

Wheatland, 11 June 1866

My dear niece,

I duly received your favor of the 29th & would have answered it sooner, but for want of materials for a letter. I was at Miss Yeates funeral on Saturday last, and the spectacle to me was mournful. When I recollected the ancient time when Judge Yeates & his family were perhaps the first people in Lancaster & in contrast saw the Cunninghams as chief mourners, it brought to my mind the vanity of all things human. There were very few of any of the representatives of the old families of Lancaster & none of the Jenkins connection at the funeral. It was believed at the first that Miss Catherine had made no will, but I now understand that she had made one a number of years ago. What the contents were I have not learned. Mr. Mombert informed me at the funeral that Mrs. Cunningham was in her Eighty ninth year & was bore care of her sister with Christian resignation.

You ask whether Thomas has proven an able servant to me personally & I am sorry to answer in the negative. Rosanna, his wife, as a cook has been all I had anticipated. Yes, she is a good warm hearted just woman. Everything went on agreeably for a few days, but expressing their entire satisfaction. I had agreed to pay them the same wages they had received from Mr. Brenton -- \$18 per month and \$3.00 per week to her. Without known cause Thomas drafted me a note on the 25 May saying that we wanted to leave my "service in one week or ten days, at farthest." Rosanna was unwilling to leave & remained. He went off to Lancaster on the 5th Instant receiving his months wages & got drunk there & in this condition his pocket was picked & he returned here on Saturday evening without a cent of money & full of repentance for his conduct. Rather than loose [sic] Rosanna I have agreed to take him another month on trial. He is anything but an agreeable servant, although an excellent waiter. He is too fond of whiskey. You may suppose that Miss Hetty is to blame. Far from it. On the contrary she behaved towards both as well possible & was delighted to have them.

The three "young ones" as you call them: are as merry as crickets & enjoy themselves very much. They afford me so much pleasure & Miss Hetty is devoted to them. They have received a moderate share attention; but none whatever from your sister Mrs. Lane or any of her relatives.

Jessie was seventeen a few days ago & looks like a woman of twenty. She has been highly educated & her manners are good and unassuming. Her disposition is evidently very amenable & she is quite good looking. She is inclined to be corpulent. When she leaves here she will visit General Ramsey's family in Washington with whose daughter she formed an intimate friendship at the convent. Her mother & the Ramsays are great friends. Her sister & Lois have been very kind to her and appear to be warmly attached to her.

I have not heard a word, directly or indirectly from Mr. Schells; but ~~expect~~ hope to hear of him from James Henry, whom I daily expect.

Blanche has been quite unwell for a week or ten days past & confined to her bed; but came down on Saturday evening to meet the girls. They say she looks wretchedly.

I am glad to learn how much practical experience you are acquiring in house keeping. I hope that by this time you have ~~acquired~~ obtained the affectionate regard of



the ladies of Mr. Johnston's family. You ought to cultivate them. This is necessary for your own comfort & happiness.

When I shall be able to visit the "Palace," I cannot now anticipate, though I should be very glad to see you. Of course you will consider what I have said about my sumptuous entertainment there as mere bagatelle & should be greatly annoyed if on my visit, you should depart from your common fare. You know how much opposed I am to "fuss making."

Mrs. Steinman & her sister were here a few days ago. She looks well & happy & her husband is engaged in the store.

The three "young ones" & Miss Hetty send their fondest love to you and Annie.

With my kindest love to her & my warmest regard to Mr. Johnston,
I remain yours

Very affectionately,

James Buchanan

Mrs. Henry E. Johnston

mss1995_098_1866_JB_to_HL



LancasterHistory