

are you a going to teach  
this summer or are you a  
going to marry or what are  
you going to do. I ain't  
a going to tell you that  
Mans name that wears  
the Imperial. But you  
may see him some time.  
You may do what you  
are a mind to with this  
letter only dont let any one  
see it. Helen says give  
her love to you and tell you  
to write to her. You must. She  
is a pretty girl I tell you I  
like her first rate. Write  
soon. My love to Aunt  
and a large share for you  
good bye

Minnie

May it take me to court

Minnie's letters

Edna



"Viola March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1857"

"Dear Mother" "Wednesday Eve"

It is a pleasant evening the  
"Sky" with its million of eyes look down  
upon earth and upon me in all their  
beauty, it is a wondrous hour, and a  
time when our thoughts are most  
potent, and all the avenues of the  
heart open spontaneously to the prompt-  
ings of Nature so recolent with love  
and is it strange that as the shades of  
evening gather around me, that the  
thoughts of absent friends come upon me  
when it was at this hour that our  
sweetest consummings, and dearest associates  
were. such thoughts often come in my  
weary hours, to cheer my loneliness. I  
recollect a letter from "Nellie" to day it cost  
me many tears to read it. it was indeed

with pure friendship as they always are.  
O! had I the wings of a dove, how quickly  
would I plume my wings, and lay aside  
pen and paper and soon join  
you friendly circle. I am in  
school to day, and have  
just got my arithmetic lesson  
so I will finish this letter  
here. I am not in a writing  
mood, I do not know what  
to write. Had I the power  
of an Arch to wield my  
pen, I might write some  
thing fit for the Dear one  
I am writing to, too peruse  
We have enjoyed ourselves  
first rate this Winter. I  
tell you. O Mary I wish you  
were here with us. We have  
such good meetings. You must  
seek those unperishing riches  
Dear Comin which <sup>do</sup> not fade  
away. And has so has Mary

that if we meet no more  
on Earth we may meet in  
"Heaven". I am going to teach  
this Summer I don't know  
where I have 2 or 3 in view.  
I am coming east. "Mary"  
pretty soon to make a  
good long visit. I am  
the same naughty Minnie  
about some things as ever  
that is I am inclined to  
receive the attentions of  
any one of the Lords of Creation.  
But you know, (just so far  
may you come but no farther)  
I don't think they will get  
me to bend to any will but my  
own this some time yet.  
I am so fond of being  
yoked. Our school has soon  
out we have learned a  
good deal this Winter

Smart, yes that Boy is a  
brave child I tell you  
he is a great fat pretty Baby.  
but you did not get your  
wish, did you. I told you  
I did not have Sisters as  
much as I did. ~~what~~  
has Mrs Warner named  
her girl. how is every one  
prospering. You must not  
get tired answering my  
questions, but practice  
patience with your naughty  
Cousin. Give my love to  
all and write soon  
Ma sends her love to you  
and Aunt. do not let any  
one see this remember  
that if you do I wont write  
to you any more. Eliza sends  
her love and is going to  
write soon, hand this  
note to Nettie as soon as  
possible. your Cousin  
for no eye but yours "Marian"  
"Mary"

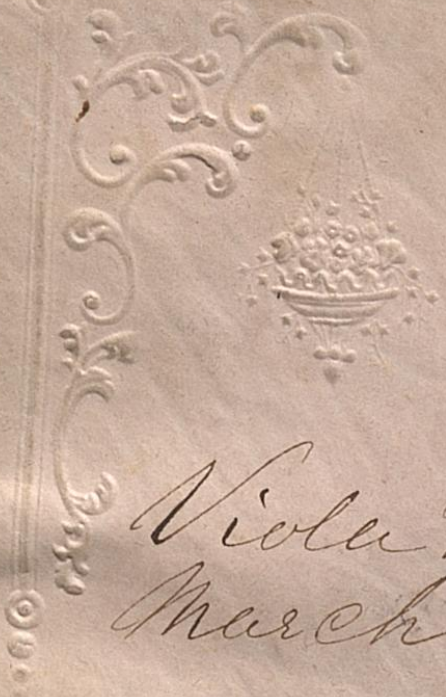
Viola March 22 1854

"Beloved Cousin"

