rotterdam of the unpractableness of those places in the winter as ports for the American Mail Steamers. At Amsterdam I obtained some information (& hope to have more communicated) which will enable me to report a suitable port of call (I trust) where we can leave the mails for Amsterdam & the Low Countries. When my friend, Mr. Gradie, comes in from his residence, five miles from here, I will, with his aid as interpreter & as a gentleman who has already given some attention to this subject, commence my negotiations with the Director General of the Thurn & Taxis posts. A communication has passed between us through the medium of Mr. Gradie - I shall, when this is completed, hasten on again to Bremen to close the arrangements which were interrupted by Mr. Bancroft's call on me to repair to London. From Bremen I shall again go to London in the strong expectation that by that time the Lords of the Treasury will have rescinded the 1/ tax on our letters; for I am satisfied they will do it if they take the matter up. I was so unfortunate when in Amsterdam as to have an attack of my old enemy the bowel complaint. We had there the coldest weather that I ever encountered in August or even in November, & the sudden change with my exposures on the road, subjected me to the attack. I am however indebted to this circumstance for the company & indispensable aid of Colonel Mann, who refused to leave me at Arnheim, or rather Dusseldorf, which he otherwise would have done, fearing I might have a recurrence of the attack.

I add a note on a separate slip. [not present]

Faithfully & truly yours

S.R. Hobbie

9) [address leaf to Hon. Col. C. Johnson, Postmr. General of the U.S., Washington, D.C.
with red cds of Boston and "FREE"]

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Col. C. Johnson

U.S. Post Office & the Trans Atlantic Mails 1846 to 1859

The United States had enjoyed a solid second place, behind Great Britain, in the maritime commerce of the 19th century. In point of speed, the Yankee Clipper ships were tops. Steam power, however, was changing the business and scale of maritime enterprise. The post office department became visible as an implement of foreign policy when Congress in 1845 enacted legislation to promote the American steamship industry with foreign mail contracts. The Bremen line was the first. Its mails would enter Europe direct, free of British controls.

1 Dec 1845 Annual Report Postmaster General Johnson: "I have deemed the making of these contracts of so much importance that I fixed the period for making them when Congress will be in session, that I may be guided by such further directions as it may think proper to give."

"Transportation of Mails" Hdoc 162 (29-1) 10 Mar 46 29pp + map [485] PMG letter 9 Mar 46 covering the documentation for the advertisement and bids for foreign mail contracts "that the mails be transported in American vessels by American citizens, and that a preference be given to such offers as propose to take the mail in steamships convertible into vessels of war." For the routes to Europe, Edward Mills was awarded the contract 19 Feb 46 when he included the war steamer clause and accepted - at the PMG urgings - Bremen rather than Havre as the principal terminal: "twice a month from 1 Mar 48 to Bremen, by Cowes, with privilege to run alternatively to Havre, instead of Bremen ..." Duckwitz letter 17 Jan 45 to A. Dudley Mann, the U.S. Consul at Bremen, offered a handsome list of exemptions and facilities; Chs. Tho. Gevekoht letter 28 Jan 46 to the PMG in Washington guaranteed the expedition of the mails from "BremenHaven" to "BremenTown" [by modern convention, spelled Bremerhaven, as the port at the mouth of the Weser, an enclave of Bremen some 35 miles from the city center upstream] and "that all letters and newspapers, including those American newspapers printed in the German language, can be forwarded to Bremen, and enter there, free from any molestation or control whatsoever," - a consideration which the PMG reiterated; map 19" x 23" of N. Europe of railroad connections with ship routes. In Sdoc 237 (29-1) 18 Mar 46 29pp, the Senate version of the above, a map is called for in the text but is not present in my copy.

"Atlantic Mail Steamers" Hrep 476 (29-1) 27 Mar 46 6pp [489] A report from the Committee on P.O. & P.R. regarding the PMG letter of 9 Mar 1846 (see above) and sustaining his choice of Bremen as the European terminus. Emigration is high, tobacco and import duties are low at Bremen: "more than 1/3 of all the tobacco exported from the U.S. within the last 12 years was imported into Bremen." "The political objects to be accomplished by this new connexion with Germany ought not to be overlooked ... Relying no longer exclusively upon England for information respecting our pecuniary and moral condition, they [Germany] will be able to gather, from more direct and reliable sources, a knowledge of our country and its affairs." Recommending for the necessary appropriation.

6 Dec 1847 Annual Report Postmaster General Johnson "... the first ship, the *Washington*, entered upon the service 1 June and returned in July [now abroad on her third voyage] ... [1st Asst PMG] S.R. Hobbie ... went in the *Washington* ... His mission to Germany was successful ... his investigation into the post office systems abroad with a view of ascertaining what improvements may be introduced into our own, will constitute hereafter, the subject of a special report."

"Foreign Mail Service" Hexdoc 35 (30-1) 26 Jan 48 16pp [516] A letter of the PMG 20 Jan 48 covers the report of S.R. Hobbie 15 Jan 48 as promised above. The PMG: "The only packet postage allowed by acts of Congress is applicable exclusively to the mails conveyed by the ships of the Bremen Line. It is 24 cents - of the same amount as the English packet postage." S.R. Hobbie: "Besides the post office authorities at Bremen, I met there representatives from the post offices of Prussia, Hanover, Brunswick, and Hamburg; and a communication from the Directeur General of the Thurn and Taxis posts ... The Prince of Thurn and Taxis (resident in Ratisbon, in the Kingdom of Bavaria) holds, by ancient feudatory grant, revived at the Congress of Vienna, the exclusive right of mail conveyance in seventeen states of the German confederation; and, in most of the remaining states, a right concurrent with the separate right of local governments. This circumstance ... embarrassed my operations with difficulties somewhat peculiar. The general and the local authorities entertained conflicting views. ... I judged it best to rely upon the agency of the government of Bremen ..." Hobbie 16 Oct 47 exchanges letters with Duckwitz 26 Nov 47 regarding inland postages. Hobbie proposes a reciprocal measure; Duckwitz rejoins: "you must not overlook that the chief expenses for post matter do not exist in the transport of letters, but in the expenses of the administration. The consequence thereof is, that the postage in a country with a great population and many different administrations must be higher" The "Table of Rates" gives foreign postages as well as the U.S. inland and packet rates, and is claimed to be more accurate "because made at a later date" than those published with the regulations.

"Mail from New York to Bremen" Hexdoc 50 (30-1) 13 Mar 48 6pp [518] Contract of 2 Feb 47 - for five years from 1 Mar - signed by C.H. Sand as the President of the Ocean Steam Navigation Co. referring to the 19 Feb 46 Contract of Edward Mills and subsequent Congressional appropriations of 19 Jun 46 and 2 Mar 47 whereupon on 19 Apr Mills & Co. assigned their contract to OSN Co. A letter of the PMG 2 Mar and a note of 18 Mar explain that Mills had not anticipated the delay in Congressional funding and so assigned the contract to the OSN Co., whose article of contract promises: "To run said line with greater speed to the distance than is performed by the Cunard line of steamships between Boston and Liverpool and

back. Privilege will be allowed to the Postmaster General to send an occasional agent to Europe." Moreover, "Contractors are to have the privilege to run each alternate ship to and from Havre ... and the pay for the ship to Havre is to be made at the rate of \$75,000/yr instead of \$100,000."

2 Dec 1848 Annual Report Postmaster General Johnson: "It is to be regretted that the OSN Co. has not as yet been able to comply fully with their contract for service between N.Y. and Bremen ... the importance of the service in connecting our country more intimately and directly with the enterprising and enlightened States of the German confederation, would entitle them to the indulgence of Congress and the forbearance of the department."

"Reports of the PMG and of the Sec. of the Navy" Sexdoc 15 (30-2) 22 Jan 49 3pp [529] PMG [Johnson] letter 19 Jan 49 announcing that by contract entered into 4 Nov 47 OSN Co. is running one ship once a month between N.Y. and Bremen via Cowes or Southampton.

"Report of the PMG communicating the particulars of the postal arrangement with Bremen" Sexdoc 25 (30-2) 6 Feb 49 19pp [531] PMG [Johnson] letter 3 Feb 49 reviewing the reasoning for the Bremen line, and again emphasizing: "that the people of the U.S. and their institutions should be seen and judged by the enlightened nations of Europe through the medium of the American press, rather than the misrepresentations of the presses of other nations;" the deputation of S.R. Hobbie in a letter 26 May 47; the "Arrangement ... done and signed at Washington 29 Mar 1847 [by the PMG] and at Bremen, 26 June [by Duckwitz] includes Regulations proposed by Hobbie in Bremen 13 Sep 47 and signed by Duckwitz 18 Sep. The PMG attests: "the regulations were duly confirmed in a notice to the public and instructions to postmasters published 1 Mar 1848." Accounting forms are prescribed. "Foreign Postage to be charged in addition to American Postage" are current [1849], and differ from those given in Hexdoc 35 (30-1) above.

"Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads" Srep 330 (30-2) 2 Mar 49 2pp [535] The *Washington* entered service May 47, the *Hermann* Mar 48: "the company have nearly completed a third ship called the *Franklin* ... [and] will soon ... compare favorably with the Br. steamers" - the OSN Co. contract should be extended another five years after the expiration of its first five.

"Ocean Steamers" Hexdoc 63 (30-2) 2 Mar 49 4pp [543] PMG [Johnson] letter 2 Mar 49 encloses a list of the foreign postages to be charged beyond the Bremen terminus [which is the same as that provided in Sexdoc 25 (30-2) above]. The Bremen line had accrued \$29,082.83 in postages, as of the last annual reporting.

3 Dec 1849 Annual Report Collamer: "The mail service by way of Southampton to Bremen has been ... carried the past year by the steamships *Washington* and *Hermann* for the sum of \$200,000, and the gross amount realized in postage from that service for the year ending 4 October was \$61,114.20. The gross amount from 1 June 47 to 4 October 48 was \$29,082.51. Notice has recently been received from the proprietors that this service will be suspended until February next, in order to make the necessary repairs now required for the safety of these steamships."

"Cost of Ocean Steamers" Hexdoc 86 (31-1) 12 Sep 50 4pp [579] Letter 7 Sep 50 signed S.R. Hobbie "Acting PMG" that the particular postages of different foreign mail lines are not separately accounted for.