A happy Spring I  
wish to you, has I received your  
letter and you do not know how  
glad I was to get it. Mary you  
said you thought I was not  
a going to write how could  
you think so, you knew  
better. your letter was 5  
weeks a coming, and I  
answered it just as quick  
as I got it, and that was  
soon enough was it not, are  
you coming up here to stay  
this summer you had better  
you dont know what lots of  
fun Eliza and I have  
it is beautiful here now  
as Spring is opening trees

anti chamber full of  
Floral charms, and all  
the Glowy Kingdom begins  
to come forth for exhibition  
My school is closed again  
for a short time, I intend  
to teach there the coming  
summer, are you going to  
teach Mary, or are you  
going to school or get married  
or what, I am sorry that  
you and a certain little  
clerk I know of has (fell  
out of bed) for I wanted him  
to be cousin, it will not  
last long folks have to  
have a dozen spots always,  
does Bett and Amos <sup>hit</sup>  
as well as ever do you really  
think that means something,  
I would sack that Glord  
Bolkeun anyway, I wish  
I could see you, Mary I  
would have some fun  
I reckon, is Bailey's school  
out and is he and Mira

going up, has Hellen got  
honte from Gainsville  
yet, and is she going back  
this summer, A Mary come  
and go to the city to school  
with me next fall a young  
lady here is going with me  
she went to school to me  
this winter, she makes me  
think of "Jetta" every time  
I look at her, you had better  
believe I like her, We are  
a going to board ourselves,  
is the Selut school out and  
who is a going to teach  
the district school this  
summer, you see I am very  
Inquisitive, But I dont care  
as long as I am not "Gausy"  
is it as honest there as  
as ever, tell Quina to  
answer my letter right off  
tell her Perry got a letter  
from Jim Potter and  
that he is all right,  
Mother is getting quite



Viola Wj  
March 24

Miss Mary S. Briggs  
Str. Kersville  
Wyoming Co  
N. Y.

making sugar this spring  
the snow has not all  
gone off yet - but it is  
going now quite fast. Pa  
tapped five trees but  
we have only made a  
little molasses yet.

I hear that there has  
been another mysterious  
wedding in Itrykers with  
that of Julia ~~and~~ West  
Peng is going over to  
the P.O. and must bring  
this to a close. Answer  
this soon. ~~Yours~~

Windsor March 24<sup>th</sup> 1867

Dear & Loved Mary,

Once  
more has <sup>my</sup> heart been glad  
dened by one of those ever  
welcomed messengers, a letter  
from one I love. What a  
privilege it is that we  
can combine our joys  
and our sorrows to each  
other with the pen on  
the sheet that lies so  
placid before us.

You spoke of going out  
to Jona to an oyster supper

I would dearly have liked  
to have gone with you,  
but it seems that my  
shot has been cast in a  
place where horned horses  
and ox sleds are, <sup>more</sup> fashion  
after, than there, I have  
not rode a step after  
horses since the day we  
came here and that was  
the 10<sup>th</sup> of September.

Tell Franke, that I should  
rather go to sportus with  
a tame animal than  
with a wild one.

her in six weeks, <sup>but</sup> I want  
to see her every day  
Mrs Keller is keeping  
house for William Clift  
now I have not seen her  
since Christmas.

Tell Lucia. I think I  
will write to her as soon  
as I can get time I have  
to write two or three letters  
every week. You Mary  
I want you should write  
to me and tell me all  
the news. I suppose you  
have had five times then

recovering from a fit of  
sickness she has not been  
able to do any house work  
for about five weeks  
so you can imagine ~~how~~  
how much I have had to  
do. there was two weeks that  
she only sat up to have  
her bed made. but our  
neighbors were very kind  
to us we only had watch  
ers three nights. My health  
is good now I only weigh  
17 lbs more than I did when  
we came from the east

Rebecca is at home  
now. I have not seen

Mary I think you are getting  
to be quite a shy mist.  
since we came over.

"If it want for a kind of the name of <sup>look</sup>  
I never could think of Howard." <sup>H. Clark</sup>

I think there has been  
a great change in Stephens  
will since we left. How  
does John and Frank get  
a long I heard things were  
not going on very smooth  
between them. but I did  
not know whether to  
believe it or not.

Sister Emily wrote me  
a short time since that  
Helen Hutchins had lately



experienced religion at Gaines  
ville. I hope it is so, I  
suppose Warren makes fre-  
quent visits over east.

I have been down to see  
Gills and Minnie and I had  
a private time I visited  
her school the last day.

and had a good time  
I got some acquainted  
with one of the girls  
down there her name

was Nancy Day I think  
she is a real pretty girl

You wished to know  
how I found Valentine  
day I found first

for I neither wrote nor  
received any. I have not  
got acquainted with any  
of the Hoosiers yet. nor  
do I know as I would  
to I do not like their way  
of talking. they say "there  
is a right smart of  
snow on the ground" or  
"put a right smart heap  
of wood on the fire etc"  
it sounds so odd.

Are you going to spend  
the summer at home  
or what are you going  
to do. I am going to stay  
at home. Mother is just

May 11<sup>th</sup> 1857.

Dear Cousin.

I have seated myself to address one I never saw, but I hope it will be accepted the same as though we were acquainted, for we will endeavor to be so by paper, pen, and ink. We were surprised when we received your letter for we had all begun to think you had forgotten your cousins, and Aunt in R.I. We were all very sorrowful to hear cousin William was no more but that was the reason of his delay in writing, I will describe myself to you, first a great romp who is up to all sorts of fun it makes but little difference if it is with persons of my own age sometimes I do things which I repent off after they are done such as sending Valentines and making speech<sup>es</sup> which every one will, <sup>not</sup> take, the more fool<sup>y</sup> they I am about 5 feet 3 inches black hair and eyes preeled nose after all quite a negro, so you would think should you see your cousin this is a piece of my hair I still attend school and am 16 years old the last day of this month, quite a miss so you must tell the young men that way, when I come so I can get a bear when I come. when will that be I ask of you and you cannot answer me but would I could see you, I am going to have my ugly face put on a plate and then you will see how this black gal looks.

I will tell you one thing which you do not know we live in East Greenwich and have done so the last three years, in the country, I live in the house with us and has got 2 children a boy of 3 years a girl of 8 weeks. Willie and Hattie, ask Uncle Johnny if he remembers the black eye girl of 11 summers, tell him I have improved some since he was here. tell him that Aunt Harriet has lost her husband last winter Aunt Mary resides in Wickford still and is well and your Aunt Rebecced is still living wishes to be remembered to Aunt Roxsa and the rest Uncle Ambrose lived with us last winter she has got a very bad sore leg and continues to drink, Oh how I wished you would all every one of you come down this summer and go to the shore how I would duck you if you will come I will ensure you a bear for there is one here that is ever ready after a petticoat his name is William Spencer a cousin of mine, I cannot think of any thing else that will interest you so good evening and pleasant dreams hoping you will not sleep a wink direct your letters to  
East Greenwich

Though rocks and hills divide  
And you I may never see  
How often shall I think of you  
If you never think of me.

answer this ever yours  
cousin Scatilla  
Baker  
Spencer

Scatilla B Spencer is my name  
And English is my nation  
East Greenwich is my dwelling place  
And Christ is my salvation

we went up the river ~~the~~ week or a visit  
several weeks ago and when we were at  
Mr Jacksons he was there and staid all the  
afternoon and evening and the next  
sunday he went down to Mr Gills house  
and I have laughed enough about it  
to split our sides and she takes it  
an every hand when she is here.

I have not seen her since she came  
out her school I do not know but shall  
go soon and see her the last of this week

It is getting late and I must  
close Your Aunt wants you should write  
to her right off Leave to all the girls  
and a kiss on both cheeks for Mary  
from your ever affectionate friend

Lizzie

Wells June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1844

Dear Mr King

Having nothing of importance to  
occupy my time I think I will devote it to  
writing you a letter as I have not as yet answer-  
ed your last one I received it two or three weeks  
ago and its contents was perused with much  
pleas<sup>ure</sup> I was surpris<sup>ed</sup> to hear that you were  
so homesick since we came away but you know  
goodbyes speak contrary to what you mean  
and I rather think you did this time You  
wished me to ask Mrs Gill what she thought  
of me at a side glance She says she thinks  
I look about as usual and my feet talk

stick out about as far as ever I was sorry to hear  
that Kellers religion did not last long such piety  
is not worth much I have not heard yet  
whether there will be any dutch bells next 5<sup>th</sup>  
or not I hope you had a good time at the  
"ingoe party at Mr Gleans and I presume  
you found no trouble in finding some  
one to go with you if you did just let  
me know it and I will send you down  
one of the Hoosiers to go with you.