"Report of the PMG in relation to alleged non-compliance of contract of steam-vessels carrying the U.S. mails" Sexdoc 77 (31-1) 24 Sep 50 6pp [562] PMG [Hall] letter 23 Sep 50 covers a full accounting of the foreign postages. "It is understood in this department that the performances on the N.Y., Southampton, and Bremen line by the first two ships first placed in the service, and which are the pioneers of the American steam mail packets, are not quite equal to the speed promised; but the 3rd and 4th ships, which are to run on the Havre Branch, are expected fully ..." Payments to the Bremen line from 13 Dec 47 to 20 Jul 50 total \$416,666.65; against \$132,567.12 in postages derived.

"Mail Service in Steamships between the United States and Foreign Countries" Hexdoc 127 (32-1) 31 Aug 52 17pp [649] PMG letters 29 Jun & 14 Apr 52 covering documentation: contract term and compliance. The *Washington* was ready in time, but the *Hermann* was put in service late, 21 Mar 48. The PMG ordered until 1 Jul 50 for OSN Co. to provide the ships to extend the contract to ten years. The third ship, the *Franklin*, was put in service 5 Oct 50 and the fourth, the *Humboldt*, 6 May 51. "In another particular, of great importance, the company failed to meet the requirements of the contract. These ships were to be of greater speed than those of the Cunard line. The *Washington* and *Hermann* have fallen far short of this engagement, having never attained the speed of those vessels. ... The *Humboldt* and *Franklin* have made shorter voyages, and their performance has been more satisfactory; the other two have been so uniformly tardy, as compared with the Cunard and Collins packets, that they have been little patronized, as mail conveyances, between this country and England." Since Apr 51 the OSN Co. has been held to a schedule in coordination with the Collins line steamers running NY to Liverpool under Navy contract. The rejoinder of OSN Co. 3 May 52 signed by Mortimer Livingston is that they have enjoyed the forbearance of the PMG with respect to the terms of contract and "... our ships do, at this time, perform with greater speed than the Cunard ships in service when our contract was made ..." Sec of State [Corwin] summarizes commercial advantages of the OSN Co. lines.

The U.S. imports from the Hanseatic Towns since 1846 have tripled to ten million dollars. Att. Gen. [Crittenden] letter 30 Apr 52 upholds the authority of the PMG for making foreign mail contracts despite the deference to Congress for funding.

"Mail Ocean Steamers" Hmisdoc 17 (32-2) 27 Jan 53 23pp [685] Bremen line revenues for the year ending 30 Dec 52 total about \$86,000, 50% more from mail sent than from mail received. Receipts from the closed mails handled by the Bremen line *Canada, California and Havana* total less than \$1000.

"... respecting the postal convention between the US and Great Britain" Sexdoc 32 (32-2) 4 Feb 53 44pp [660] Letter 8 Aug 51 Mr. Lawrence to Lord Palmerston refers to the German-Austrian postal convention eff. 1 Jul 50: "that the rates of postage throughout Prussia, Austria and indeed in most, if not all the States of Germany, have been greatly reduced, and that it is represented that the high transit-rate through England is the only obstacle in the way of rendering that convention available to parties corresponding between the U.S. and those countries [in view of the fact] ... that the U.S. rates of postage on letters and newspapers by American ships to the continent of Europe were materially reduced 1 Jul [1852]."

1 Dec 1853 Annual Report Postmaster General Campbell: "By a postal convention concluded 4 August (effective 15 August 1853) between the U.S. and Bremen, ... the rate of postage [is] reduced from 20 cents to 10 cents the single letter. Under the former arrangement, the postmaster of Bremen acted as the agent of this department in collecting postages, receiving for his services a commission of 20% ... the Bremen government [is] putting on two steamers to run monthly, alternately, in connexion with the U.S. steamers *Washington* and *Hermann* ... and the commission to the postmaster of Bremen is discontinued."

"Steamships" Hexdoc 75 (33-1) 13 Mar 54 8pp [723] Navy analysis of mail steamers finds them wanting as war vessels: "The *Washington* and *Hermann* both are inefficient for war purposes ... all are side-wheel steamers."

3 Dec 1855 Annual Report Postmaster General Campbell: "Additional articles agreed upon between the Post Office Department of the U.S. and the Post Office Department of the Hanseatic Republic of Bremen, providing for the registration of valuable letters, to be conveyed by the U.S. and Bremen lines of steamers, direct, between New York and Bremenhaven." [signed 27 May 1855]

"Memorial of the OSN Co. of New York" Smisdoc 75 (34-1) 6 Aug 56 2pp [835] 5 Aug 56 signed by C.H. Sand as president. OSN Co. "prepared to build two first class steamers" to propitiate a renewal of their contract (set to expire 1 Jun 57) for the carriage of the mails "between N.Y., Bremen, and Havre via Southampton" rather than that the department should contract with Cornelius Vanderbilt.

Five more executive documents of the House publish PMG Campbell's estimate - \$200,000 - of the funds required in the next year's service on the Bremen line. These are: Hexdoc 11 (33-1) 22 Dec 53; Hexdoc 93 (33-1) 19 Apr 54; Hexdoc 18 (33-2) 21 Dec 54; Hexdoc 86 (34-1) 14 Apr 56; Hexdoc 21 (34-3) 30 Dec 56. Campbell's annual reports detail the actual expenditures.

1 Dec 1857 Annual Report Postmaster General Brown: "The contract with the OSN Co., ... expiring on the first of June last ... I deemed it my duty to make provision for their continuance another year. ... the temporary contract for the service on the Bremen line is with Cornelius Vanderbilt ... the compensation to be paid is limited to the U.S. postages, sea and inland ... a fit occasion to inaugurate a system of self-sustaining ocean mail service ..."

"Contracts for carrying the mail to foreign countries, and statements of the amounts of postage derived therefrom" Hexdoc 47 (35-1) 25 Jan 58 16pp [955] PMG [Brown] letter 23 Jan 58 announcing temporary contract with Cornelius Vanderbilt for thirteen round trips 1 Jun 58-1 Jun 59 "for the gross amount of the United States postages, sea and inland, on the mails conveyed" - with a copy of the contract "the days of sailing of said steamships to alternate at equal and regular intervals of time with the U.S. steamers running between N.Y. & Havre via Southampton and between N.Y. & Liverpool" in sidewheel steam-ships convertible to war - and stipulating "that no mail shall be despatched between N.Y. and Southampton or Bremerhaven, in American vessels, within one week of the days of the departure of the mail herein provided for." Schedules. [The OSN Co. continue in the guise of N.Y. & Havre Steamship Co., Mortimer Livingston as President, jointly with C.H. Sand as sureties, with the same conditions as for Vanderbilt, the contract & schedule.] Vanderbilt ran the *Ariel* and *North Star* each for three trips between NY and Bremen 13 Jun 57 / 19 Dec 57 for the sea and inland postages.

"Mail Service to Foreign Countries" Hexdoc 105 (35-1) 22 Apr 58 2pp [958] PMG [Brown] letter 21 Apr 58. Because of an increasing uncertainty regarding the contracts for carrying the foreign mails for the postages, advance funds will probably be necessary for continuing service after 1 Jun 58 expiration of the temporary contracts of Hexdoc 47 (31-1) above.

4 Dec 1858 Annual Report Postmaster General Brown: [Pursuant to the act of 7 June 1858] "A Bremen company are now running fine steamers semi-monthly between N.Y. and Bremenhaven, carrying the mails for the postages ..."

"United States Consul at Bremen" Hexdoc 44 (35-2) 13 Jan 59 12pp Sec. of State [Cass] letter "touching the expediency of increasing the compensation ..." The Bremen office is a distributing office for parcels and letters transmitted from the department of State to the U.S. consular and diplomatic officers residing on the continent, the rate of postage being about 50% less upon mail matter sent direct to Bremen, than if forwarded by Liverpool. Bremen is also the principal port from which emigrants take their departure to the U.S. The Bremen cost of living is up 50% from the influx of gold. "Railroads have had the effect to equalize prices all over the continent." The \$2,000 salary had been sufficient: "when there were no steam packets, when there were but few travellers from America, and when the Germans had not been awakened by railroads and telegraphs from the primitive and simple mode of life to which they had been accustomed for centuries."

"Committee on Finance" Srep 371 (35-2) 9 Feb 59 2pp Report on the memorial of Kunhardt & Co., "Agents of the steamship companies whose steamers carry the mails between N.Y. & Hamburg and N.Y. and Bremen, receiving as compensation for this service the sea postage ... that their several steamships were all built in England and, from the peculiar construction of their boilers and furnaces, burn American coal to great disadvantage, and are therefore obliged to burn English coal" and ask for drawbacks on the duty. "The system of drawbacks is a comity among friendly nations by which one is permitted to experiment upon the markets of another." Declined.

3 Dec 1859 Annual Report Postmaster General Holt: "... this department [should] have the power to send forward the foreign mails as often as a safe, reliable vessel can be found to convey them, and that the obligation to prefer the American to the foreign steamship shall only exist when they sail on the same day."

From the beginning, then, the Bremen line was instrumental to the establishment of United States diplomatic relations with Europe, independent of Britain and in response to Bremen initiatives. The treaty itself might have seemed a foregone conclusion, having been signed in Washington, D.C., in advance of Hobbie's departure on the *Washington* except ... but then ... and Hobbie would be done almost before he got started. The story is furnished by a letter which Hobbie wrote to his wife Julianne from his hotel in Bremen, dated June 24 but the P.S. is worded to reflect the signature of the treaty by Duckwitz on June 26. See Sexdoc 24 (30-2) 6 Feb 49 above. A further addition datelined June 29 discloses that Hobbie has been called to Britain. Among Hobbie's companions at Bremen, the "Mr. Stephens" was John Lloyd Stephens, traveler and author as well as vice president of the OSN Co. Stevens later became president of the Panama Rail Road. Both he and Hobbie were in the Isthmus in 1851, both dying soon thereafter.

7 1,500.-
£ 1,000.-

Selah R. Hobbie, Post Office Ambassador to Europe

Two extraordinary letters (8 pages and 27 pages) written by First Assistant Postmaster General Selah R. Hobbie to his wife Julianne en route and while he was in Bremen and London on official business in 1847.

Selah Reeve Hobbie [1797-1854] was a native of Newburgh NY. He practiced law at Delhi, Delaware Co., NY and married Julianne Root, daughter of General Erastus Root. Following in his father-in-law's footsteps, Hobbie was elected to Congress in 1826 and was appointed First Assistant Postmaster General on the accession of Andrew Jackson to the Presidency in 1829. His was a remarkably long tenure in this job, helping to keep the postal system viable over a tumultuous period of growth. Ill health forced him to resign in 1851, but he returned under Pierce in March 1853 to serve another year until his death.

In 1847, Postmaster General Cave Johnson sent Hobbie to Europe to negotiate agreements with some of the German states, with the Thurn & Taxis family, with France, and with England regarding trans-Atlantic mails. The US had just committed to financing a line of steamships to expedite mail - which would be in competition with British ships (see the listing of Congressional Documents, attached, that describe the history of the relationship between the federal government and the Ocean Steam Navigation Company.) Hobbie traveled to Europe on the maiden voyage of the first of these vessels to be finished, the *Washington*. The Company had contracted to build steamships that would be faster than the Cunard Line steamships then in service. By the time they had built their ships, though, they were behind in design. And, as Hobbie's letter points out, there were also problems with the design that slowed the *Washington* - so that there was some dismay at the US prospects of garnering trans-Atlantic communications business.

Here, Hobbie's first letter written in pencil aboard the *Washington* (because dealing with ink on board a vessel was too difficult) is a very expressive picture of life aboard what was the luxury steamer of the year. One innovation was the upper promenade deck; another the commodious kitchens which produced feasts four times a day. Hobbie describes his fellow passengers as well as the ship, itself, and his own discomfiture at not having sea legs.

In the second letter, Hobbie describes his royal welcome in Bremen - along with John Lloyd Stephens, the Vice President of the Ocean Steam Navigation Company - in great detail. He follows with a travelogue of his trip to England - overland at first through German states where he knew neither the language nor the currency, and then by ship. He records his first impressions of England, and some of his observations about the postal negotiations in Bremen.

As unofficial ambassador, Hobbie realizes he is getting unusually luxurious treatment - and he seems to feel that part of his responsibility is to record it well, for his wife but also for posterity.

1) [letter plus typescript copy]

Steamship *Washington*

At Sea - Latitude ...Longitude... from L...Miles, by log, ...from New York.

My dear,

On Tuesday last the 8th June, after having been to sea a week I commenced a letter to Fanny. I have been writing in it from day to day. I have not yet quite filled a sheet. The ability to do much on board of ship by an inexperienced voyager is small & the disposition less. I will make the attempt to write you now in pencil. It is so difficult to do it with pen & ink.

Our departure from New York was beautiful. The weather was bright & an immense crowd covered the wharf, the shipping, the shrouds & masts, in the vicinity of our ships & all the high points in Castle Garden swarmed with multitudes of gazers. We drew out beautifully into the stream, discharged our guns in token of farewell & under the command of the hoarse-voiced pilot, put forward straight for sea. Many friends to those on board accompanied them to the narrows, when they returned in the steamboat *John Marshall* & after the Pilot got us over the bar near Sandy Hook which was attended with a delay of nearly two hours waiting for the tide to rise sufficiently to float our deep ship. He slipt down the side of the *Washington* & flung himself into the little pilot boat that was in waiting for him, committing us to the command of our excellent and accomplished captain. We were now on the great deep. The change was apparent & it was felt by some of us, not with any violent sensations at the time but with such as disturbed as much, & blanched the cheek, though not with fear. We sat down ere yet the night had set in, to dinner, but it was slightly partaken of by me or by my friend Broadhead who sat by my side. We were the first to retire - going upon deck under the hope that the disagreeable motion caused by the

heaving of the sea would less affect us there. But we were driven below by the raw chilliness of the air that swept the ocean, whereas that we had left behind in the city & harbor of New York was exceedingly warm. With a stomach & bowels agitated in pain I spent the night, the next day & several succeeding days I was qualmish & disturbed unable to occupy other than a recumbent position & consequently I kept myself chiefly in my berth, where happily I slept away the chief portion of my time. But I had not at any time in the full sense of the term, what is called sea sickness. In this disagreeable condition, between sick & well I remained for about 10 days, somewhat improving after the 2d day, from day to day, until it gradually left me. The violent sea sickness so universally expected, so much dreaded yet so much commended for its salutary effects, with the vigorous health of body & keenness of appetite that are said to succeed it - these I have not experienced. And this I find has been the case with several on board. My friends & immediate neighbors in our state room & table occupants, Broadhead & Campbell have been treated to a regular course of sea sickness & the former I am sorry to say is now at the 12th day from our start an invalid severely humbled by bowel complaint, tho' unsurpassed in his general good health by any one on board. Until very recently I have turned away from every thing around me with a feeling that would have converted to disgust, but for the fact that there was not tone & energy enough in my feelings to bring them up to that point. Every thing was devoid of interest. On deck all was dull & disagreeable. The ocean presented nothing even to excite attention. There is much about this beautiful ship to study & to learn - but I have no mind for the undertaking. There are on board the elements of a most interesting society. Some highly intelligent & accomplished gentlemen & doubtless some interesting ladies, but then we instinctively decide to be bores. Our table is abundant & sumptuous. But we have no appetite for the feast, spread before us in skillful variety, four times a day.

This is indeed a great hotel. Its boarders number ... strong & its family to which its officers, crew & servants may be likened amount to ... Its upper deck affords an immense promenade. This is an arrangement that no other ocean steamer has. It is of great advantage & much enjoyed when weather will at all permit by those who have got on their sea legs. We have at times numerous groups that it is pleasant to look upon with an eye directed to the varieties & contrasts in appearance, dress, manners & speech that the different nationalities here represented exhibit. We have German, English, Dane, French, Italian, Spaniard, Mexican & American & we have Jews as well as Gentiles and the more to chequer the scene we have a half cracked man on board, who wears motley & lectures on temperance, very little I see to the success or dignity of the cause. One of the most pleasing features in our ship deck scenes is the intermixture of children in our groups. They enjoy better health than any one else, they move about the deck with less difficulty and are as sportive & noisy urchins as they would be at home & probably more so for they are no doubt more played with & spoiled. There is a great contrast between the animated scenes on our deck at times & the gambols & sports of the children & the wide desolate interval of water around us spread out to a limitless expanse without another single object upon it to meet the eye.

The deck below the upper one is the saloon deck. The meals are served up in this room for the first class passengers on 2 long parallel tables fixed to the floor with permanent seats attached. We divide off into messes - partly by previous arrangement, partly by accident. The tastes & likings of the passengers have a good deal to do with the matter - for our chief social intercourse & enjoyments are much concerned in these events. My chief acquaintance is with the members of my mess which is the principal one - occupies the first portion of the table, drinks the most wine (with little aid from me however in that respect) sits out the longest & has the most to say. In it are Mr. Broadhead, Mr. Campbell, Gov. Matthew, Mr. Peries, Mr. Foucké, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Oelrick, Mr. Blair and Mr. Saint Felix. Mr. Silas E. Burroughs with his family & friends occupy the section at the other end of our table. A young Mr. Key of Washington & some young friends of his from Baltimore are fellow passengers & are in a mess at the other table. Our table is equal to that of the Astor House & is probably the best that was ever spread out on this great highway. State rooms are arranged along on the side of the saloon. Mine is one of the most pleasant & convenient & I have it with an unusual privilege that of exclusive occupation. Below this is a large room cut up entirely with state rooms or bed rooms as it would be more expressive to call them. Like rooms for first class passengers are in the upper front cabin with a saloon in the centre for smoking & playing cards & in the room below are the berths & eating room for the 2d class passengers. In the centre of the ship next to that portion of it spent for the engines are the kitchens, larders, & pantries & they are quite roomy compared with the scant provision that has to be made for the cooking department on board of ships. Our time is divided into 5 four hour watches & 2 two hour watches. The captain is at the head of one & the first mate at the head of the other & the crew is equally divided between them. Each in its turn having the management of the ship & the other for the time at rest. Time is kept by sounding a bell at the end of each half hour from the commencement of a watch. We are now, at the last observation made today at 50°14' north latitude & 13°48' west longitude from London - about 12 degrees of 38 miles each from Southampton - that is about 456 miles yet to run before reaching land. The ship has disappointed us as to her speed - or rather her engines have. Every one is satisfied that the construction of the vessel & the power of the engines would give us the dispatch we had expected - but there is a small defect that

prevents our obtaining it. The hot wells are too small to receive the condensed water from the steam when the engines are worked fast & we are of course obliged to work them slow. That explains our delay. There is a difference between time & New York time of about 4 hours. It is now 11 o'clock p.m. ship time. My watch gives 7 as the hour. Our nights are very short - we have day light at a little after 2 o'clock.

My dear, I found in my trunk last Sunday your very acceptable present of the bible & prayer book. I made some use of them but not much owing to my illness. They have occupied my attention much more today. We have had no service on the ship. There is no man on board of a clerical character. I have read with renewed gratification Mary's very pretty lines addressed to me & which I found in my trunk at New York. I did not write to Fanny from New York, being so humid at the time. But I have been writing her a long letter here. I commenced it indeed last Tuesday & have since been making slow progress in it from time to time since. I fear my omission to write has caused her unpleasant feelings & I have thought much of it, & with pain. I am heartily rejoiced that she is not with me. There is not a particle of pleasure in this trip so far I am satisfied that she would have suffered much. There are several young ladies on board as well as old - I have seen but little of them. Silas E. Burroughs has a daughter & she expresses great regret that Fanny is not along.

[docket] This letter was not finished till after I got to Southampton. I then closed it on Wednesday night June 16 & 17 then left it with Consul to forward it. 17th June - wrote an additional letter & Mr. Ross took it ashore from the ship at Cowes.

2) Lindenhof
Bremen
June 24, 1847

My dear -

I sit down again to write to you with a great deal to say & communicate, but the thought that takes chief possession of my mind is the anxious & vain enquiry I make to myself How is your health? Have you recovered? Or are you lingering along in illness? My mind, giving & sinking away as it does at times, will not push the enquiry further. Oh! that I could be satisfied in this particular. But I will hope for the best; & flatter myself with the belief that the improvement, of which I was informed by telegraph through the exceeding great kindness of Mr. Gillet, has continued; & that you are now again about, & in the enjoyment of health.