May not get married down there  
come up here there is a great many more  
fine young gentlemen such as the Hoosiers,  
Pennsylvania Dutch &c if you will come  
up here maybe I'll give up my laughing  
joke to you but I can't promise.

Married

"In the town of Wenest by John  
Rogers Esq Mr James Boncker to Miss  
Mary Briggs all of Wenest"

if it is the identical Mary G Briggs  
I think I shall call on her soon is it?

Died

At Keokuk on the 29<sup>th</sup> inst Mr Foreman  
A: 48 years

He accidentally shot himself nearly  
three weeks ago while wiping out his gun  
the ball went in near the pit of the  
stomach and lodged between the solar bone  
and the cross pit

Kate I wrote nothing about you  
in that letter but what I would be willing  
to tell you of and I will tell you if you  
will come within hoisting distance. neither  
did he write any thing about you he did  
not even mention your name.

I am sorry to hear that that plague  
Six has caught all Mrs Harringtons here but  
I presume Frank has set a trap for it  
and perhaps has caught it before now.

That young widower (Mr Staker) is still  
in the place he has gone to Milwaukee now  
to get a new stock of goods but I guess he  
has got through paying his attentions to Primie  
that is if he ever did pay any.

East Greenwich June 10<sup>th</sup> 1857.



Dear Cousin.

I seat myself to tell you I am pretty much such a girl as <sup>you</sup> described, so you would think to see me ride a horse-back, put a saddle on the horse lead her up to a fence, or rock, mount and off I go, not to any particular place but down the road untill I get tired, then home, do you ever ride so if you do tell me in your next letter. As for wearing hoops I do and the most of the young folks do here some as large <sup>as</sup> you described others so you cannot perceive they have any on. as the I wear them you should see first then judge, but I think you would not judge harshly of you cousin, Gill, as some call me.

I never have had much trouble with them in company only get bent some in a crowd how queer people look now without them, I presume it is because the majority of them wear them. As for school I can tell you last winter I was seated between two sisters they would get vexed with one another then come to me and all there was for me to have nothing to do with it. then the master he was a man of middle age and said he did not like children therefore crop. so there

was no peace for the wicked he did not like for  
us to speak to the young men that came so all we had to  
do was to draw down our faces as long as my arm and study  
rather a hard task for your Cousin to keep a long place  
the whole day the school house is 1 mile and 1/2 from where I live

I think I shall learn more this summer  
than I did in the winter I study Geography  
Arithmetic History in the morning Algebra Gram-  
mar in the after noon read spell and write the  
family are all well and join in sending their love  
to your family. Parson is at the factory at work there-  
fore cannot have your letter untill saturday then I presu-  
me he will answer it my love to you seven-fold write  
again  
Adieu go from Scitilla B G.

I am a maiden, fine and young,  
And am, thank God, yet free;  
Romantic raptures never flung  
Their witching spell on me.

And so no stiff and stupid pride  
Has ever set foot on me;  
To be a girl I'm satisfied,  
Let others angels be.

Scitilla B Spencer.

I haven't decided to go any where the fourth but wish  
I could be there with you.

When we got home Maxine felt quite ill  
and ~~she was~~. You had better believe we had some  
spant.

Wednesday (you say) Ben he is enjoying herself, only  
in her own house. I am to try to get up and write  
so I will lie abed, but that does not go so well I don't  
know but I shall have to get up now what a  
pity! Do you know when Sandra Warner is over.  
Please say to Amelia I saw when you see her that  
I wrote to her the 6<sup>th</sup> of last April but have  
never received any answer and I should be  
very happy to hear from her. I must close  
as I shall have to send it over to the office  
to day, accept it with much love from your  
Friend  
Livia

With love

My Happy Home Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> 1867

Dear Mary,

I received your last kind and  
welcome letter the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of September and I  
hasten to answer it at the first opportunity.  
Our little first boy is a pretty bright little  
fellow and I hardly think he is the one to  
blame, perhaps your little girl is the one to  
blame.