I am well - entirely so, indeed, this bright, but cool morning - looking out from the windows of my hotel, the Lindenhof (Linden is the name of the tree; & hof is square) upon the odd scene before me. It is the square - about as wide as 2/3 rds the width of Penna. Avenue - traversed & crossed in every direction by every variety of person & dress - but chiefly by bare headed & bare armed women, bare heads if young, if old then clean white frilled caps.

I suppose when this reaches you, the adventure upon which I am now engaged stands in the U.S. at a rather low ebb, on account of the failure of the *Washington* to make the trip in the time that was calculated, & her being beaten by the *Brittania* - Not so here. We are the greatest Lions that have been in Bremen for the last several centuries. I cannot describe it - nor my feelings. - This last expression is not exactly correct - my feelings were then chiefly of amazement.

We reached the Bremer Haven about 40 miles below this, at the mouth of the Weser, on Saturday the 19th at about 7 o'clock in the morning. Salutes were fired - & all the German flags & flags of the U.S. without number were displayed from the masts & shipping (of which however there was not much) but there were several steamboats flying about, decked off with an infinity of flags, & firing swivels. A committee came on board headed by their Amptman (or Governor of the town) who addressed me & the Captain (being called forward for that purpose) with a hearty welcome in a good English speech (the speech was pronounced by another person who could speak English). After partaking of breakfast with us, we prepared to ascend in a beautiful little iron steamer sent down to bring us up to Bremen. But before leaving the ship the Committee was reassembled on the Quarter deck & I took leave of them in a speech which appeared to give them great satisfaction. From Bremen Haven to Bremen it was a scene of the utmost display & rejoicing. Every boat was decked with streamers & flags & fired us salutes. The population all crowded to the shores, dressed in their best for the occasion. Great crowds, shouts of welcome, & discharges of artillery, greeted us at the villages we came to, of which there were several singular looking yet interesting & rather beautiful ones, on our route. But Bremen presented an astonishing spectacle. Here the shores of the Weser are embanked with high perpendicular walls & these closely built up to by high houses with lofty balconies. They were covered with people - men, women & children. The whole city & much of the surrounding country must have emptied its population upon these walls & houses - & all to see, not the ship for she was at Bremen Haven, but us - little me & Mr. Stephens Vice Prest. of the Ocean Stm. N. Co. & Mr. Jno. Blair

of the U.S. Navy who accompanied us & is with us still, a most excellent fellow who enjoys these matters exceedingly & is treated with the greatest attentions. A deputation descended to the deck of the boat, headed by the venerable Burgomaster Schmidt, giving us a hearty welcome by the hand (but not in a speech) whilst the crowds sent up their shouts. We were led out thro' the great mass that had fallen back on each side & who took off their hats to me as I passed & I could not restrain my old military feeling & habit by uncovering from time to time as I moved forward to the carriage in which we, three, were placed with Mr. Henicken, & were conveyed to the Lindenhoff.

I cannot relate all - for I have an appointment to meet shortly. The principal citizens called during the afternoon & evening & several before we got away from the dinner who sat down & joined us in a few glasses of wine. On Sunday, we went in the first place to their church, Cathedral, Dutch Reformed - an immense pile in length & width; but not so high (the steeple) as Trinity - the rest much larger. It was little of the service we attended or looked to - we sought the curiosities - the most extraordinary the bodies of the corpses which I saw & touched, some of them 400 years old & more - that is, been dead that time. One was a Swedish countess dead 200 years - hair still on her head - the flesh has shrunk away the skin has become like leather almost - there was the body of a student, killed in a duel - another of some General, a Swede, a large corpulent man - all preserved by nothing but the peculiar atmosphere of the place. Strange! - there were cats, birds, turtles, killed & hung up, some recently, in this vault, but partly under ground & well lighted & yet corruption does not touch them & they are preserved dry & shrivelled, superior to all art of embalming.

In the afternoon we were taken out in a carriage about 5 miles to a Fête Champêtre - gotten up in honor of the occasion of our arrival. I must take another time to describe this beautiful scene. An immense dinner was spread, headed by the President of the Republic, by whose side I was placed - splendid music - 3 toasts, preceded with speeches - in honor of hunting & sharp-shooting, of America & Germany, & of the ladies; & when the last toast was given the Presidt. Mr. Myers, the Burgomaster Schmidt (the greatest man in talents & standing in this Republic), Mr. Duckwitz & all around turned to me, all of that part of the table & loudly drank the health of Mrs. Hobbie, at the same time taking from a splendid piece of confectionery standing at the head of the table a little banner having the flag of the U.S. & presenting it to me. After dinner the firing commenced - target shooting all over the field was carried on in elegant style & I had to give special observation & much commendation to it; & it was well entitled to all praise. Several of the principal persons then went with me (& there were several high officers of state from Hanover & Brunswick along) to visit the magnificent country seat of Mr. Henicken, near by. We returned, sat down again - heard Yankee Doodle played - Stephens & Blair went & saw the dancing of which there was a great deal. Just before leaving I arose from the seat, where I had been sitting at the table & addressed the Sharp Shooters under whose management the "Fête" had been conducted with a short speech returning our acknowledgments for the honors tendered & expressing high satisfaction with the sports & festivities of the day. This was very well received & cheered - All this was on Sunday, & perhaps every person on the ground who engaged in this feasting, singing, playing, drinking, shooting, dancing & merry making of all sorts for there were tricks among the boys climbing greased poles, getting ducked with tubs of water when they did not hit the button in the barrel game & the like, was a church member - excepting we surprised Americans - not Catholic but protestant - not Lutheran protestant, but of that older Dutch Reformed. And I believe every one went away sober. The fathers of the Republic were there, the ladies, the old, the middle aged, the young, the rich & the poor. It was all in perfect order - full of glee & enjoyment, but no rudeness, nothing offensive. We can have no such scenes in America, nor in England. On Monday I attended the dinner of state, given by the Senate of Bremen on the occasion, men in red livery in waiting - the President of the Republic at the head, the Secretary of state of Prussia on the right of the chair (not the Secretary, but some officer in the Dept) I on the left, Stephens further around on the right, the officers of state from Hanover further around on my left, Capt. Hewitt (a noble fellow) & Blair also prominently placed, two immense tables & a cross table at the head filled the room, large & splendidly lighted with brilliant chandeliers - the courses were innumerable. When the Haunch of Venison appeared the speeches & toasts began - German, all gammon to me. Of the foreigners present they called me out first - by a toast to Col. Johnson, Postmaster General of the U.S. and I replied in a speech & with a toast. I felt very well at the time, & satisfied myself which is satisfying rather a hard judge. There were a good many present who understood English, perhaps half of the company & they appeared highly pleased and after we rose from the table I was excessively complimented all round for my speech & for the manner & style of delivery, which must have stuck them at least as peculiar for in voice, accent & gesticulation it was vastly different from the German mode of speaking. Senator Duckwitz who is a very superior man, Young Schmidt an eminent lawyer son of the Burgo master & many others congratulated me warmly & Stephens said I did too well for I spoilt his speech. He made an excellent one however. It was humorous & drew forth much laughter. He made one or two capital hits. Capt. Hewitt also spoke. I was succeeded by the Prussian Secy of State - in German - Senator Gildermeister, sitting on my left, translated one expression to me as he went on, viz: that he would not "speak of the occasion, that had

been done far better than he could by the eloquent mouth of the other Hemisphere." Yesterday I dined at a private party, but in a most rich & elegant style, with a Mr. Myers & lady. Us 3 - Stephens, self & Blair - with some 4 or 5 gentlemen & 2 ladies - servants in livery - & were taken out after dinner to the beautiful country seat of his brother, one of the guests, about 4 miles from town. How beautifully the grounds are laid out - the Houses are costly & tasteful. There is a great deal of wealth here in the upper classes. This city is surprisingly beautiful. I never saw anything so pleasing as is that part of it called the ramparts. But I must close. Day before yesterday - Tuesday, I was sick & did not attend the grand entertainment given on board the *Washington* 40 miles below. The rest I then got has been of real service to me.

I wish I had time to write more - to talk of Home matters - to talk of the dear children - to pour out my deep & abiding love for you & them.

Adieu, adieu.

S.R. Hobbie

Julianne

P.S. The *Washington* sails to morrow from the Bremer Haven at 9 A.M. They will send down a special mail at 10 P.M. to night, so I have more time. I have met my appointment & had my interview with Senator Duckwitz, a member of the Committee on Foreign affairs charged with post office relations. I am to dine out today at the Stadt Frankfort at 5 p.m. My German post office business will be all got along with. An arrangement equally as good as that of a postal convention with the different Germanic states, including even Prussia & Austria will be accomplished. This is gratifying after finding such a severe rebuff in England. Am prepared to go to Hamburg - but they will wait on me, here. I shall proceed from here to Hanover & thence to Frankfort, which is the heart of Germany down the Rhine to Ostend & over to England before going to France. Our port matters in England are in a very bad way & I anticipate great difficulty. She feels hostile - exceeding so; & I have a most difficult part to play in that high theatre - to express my idea better I shall find it difficult to play any part at all. After I shall have been to London, I will go to Paris.

There is a vast deal here to wonder at & admire. I admire the manners of the people - but dislike their language. I can't understand it, that is not the fault of the language - but it sounds bad & makes the men & particularly the women who talk it look bad whilst talking. The streets are very narrow - houses high - well built - grotesque many of them - in the gables & roofs, but still they are handsome - strong built & much ornamented. And they have particularly in their country seats arrangements & decorations far exceeding anything of the kind I have seen in America.

They drink beer & ale here & I have somewhat fallen into that way & not with bad effect, as yet. The drink at table is the light French & German wines - which do not intoxicate, nor oppress the stomach as the madeira and sherry wines do.

I have heard the nightingale, but slightly - not his long warbling song, that is given only in the night & I have not been in the country late enough to hear it. I have seen the stork here & the swan. They are frequently met with. They appear under very interesting aspects.

The streets are many of them so narrow that but a single carriage can pass - the foot way so narrow in places that you have to step off to get around a bow window or angle in the building. This was originally a fortress with immense ramparts & a deep moat. Those ramparts are now the handsomest pleasure grounds I ever saw & the moat a most beautiful sheet of water. Outside of the gates of the city, along this moat, are built houses, that for prettiness of arrangements, grounds & position make one feel exceedingly envious. Here are young merchants in New York of no note or distinction whatever now who went from here poor, - are making their fortunes in our country & are preparing for their return by building beautiful houses for their family - one has been pointed out to me, built beyond the moat, a beautiful & picturesque situation, that will cost him \$20,000 dollars. In the moat are swan & ducks - islands in the moat, where they breed. They are never disturbed. Flowers abound in every direction. Large parterres of them are cultivated with most beautiful taste at public expense open to the streets - no enclosures - the richest of red roses trained up on posts to look like a tree with a canopy top to it. No hand of man, woman or child, high or low, even presumes to touch one, except those whose business it is to take charge of them. Every thing is subdued down into the most quiet & submissive state. The town is ruled by the Old Senators. They are elected or rather elect themselves by a complicated form of election which I have not time to describe now & hold their offices for life. But they appear & are the old fathers of the city. Their authority is most kind & paternal. But it is wonderful to see how unconditionally it is submitted to. No boy climbs a tree or runs frolicking about on the grounds & over the paths that wind thro' their open spacious & lovely grounds. No rudeness of manner is observed - no instances of intoxication, no loud talking, great courtesy & respectfulness is observed & great freedom on the part of the low in speaking to the high & great readiness on the part of the latter

to return every salutation with the utmost respect. But there is not that energy that the more untameable spirit of the Englishman & the American imparts to his whole character. I presume their laborers (I have seen them to work on the rail roads) do not perform half as much work in a day - no, not as much by 2/3rds as our good American white laborers do. But this city of Bremen shows a wonderful spirit of improvement & enterprise for a German town. It is very rich, its leading citizens are rich & at the same time it is not as rich as they mean to be - for they have incurred a debt of about 8 millions of dollars for improvements, for a harbor for our Steamships at the mouth of their river, for a rail road from that to Bremen & a rail road from Bremen to Hanover (where it will connect with the Hanover & Prussian system of Rail Ways) & from Hanover east to connect with the rail roads leading to the Rhine; & for a rail road west to Hamburg to connect Bremen with the Baltic. This will concentrate all the German trade & intercourse with America, at Bremen.

The plaza in front of my hotel presents a pleasing scene on Sunday morning. It is chequered & covered at times with a moving & varying crowd. There is early church 0 about 7 - again at 9 - again at 11. About 10 o'clock the windows of the dome of the great Cathedral are flung open and a chant is sung from that high elevation by many voices accompanied by instruments. It is splendid. Between 11 & 12 the military appear on the square & go through with their exercises surrounded by a host - at a respectful distance however - of spectators. This military parade takes place every morning. Their principal guard house is on the square. They are dispersed thro' the different parts of the city & perform the rites of a watch day & night.

I have told you of the dead bodies I saw & felt in the vaults under the great cathedral still in a state of preservation, the bone, skin, sinew & much of the flesh, the features pretty well retained. Some between 50 & 100 years old & some 400 - they have another affair of a very different kind that they have preserved to a wonderful old age in the vaults of another of their buildings - the cellars of their Rath House (Senate House). It is wine - they gave me some to taste, made they said in 1624 - only think of that. A wine glass they said would make me stone drunk - and this was light Rhenish wine, of which a man may drink of ordinary age a bottle & not feel it more than 2 or 3 cups of good strong tea. This dreadful old wine was not pleasant to the taste & we had at the time to drink, furnished by the keeper of this Senatorial cellar some of the best Rudesheimer I ever tasted; & with a little plain excellent refreshment, & for which we paid him being an emolument of office going to the public functionary just mentioned. They have in this vast suite of cellars bottles so monstrous large that I have forgotten the dimensions, and among them, in the choicest cellar of all, 12 particular & special ones, called the 12 Apostles, each labelled with the name of an Apostle. What is strange is, that the one labelled Judas contains the best flavored wine.

I have attended the opera, once - but not on Sunday evening, which they say is the choicest time to attend being uniformly then the best performance & the largest & most select audience. I went on Sunday to their Union Hall got up for the improvement of their young men & furnished with a very large library - this was explained to be for the improvement of their time, & to keep them from dissipation &c & yet we found portions of them playing, on Sunday, billiards, domino, chess & like games & some drinking beer all provided as well as the books for the benefit of the young men. This was explained to us by our friend to be all right, exactly right - & having the desired beneficial effects.

The stores & places of business are open on Sundays after church service is over - particularly all places of amusement - and instruments of music, giving the lively German waltzes, & listened to by crowds, are heard at many places throughout the city.

Tuesday 29 June 1847

My dear - I concluded to wait before sending this letter until an efficient time to take it to Southampton just as the *Washington* should sail - and now I have received a dispatch from our Minister at London which makes it my duty to give up all other plans & go immediately to England. I start today at 11 or 12 o'clock & have to hire an extra post carriage of two horses, in order to reach the Hamburg & London steamer near the mouth of the Elbe at a place called Cuxhaven, which we will pass very early on tomorrow morning. I lose by this another interesting affair. I have received an invitation from Burgomaster Schermacher, at the head of the two Depts. of Finance & War, to unite in a rural dinner at a village called Horn - Some gentlemen connected with the Govt. of the Duchy of Oldendorf are to be present; also the military are to be on the ground & a review will take place. Senator Duckwitz was to take me out in his carriage. Now I must write my apology & forego this interesting occasion.

London July 2 1847

Here I am in mighty, monstrous & overwhelming London. I have sailed up the Thames, I have seen the Tower frowning on its side, I have been through the Custom House, I have been whirled thro' some two and a half miles of streets from the Custom House to my Hotel, & here I am at Morley's on Trafalgar Square, near Charing Cross. It seems as yet like a vast chaos of streets and buildings - a vast whirlpool of population, whom devious currents are raking in every direction, "a mighty maze, & all without a plan" But the names are full of the richest associations. Before me is Trafalgar Square, with its lofty column surmounted by the statue of Nelson, & ornamented at one of its angles with a magnificent bronze equestrian statue of George the 4th. This is a large plaza, all laid with marble, & tessellated; & containing two large & ever flowing jet d'eaus. Off on my right, is the Royal Academy of longer frontage than New York city hall. On my left the palace of the great Duke of Northumberland, with an audacious looking lion surmounting the facade & a huge shield covered with armorial bearings, suspended midway upon the centre of its long extending front, that looks silent, stern & gloomy upon the busy street beneath it. And farther along is Charing Cross marked by the statue of Charles the first, mounted upon an oversized ill shaped Flemish horse. But I have no time to describe London.

I should rather speak of my journey to it. It was a distance of 14 3/4 miles, German, equal to about 70 miles, English, from Bremen to Cuxhaven. Imagine my feelings, when told that with the exception of the first 8 miles, English, I travelled the whole distance without knowing a word that was spoken or finding those who understood a word I spoke - all alone. Most of the way a dreary country, considerable portions uncultivated & barren. I reached Cuxhaven, a gloomy village on a flat & cheerless coast at one o'clock t night. I had to encounter three kinds of currency - the Bremen, the Prussian adopted by Hanover, through whose territory I travelled, & the Hamburg. I changed horses, carriage & postillion about every 10 miles, English. I had to pay the postmaster for the carriage & horses - that was plain for it was written down in German & a receipt given which was explained by the fingers & besides I had to pay the postillion, always disposed to cheat, as the man of the whip is, the wide world over, whether driving a hack on Pennsylvania avenue, an estate in Hanover, or Hance's Patent Safety Cab in London. And it puzzled me exceedingly to keep good the reckoning between the Bremen grote & the Prussian gute grotien & the Hamburg marks & schillings - for they are of different values in the different countries.

On board the *Wilberforce* we encountered a severe gale & a rough sea, & oh! how sick I was. I took to my berth soon after reaching the ship which was done by means of a small boat; and I kept my berth from Wednesday morning till late on Thursday afternoon. Dishes of soup & tea were brought to me; but they were flung off by my stomach into the vessel I kept constantly by me with much greater suddenness than they were swallowed. My first meal & that a very sparing one was made at the dinner table at about 5 p.m. on Thursday. I lost much in not being able to get on deck on Wednesday night to witness with my eyes the furious waves that flung us about with such violence that it was difficult to keep in our berths & that dashed from time to time over our decks as the roaring of the water thro' the scuppers would plainly inform us as we lay in our berths. When we left the German ocean & entered the North we glided into smooth waters & passing up the Thames, beheld the shores of "Merry England" on either hand. Those of Kent on the left were the most attractive. We halted at Blackwalls, which tho' in London is many miles below the end of our voyage, to receive on board three amiable personages, the Custom House officers, & to land a Prince & his suite & sundry heads of good fat beeves, all direct from Germany. We did not know till now that we had been travelling with the blood royal of Prussia, in the person of Prince Waldemir, nephew to the King. But there came on board a very genteel looking young man, said to be direct from the Court to unite them, a Treasury order permitting them to go ashore. Nevertheless the Custom House officers, as if in happy ignorance of all such things, made very special enquiries of Count this, & Baron that, gentlemen of the suite, whether they had any contrabands in the shape of cigars & wines. The Prince looked & behaved very much like one of the American foreigners except that his mustache was considerably yellower than the general run of such articles in our climate & his manner was more pretensionless, decidedly.

Not feeling well today - that is, a little unsettled in the stomach, I have sent a note to Mr. Bancroft who lives some 2 1/2 miles further up town (recollect I have come 2 1/2 from the Custom House & we probably came over a half mile or about from the steamer to get to the Custom House) that I will call on him tomorrow. Had I announced my official character I might have got ahead of the rest at the Custom House. But I felt indisposed to do so & I wanted to see the routine. We were all the forenoon there - but personally I have no ground to complain. They gave me a preference I was not entitled to - treated me with great respect - tumbled my things about in the trunk very little - knew it was a New York article - made some complimentary remarks (about the trunk) affixed their stamp & dismissed me. They knew I was an American & treated me better on that account. That I am quite sure of.

July 7 1847

(I have written you a hasty letter from the Minister's house. I will proceed with this, tho' I have little time to write what I should desire to do).

July 7 1847

Tomorrow is the last time for sending this off by the Minister's bag, which is the best way to dispatch it. Tomorrow, at his house by 11 o'clock at the latest. It is now I suppose long after 12 at night. I must finish tonight as other letters official must be written in the morning.

I get along very slowly - with everything. London is so large. It is expensive getting about, if I ride and if I undertake to explore my way on foot I get lost. I have got lost twice - & after wandering about out of my latitude & reckoning as to both distance I got a cab & am brought around all right at last. I have also to receive civilities and attentions - can't put them off & the great thing in that way is to eat & drink. Day before yesterday Gov. Mathew took Campbell (late m.c. from New York & myself) down to the Greenwich Observatory & hospital. It's a part of London City but then it is 6 miles from here. We went by steamboat, under the magnificent bridges that span the Thames - the suspension, the Waterloo, the Black Friars, the Southwark, & last & grandest of all the London (Westminster & Vauxhall & Battersea bridges are above Charing Cross) - we went by the great Somerset house - a palace built by Cardinal Woolsey & afterwards the residence of the great protector Somerset now a place for city offices - by the Temple Inns Courts, we went over the Tunnel, & thro' the forest of shipping in the Thames, a small part tho' of that which lies in London for it is taken thro' locks into immense docks constructed at a considerable distance from the river. But I can't tell all that we went by. We went to Greenwich, surveyed its beautiful grounds, its immense hospital for seamen, its observatory, where the world begins its reckoning of degrees & time & we wound up with a dinner that must have cost our friend some 4 or 5 guineas or 25 dollars - it was all fish, taken there, & the last dish the most delicious I ever ate called white bait about as large, the largest, as the two joints of your little finger. We had strawberries, so large that one could not be eaten at a mouthful - have to make two bites at least - and wine & beer of course we had to the uttermost, to say nothing of some punch, which we must drink because Aldermen always drink punch after turtle soup - & we had turtle soup to begin with. The consequence is that Campbell & I were sick all day yesterday. He worse than I.

I have been dissipating among the pictures. Oh! what a luxury - here a few steps from my hotel is the magnificent collection of the chef d'oeuvres of the old masters which the British Govt. has been thro' all time amassing. Tell Hamilton - here are Claudes, several of them, Rubens, Titians, Paul Renoirs & Ponsains - but my time gives out. Otherwise I would tell of the Rembrandts, the Guidos, the Corregios, the Raphaels, the Michaelangelos, the Hoggarths, the Reynolds, the Wests, the Thomas Lawrences, the Wilkies, and the Murillos. I would also dwell upon the glories of the Royal Academy - the school of the present day, which I confess pleases me the best, barring some 2 or 3 exceptions.

Neither have I time to tell you of Westminster Abbey, & of the Parliament House - the old one & the magnificent unfinished new one, nor of St. Pauls, nor of the Bank of England, nor the London port office, nor of Col. Maberly. No. No. These & much more I must reserve for my second chapter, or rather book.

I am much obliged to Mr. Gillet for his excellent & interesting letter. I wish I had time to write him - but when I make such interminable letters to you I am unable to write to any one else, but on compulsion, on business. He may read of this - by the folio. But again adieu, adieu.

My love to the dear children and your dearer self.

S.R. Hobbie

Julianne

July 9 1847

I took myself up to the Minister's but found I had until today 4 p.m. I brought it back intending to add much more, & now find I have not time to add a word scarcely. I have been sightseeing & making calls. Oh! how rapidly time flies here. How little is accomplished. I am tired of this. There is a vast deal to see & admire but it costs too much labor & time & money. This life in London is too artificial. There is too much of extremes. The wealth & display & pomp exhibited are excessive, & so are the poverty & dissipation & suffering, one sees every day & hour, side by side, with the highest dignity & greatest opulence, the world possesses. I took up my pen to describe but I feel too much like moralizing & my mind turns off from what I have been viewing & contemplating with a sense of weariness, amounting almost to satiety & with the reflection that after all it is vanity, & there is more vexation of spirit in it, than solid satisfaction. I hope our country will never ape this ambitious display, this concentration of wealth in the hands of the few & this beggary of the millions to sustain it. A simpler life be ours,

a more equal dispensation of its enjoyments & blessings. I have much to relate; but am not now in the vein for doing it. I had rather see you & the dear, dear children, at this moment, than al the sights in London from Kensington Gardens to Blackwalls. Again adieu.

S . R .

H o b b i e .

1.
Steam Ship Washington
at Sea - Latitude

Longitude for L.

Miles, by long, from
New York.

My dear,

On Tuesday last the 8th June, after having
been to sea a week I commenced a letter to
Fanny. I have been writing in it from day to day,
I have not yet quite felted a sheet. The ability to do
much on board of ship by an inexperienced voyager
is small - & the disposition less. I will make the at-
tempt to write you now in pencil. It is so difficult to
^{write} with pen & ink.

Our departure from New York was beautiful. The
weather was bright & an immense crowd covered the wharf
the shipping, the shores & mast, in the vicinity of our ship
& all the high points in Castle Garden swarmed with mul-
titudes of gazers. We drew out beautifully into the
stream - discharged our guns in token of farewell & un-
der the command of the hoarse voiced pilot, put for-
ward straight for Sea. Many friends to those on board
of whom I cannot ~~forget~~ ^{forget} ~~on~~ accompanied them to the
narrows, where they returned in the Schooner John Min-
shall about the time I after the Pilot got us over the
bar near Sandy Hook which was attended with a

(3) Steamship Washington

At Sea - Latitude ...Longitude... from L...Miles, by log, ...from New York.

My dear,

On Tuesday last the 8th June, after having been to sea a week I commenced a letter to Fanny. I have been writing in it from day to day. I have not yet quite filled a sheet. The ability to do much on board of ship by an inexperienced voyager is small & the disposition less. I will make the attempt to write you now in pencil. It is so difficult to do it with pen & ink.

Our departure from New York was beautiful. The weather was bright & an immense crowd covered the wharf, the shipping, the shrouds & masts, in the vicinity of our ships & all the high points in Castle Garden swarmed with multitudes of gazers. We drew out beautifully into the stream, discharged our guns in token of farewell & under the command of the hoarse-voiced pilot, put forward straight for sea. Many friends to those on board accompanied them to the narrows, when they returned in the steamboat *John Marshall* & after the Pilot got us over the bar near Sandy Hook which was attended with a delay of nearly two hours waiting for the tide to rise sufficiently to float our deep ship. He slipt down the side of the Washington & flung himself into the little pilot boat that was in waiting for him, committing us to the command of our excellent and accomplished captain. We were now on the great deep. The change was apparent & it was felt by some of us, not with any violent sensations at the time but with such as disturbed as much, & blanched the cheek, though not with fear. We sat down ere yet the night had set in, to dinner, but it was slightly partaken of by me or by my friend Broadhead who sat by my side. We were the first to retire - going upon deck under the hope that the disagreeable motion caused by the heaving of the sea would less affect us there. But we were driven below by the raw chilliness of the air that swept the ocean, whereas that we had left behind in the city & harbor of New York was exceedingly warm. With a stomach & bowels agitated in pain I spent the night, the next day & several succeeding days I was qualmish & disturbed unable to occupy other than a recumbent position & consequently I kept myself chiefly in my berth, where happily I slept away the chief portion of my time. But I had not at any time in the full sense of the term, what is called sea sickness. In this disagreeable condition, between sick & well I remained for about 10 days, somewhat improving after the 2d day, from day to day, until it gradually left me. The violent sea sickness so universally expected, so much dreaded yet so much commended for its salutary effects, with the vigorous health of body & keenness of appetite that are said to succeed it - these I have not experienced. And this I find has been the case with several on board. My friends & immediate neighbors in our state room & table occupants, Broadhead & Campbell have been treated to a regular course of sea sickness & the former I am sorry to say is now at the 12th day from our start an invalid severely humbled by bowel complaint, tho' unsurpassed in his general good health by any one on board. Until very recently I have turned away from every thing around me with a feeling that would have converted to disgust, but for the fact that there was not tone & energy enough in my feelings to bring them up to that point. Every thing was devoid of interest. On deck all was dull & disagreeable. The ocean presented nothing even to excite attention. There is much about this beautiful ship to study & to learn - but I have no mind for the undertaking. There are on board the elements of a most interesting society. Some highly intelligent & accomplished gentlemen & doubtless some interesting ladies, but then we instinctively decide to be bores. Our table is abundant & sumptuous. But we have no appetite for the feast, spread before us in skillful variety, four times a day.

This is indeed a great hotel. Its boarders number ... strong & its family to which its officers, crew & servants may be likened amount to ... Its upper deck affords an immense promenade. This is an arrangement that no other ocean steamer has. It is of great advantage & much enjoyed when weather will at all permit by those who have got on their sea legs. We have at times numerous groups that it is pleasant to look upon with an eye directed to the variety & contrasts in appearance, dress, manners & speech that the different nationalities here represented exhibit. We have German, English, Dane, French, Italian, Spaniard, Mexican & American & we have Jews as well as Gentiles and the more to chequer the scene we have a half cracked man on board, who wears motley & lectures on temperance, very little I see to the success or dignity of the cause. One of the most pleasing features in our ship deck scenes is the intermixture of children in our groups. They enjoy better health than any one else, they move about the deck with less difficulty and are as sportive & noisy urchins as they would be at home & probably more so for they are no doubt more played with & spoiled. There is a great contrast between the animated scenes on our deck at times & the gambols & sports of the children & the wide desolate interval of water around us spread out to a limitless expanse without another single object upon it to meet the eye.

The deck below the upper one is the saloon deck. The meals are served up in this room for the first class passengers on 2 long parallel tables fixed to the floor with permanent seats attached. We divide off into messes - partly by previous arrangement, partly by accident. The tastes & likings of the passengers have a good deal to do with the matter - for our chief social intercourse & enjoyments are much concerned in these events. My chief

acquaintance is with the members of my mess which is the principal one - occupies the first portion of the table, drinks the most wine (with little aid from me however in that respect) sits out the longest & has the most to say. In it are Mr. Broadhead, Mr. Campbell, Gov. Matthew, Mr. Peries, Mr. Foucké, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Oelrick, Mr. Blair and Mr. Saint Felix. Mr. Silas E. Burroughs with his family & friends occupy the section at the other end of our table. A young Mr. Key of Washington & some young friends of his from Baltimore are fellow passengers & are in a mess at the other table. Our table is equal to that of the Astor House & is probably the best that was ever spread out on this great highway. State rooms are arranged along on the side of the saloon. Mine is one of the most pleasant & convenient & I have it with an unusual privilege that of exclusive occupation. Below this is a large room cut up entirely with state rooms or bed rooms as it would be more expressive to call them. Like rooms for first class passengers are in the upper front cabin with a saloon in the centre for smoking & playing cards & in the room below are the berths & eating room for the 2d class passengers. In the centre of the ship next to that portion of it spent for the engines are the kitchens, larders, & pantries & they are quite roomy compared with the scant provision that has to be made for the cooking department on board of ships. Our time is divided into 5 four hour watches & 2 two hour watches. The captain is at the head of one & the first mate at the head of the other & the crew is equally divided between them. Each in its turn having the management of the ship & the other for the time at rest. Time is kept by sounding a bell at the end of each half hour from the commencement of a watch. We are now, at the last observation made today at 50°14' north latitude & 13°48' west longitude from London - about 12 degrees of 38 miles each from Southampton - that is about 456 miles yet to run before reaching land. The ship has disappointed us as to her speed - or rather her engines have. Every one is satisfied that the construction of the vessel & the power of the engines would give us the dispatch we had expected - but there is a small defect that prevents our obtaining it. The hot wells are too small to receive the condensed water from the steam when the engines are worked fast & we are of course obliged to work them slow. That explains our delay. There is a difference between time & New York time of about 4 hours. It is now 11 o'clock p.m. ship time. My watch gives 7 as the hour. Our nights are very short - we have day light at a little after 2 o'clock.

My dear, I found in my trunk last Sunday your very acceptable present of the bible & prayer book. I made some use of them but not much owing to my illness. They have occupied my attention much more today. We have had no service on the ship. There is no man on board of a clerical character. I have read with renewed gratification Mary's very pretty lines addressed to me & which I found in my trunk at New York. I did not write to Fanny from New York, being so humid at the time. But I have been writing her a long letter here. I commenced it indeed last Tuesday & have since been making slow progress in it from time to time since. I fear my omission to write has caused her unpleasant feelings & I have thought much of it, & with pain. I am heartily rejoiced that she is not with me. There is not a particle of pleasure in this trip so far I am satisfied that she would have suffered much. There are several young ladies on board as well as old - I have seen but little of them. Silas E. Burroughs has a daughter & she expresses great regret that Fanny is not along.

[docket] This letter was not finished till after I got to Southampton. I then closed it on Wednesday night June 16 & 17 then left it with Consul to forward it. 17th June - wrote an additional letter & Mr. Ross took it ashore from the ship at Cowes.

Lindenhof
Bremen -

June 24. 1847

My dear -

I sit down again to write to you with a great deal to say & communicate, but the thought that takes chief possession of my mind is the anxious & vain enquiry I make to myself How is your health? Have you recovered? Or are you lingering along in illness? My mind, giving & sinking away as it does at times, will not push the enquiry further - Oh! that I could be satisfied in this particular - But I will hope for the best; & flatter myself with the belief that the improvement, of which I was informed by Telegraph through the exceedingly great kindness of W. Elliott, has continued, & that you are now again about, & on the enjoyment of health.

I am well - entirely so, indeed, this bright, but cool morning - looking out from the windows of my hotel, the Lindenhof (Linden is the name of the tree; & hof is square) upon the odd scene before me - It is the square - about as wide as 2¹/₂ of the width of Penna. Avenue - traversed & crossed in every direction by every variety of person & dress - but chiefly by bare headed & bare armed women bare heads, if young - if old then clean white filled caps.

I suppose when this reaches you, the adventure upon which I am now engaged stands in the U.S. at a

S. R. Hobbie

To
Mrs. Hobbie
Bremen Ger.
London, Engd.

June 24
& July 7
1847

Lindenhof

Bremen,

June 24, 1847.

My Dear:

I sit down again to write to you with a great deal to say and communicate, but the thought that takes chief possession of my mind is the anxious and vain inquiry I make to myself: How is your health? Have you recovered? Or are you lingering along in illness? My mind, giving and sinking away as it does at times, will not push the enquiry further. Oh! that I could be satisfied in this particular. But I will hope for the best; I flatter myself with the belief that the improvement, of which I was informed by telegraph through the exceeding great kindness of Mr. Gillett, has continued; and that you are now again about, and in the enjoyment of health.

I am well- entirely so, indeed, this bright, but cool morning- looking out from the windows of my hotel, the Lindenhof, (Linden is the name of the tree; and hof is square) upon the odd scene before me- It is the square- about as wide as two thirds the width of Pennsylvania Avenue- traversed and crossed in every direction by every variety of person and representative, and chiefly by bare headed and bare armed women- bare head, if young- if old then clean white fitted caps.

I suppose when this reaches you, the adventure upon which I am now engaged stands in the U. S. at a rather low ebb, on account of the failure of the Washington to make the trip in the time that was calculated, and her being beaten by the Brittania- Not so here. We are the greatest lions that have been in Bremen

Legation of the U. S.

London - July 3. 1847.

My dear -

I am here at London. This will surprise you -
I left Bremen very hastily on Tuesday last - posted to
the Elbe - took the British steamer at Cuxhaven -
almost died on my voyage from sea sickness, - got
to the London docks Thursday night - remained aboard
P. force - Custom House officers would not allow our
baggage to go ashore till morning - That's the way they
do things here - & was yesterday till near 12 o'clock bym
I got through the Custom House - though when they
came to take me in hand they treated me most
politely & kindly - I stop at Mosley's in Trafalgar
Square - splendid place - I mean the Square, &
if I might say I mean the hotel too. I have seen
Westminster Abbey (not far from my hotel) - the
Westminster hall - the new Parliament - the Horse
Guards. - St. James's Park - Buckingham Palace
& a world of palaces besides - This is indeed a
great & magnificent place - huge, overwhelming -
I have been about, & what little I have been about
alone - but I have guessed at a good ^{deal} ~~deal~~ from
a sort of instinct, made up from previous reading

Murley's Hotel -
London - July 19. 1847.

My dear Julianne -

I received your second letter last Tuesday,
the 13. I need not say how it gratified me to hear
from you & from the children - Little Pinsey, Recor - Mary.
These were all you named by name - and I with these
names, whilst tears of affection fill my eyes, Augusta,
Julianne, Mary, Elizabeth - dear, devoted Elizabeth - you
did also name her. Oh! guard, guard them well,
that I may again meet them all in life, in health, in
joy & happiness. I was gratified very much with
Mr. Gillett's letter - I feel that I am in fault in not
writing to ~~him~~ ^{him} - but want of time - want of time -
that is my first & last complaint - So much to see,
so much to learn, so much to discuss - I shall have
no more time to write here in London, but the necessary
official letters to Mr. Johnson - & these hasty scrawls
to you. When I get to Frankfurt or Wiesbaden, or
Bingen on the Rhine, I will take a little time in
remitting myself now foded with daily fatigue &
then make amends by giving him a long response.
But show him these letters, if they are fit to show

Marley's
Trafalgar Square -
London - July 25. 1847.

Dear Gillet.

I went to bed last night in ~~a~~ state of warfare
with my habits & inclinations. Coming in late, I de-
cided to take no tea or supper, as it was my anxious
desire to rise early in the morning in a healthy condi-
tion of head & stomach & spend the day at Windsor
Castle, twenty-one miles from here, & the most delightful
spot, it is said, in England - But alas! as Burns says
'How vain the schemes of mice & men'! I ~~was~~^{arose} this stunning
Sunday morning with a headache - The stomach it
seems fell into great displeasure & not be propitiated
by the morning sacrifice, & by some operation of its
own, which I ~~could~~^{could} not stop to explain if I could do so,
has mulcted me in the penalty of a headache for the
day. & I have been obliged to take a sedative powder
from Windsor for the present. It is as well perhaps that
it should be so - There should be a pause now &
then to reflect upon the vast deal that has been seen.
& I esteem it a privilege to perform an office of
friendship in writing to you; which, the demands of
made upon my time by business & curiosity, have too long
long postponed.

London
Murray's Hotel, Trafalgar Sq.
July 28. 1847.

Dear Paine -

I have just ^{returned} ~~returned~~ from the meetings - Through
the polite attentions of our Secretary, of Legation, Mr. Broadhead,
I received a card admitting me within the bar at
Guildhall; & I was told to be there early, by half past
ten. I made my way down the Strand & Fleet Street, up
Finsbury Hill, by St. Paul's & into Chancery Lane, & leaving
the cab, I passed into King's Street, across the end of which
Guildhall is situated - The crowd in King's Street
was immense, but I found no difficulty in getting
through; & with ticket in hand, readily gained ad-
mission to the great hall. This is an immense room,
the seat of the city legislature, and where the city mem-
bers to ^{Parliament} ~~Parliament~~ are chosen. It is 153 feet long,
48 wide & 55 high. I found our Minister, Mr. Bancroft
& his Secretary on the spot - & found them at a place
not far from the rostrum. The two Sheriffs were in
attendance with a large number of officers and police
& reporters. Some after, Mr. Macthorne, the leading Tory
candidate, and his three colleagues on the ticket, came

Marley Hotel
Trafalgar Sq. London
July 30th 1847

My dear wife -

I was delighted yesterday morning to receive yours of the 13th of July. To hear that you were well. I shall leave tomorrow for Paris. I have accomplished nothing here in the way of Post Office arrangements. I have looked ^{through} ~~through~~ the British Post Office system & employed my time very diligently in exploring the mysteries of that vast concern & my facility has been allowed me for that purpose. The Department has been willing to arrange with me for an interchange of minds with privilege of prepaying or sending unpaid also & allow closed mails be sent, but as they refuse to take off their shilling postage charge on the letters conveyed by our steamers I have I have avoided entering into any stipulations - and am in ^{hopes} ~~hopes~~ that the high officers of the Government, the Lords of the Treasury, will take the matter up by the middle of next month when the elections will be over & something else can be attended to. I have seen nothing in England outside of London. I have not found time to make the much desired trip to Windsor Castle

Panama

3^d March 1851

My dear,

Let me write you a letter from this place, whilst yet I am well; though it will be a long time before it takes its departure. I want to give you my description & my views of the novelties I have encountered & of the prospects before me, as they appear to me in a state of health. Sickness may come, & I thought that perhaps the scene may become discoloured & distorted. I should be sorry indeed to be in a mood or temper to make things worse in their representation, than they are in fact. Do not understand by this that every thing is dead. There is much that is good & interesting amid the now, that is of a contrary character. But even that small portion of the good & the interesting is lost sight of, when disease has become the inmate of your apartment & death is hanging around the door undecided whether to come in or go away.

Draw no forebodings from so sombre an intro-

from I. R. Hobbes
at Panama

Mrs. I. R. Hobbes

Corn. of F. & S. Streets

Washington

Dr. W. Walker, who
can leave this at W.
McClellan's office

Northampton L.I. Nov. 12. 1848

Selah R. Hobbie Esq.

My dear Sir,

In a conversation yesterday with L. B. Strong Esq, something was said about your descent from the Strong, but he did not seem to understand the exact relationship. - It is most likely that you have a perfect knowledge of the subject, but as I possess a more complete Genealogy of the Strong, than any other man alive, I thought you would be pleased with a short account in addition to what is contained in the Appendix to my 2^d Edition of the Hist. of L.I. - A book which I hope you have -

Elder John Strong of Northampton had (as you will see by history) 16 children, 10 of whom survived infancy - one of these was Thomas, & his 11th child Selah, born Dec. 22. 1688, when your came to Long Island & married Abigail Perry of Southold L.I. His 2^d son was Selah, who was born Feb. 23. 1688, married Hannah (sister of Gen^l Woodhull) 1740, & had 14 children - said last named Selah had a brother Benjamin who settled near Goshen, and had two sons who died young, & five daughters Thetarah, Elinor, Jenetta, Mary & Millicent. The first named, was the wife of Selah Pease, who I believe was a Southold man, & settled at Newburgh. The said Selah & Thetarah were I suppose your grandparents. Now Sir, if you have it in your power, I will thank you to give me the birth day of your grandmother, when married, the names

Col. Seaton,

Dear Sir,

I have just received intelligence of the death of Genl. Root. He died in the city of New York, yesterday, the 24 Decr. Presuming you will notice it in the Intelligence I venture upon the liberty of addressing you in so doing, by giving you the following particulars.

He was journeying to Washington with the view of spending the winter with his daughter Mrs. Hobbs, and whilst at the house of his nephew W. S. John in New York was attacked with the complaint which in three days terminated his existence. He died in his 73^d year.

Erastus Root was a native of Hebron, Conn. but his career & history from the ~~commencement~~ dawn of manhood belong to the State of New York. For many years past his name has been familiar to the public ear especially in that State. In the annals of near fifty years of legislative debates no name appears more often or more conspicuous ^{than} that of "the

Legation of the U.S.
London - July 3. 1847

My dear,

I am here at London - This will surprise you - I left Bremen very hastily on Tuesday last posted to the Elbe - took the British steamer at Lushaveu - almost died on my voyage - sea sickness - got to the London docks this day - night - remained aboard N. force - Custom officers would not allow our baggage to go ashore till morning - that's the way they do things here - I was yesterday till near 12 o'clock before I got through the Custom House - tho' when they came to take me in hand they treated me most politely & kindly.

I stop at Morley's, on Trafalgar Square - splendid place - I mean the square - & so I might say I mean the whole too. I have seen Westminster Abbey (not far from my hotel) - the Westminster hall - the new Parliament - the Horse Guards - St James Park - Buckingham Palace & a world of palaces besides - This is indeed a vast magnificent place - Hugo, over whelming. I have been about what little I have been about, alone - but I have guessed out

London - July 19. 1847

My dear John, -
I received your kind letter last Tuesday the 13. I need not say how it gratified me to hear from you & from the children - Little Percy - Anne, Fanny - then all you named by name - and I will here name, which tears of affection fill my eyes, Augusta, Julianne, Mary, Elizabeth - dear, devoted Elizabeth - ^{you did not name her} Oh, guard, guard them well, that I may again meet them all in life, in health, in joy, & happiness.

I was gratified very much with Mr. Sillet's letter - I feel that I am in fault in not writing him - but want of time - want of time, that is my first & last complaint - So much to do, so much to learn, so much to discuss - I shall have no more time to write here in London - but the accompanying official letters to Mr. Johnson - & these hasty scrawls to you. When I get to Frankfurt, or Wiesbaden, or Bingen on the Rhine, I will take a little ^{time} in answering myself now sided with daily fatigue & then make amends by writing him a long response - But show him these letters, if they are fit to show - to assure him I am anxious he should hear from me & that distance does not displace him in my recollections & sympathies.

You had better send to Mr. Bent his due - or it would be better to hand to Mr. Sillet to do so - Mr. B. will pay postage. ^{that is, repd. it unpaid} It is his business. You decided correctly in postponing the payment.

Rafalgar Square
London - July 25. 847

Dear Ellet

I went to bed last night in a state of warfare with my habits & inclination. Coming in late, I decided to take no tea or supper, as it was my anxious desire to rise early in the morning, & in a healthy condition of head & stomach & spend the day at Windsor Castle, 21 miles from here, & the most delightful spot it is said in England. But alas! as Burns says "How vain the schemes of men & men"! I arose this shining Sunday morning with a head ache. The stomach it seem fell into great displeasure at not being propitiated by the due evening sacrifices, & by some operations of its own, which I will not stop to explain if I could do so, has mulcted me in the penalty of a head ache for the day. And I have been obliged to take a sedative powder & forego Windsor for the present. It is as well perhaps that it should be so. It enables me there should be a pause now & then, to reflect upon the vast deal that has been seen. & I esteem it a privilege to perform an office of friendship in writing to you which the demands made upon my time by business & curiosity never too long postponed. I will not undertake to relate the events & circumstances of my journey, or describe the scene I have passed through. This would require a volume. My purpose is to give you my reflections. This is a forbidding phrase I know, & presages a dull letter.

The idea that takes chief possession of my mind in respect to London is its immensity. I am overwhelmed by it - less so now to be sure than at first, since I have succeeded in mastering some of its details. When I left the Ship Wilkesforce in the Thames, with London stretching below further than the eye could reach I came in a boat up to the Custom House stairs about a mile & then was taken in a cab $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Charing Cross & being set down at my lodgings was told that I was not yet ^{about} to the centre of London. ~~But below~~ But below, where I landed, was the Tower, formerly an upper point in London & as fresh the residence Palace of the King of England in the reigns of Henry 7.th & 8.th; and above my hotel by a distance of more than a mile is the present residence Palace, Buckingham. ~~above~~ ^{also} ~~that is west of it~~ in Parliament, the Abbey - St James Palace, the great Parks, St James, Green, Hyde, Regent, & far above these the palace & gardens of Kensington. Below me, more ^{I mean the cellars} which they assured me embraced 11 acres of ground - and

London -

Mortley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square

July 28. 1847 -

Dear Pami

I have just returned from the meetings. Through the polite attention of our Secretary of Legation, Mr. Brodhead, I received a card admitting me within the bar at Guildhall; and I was told to be there early, by $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10. I made my way down the Strand, then over Fleet street, up Ludgate Hill, by St. Pauls; and into Cheapside, & leaving the bar, into King street, across the end of which Guildhall is situated. The crowd ^{in King street} was immense; but I found no difficulty in getting through; and with ticket in hand, readily gained admission to the great hall. This is an immense room, ^{the seat of the city legislation} and where the city members to Parliament are chosen. It is 153 feet long, 48 wide, & 55 high. I found our Minister, Mr. Bancroft, & his Secretary on the spot, & joined them at a place not far from the rostrum. There two Sheriffs were in attendance with a large number of officers, & other reporters. Soon after, Mr. Masterton, the leading Tory candidate, and his three colleagues, on the ticket came ^{by the way of a back door where} they arrived. Their approach was announced by the shouts of their friends as they passed through the crowd. Not long after the King their places, the tremendous huzzas of the populace apprized us of the approach of the Liberal candidates. At length Lord John Russell & his colleagues appeared through the back door near us, & took their places at the centre of the stage near the rostrum. A Sheriff's Officer in robes came forward & read the Queen's proclamation, whereupon the stormy multitude ceased their clamor, & every man stood uncovered. There then followed 27 speeches, besides the two made by the Sheriffs, one exhorting to order & silence, & ^{the other} in reply to the vote of thanks tendered them. There were 8 party candidates, four on each side, and one independent, making nine. Each candidate was proposed

(1)

(2)

Morley's Hotel - Trafalgar Sq.
London. July 30. 1847

My dear wife -

I was delighted yesterday morning to receive yours of the 13. July - to hear that you were all well. I shall leave to morrow for Paris.

I have accomplished nothing here in the way of Post Office arrangements. I have looked through the British Post Office system & employed my time very diligently in exploring the mysteries of that vast concern. Every facility has been allowed me for that purpose.

The Dept. here has been willing to arrange with me for an interchange of mails with purchase of prepaying or sending unpaid - also to allow closed mails to be sent, but as they refuse to take off their shilling postage charge on the letters conveyed by our Steamers I have received nothing into any stipulations - and am in hopes that the higher officers of the Govt., the Lords of the Treasury will take the matter up by the middle of next month when the elections will be over & something else can be attended to.

I have seen nothing in England outside of London. I have not found time to make the much desired trip to Windsor Castle. London is a world of itself yet there is a great deal of its great sights I have not had the time yet to see. I have not delineated

Washington Sept 23rd

My dear girls -

I should have written to you yesterday, but your Father, Libbie, Reuben, Pinks, & myself spent a delightful day at Mrs Peerses, & in the evening the Rev O Clarke kept me from writing by paying me a long visit. We are all very well. Ada is much better & talks almost as well as Fanny - she begins to grow quite fat & good again - says gr-a as well as gr-da all gone - Abbie & Maria have taken them with Pinks to the Capitol this beautiful afternoon - Pinks has a new hat trimmed with cherry colored ribbon - & she dont cry any more - because she goes to church with me - Reuben likes his school very much. is always ready in season - & is learning to write on the slate. He is much improved since he goes to school - Libbie Mary &

Department of the Interior.
U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

Reg # 252



Miss Ada Hobbs -

My father papers
His letters

My Father's letters
Westminster -

S.R. Hobbs

Carroll Co -

Maryland.

My Mother's