Since last I wrote you Death  
has entered our little village and laid his icy  
fingers on <sup>or</sup> one of our number and bore away to  
that land where sin and sorrow can never come  
a little cousin. Phoebe Willie Bruner aged years  
4 months, since Congestion of the lungs. he was sick  
only three days. I was there most of the time during  
his illness as Sunday he says "I saw the doctor



think I am better" his mother told him they did not  
know as he was, "Well, he says I don't want to go to that  
happy land you're get wait a little while and then I'll  
go a little while after he heard his little brother out  
at length he said "I'll go and tell I don't want to follow anybody  
it is wished. He collected for his Bible several times  
during his sickness and would say "this is a good book"  
He was taken sick the 29<sup>th</sup> August and died the 31<sup>st</sup>  
I vain and best up alone with the corpse it was rather  
lonely but we had some of Joseph Magazines to read,  
and that kept us busy I slept about an hour that  
night and stayed with Cousin all day

The remainder of the people here are nearly  
well Maria is now at home. She and I have some  
great times I can tell you

You say if any laughing Joe is  
a Hoaxer you would not take your little black  
bitten for him. if you would you would do  
more than I would but he is a Dutchman I would  
not allow my black and white brethren to look at him

Do they say Eleanor Barber is married Well  
Mary I don't know but we shall have to live old  
single we are getting to old. How you see this

since she was married what kind of a man  
has she got?

Your ~~friend~~ did not worry me long I  
soon got it out. I was that friend Peter & his  
wife a week ago at church but his wife did not look  
much like you. It was a year ago today that I bade adieu  
to old Shelton hills & valleys, my old friends and  
associates, my Letter to find a home in the wilderness  
of the far West, and a pleasant and happy home I  
have found. Among the many privileges that I enjoyed  
there to be sure but we cannot expect them in so  
new a place. Do you remember where we were ~~the~~<sup>living</sup>  
a year ago the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August. It was the last I  
ever met the young people together. What a pleas-  
ant side we took that night;

Presby Sept 7<sup>th</sup> Mason has been over here this  
afternoon and we went up to Uncle Williams one  
mile from here and was gone about two hours  
the way we went it was all woods and only  
a narrow path part of the way I did not  
know but we should find a better road  
but we did not when we came back we came by  
the village and called at Mr. Cousin's. He told us

back to Strasburgville to have for all the  
world, I am going to Chicago if nothing  
turns up to teach in a school. I received  
a letter from Mr and Mrs Keitt, they  
wanted me to come this winter but  
I did not want to go till another  
year. This letter looks as if someone wrote  
it that was just beginning in strokes. but  
I have been sliding down hill to night  
about a dozen of the lads and lasses, so  
my hand is a little unsteady therefore  
God must excuse me this time. I have  
got my handwriting lesson to get it to  
night so I must bring my penwork to  
a close. Etta says she will write you  
soon, Mrs Fuller sends her love and  
says till Mary not to be in such a hurry  
as her sister Elanor was to get married.  
Write soon and believe me your true  
friend and Cousin  
Minnie

Morte

Somehow I never expect to go

"Viola Hill" 1867

"Beloved Kate"

So gently I set myself to pen  
an answer to your highly prized letter.  
I had the tongue of an angel sing  
I might from the great tabernacle  
of language find something better  
for the hour than I am commencing  
with. But as of that I wish to be told  
you cannot expect together figs of Phisit  
nor the lovely grape from the thorny vine.  
It is "Sunday night" and the tragedy  
of this little Hamlet is pushed, and  
the lights which an hour ago showed  
the presence of human beings have  
ceased their watch as sentinels.  
Unseated in an easy chair at the garden  
west window, (where I lived this winter)  
and left alone with my thoughts, I will try  
to place some of them upon paper to you.  
I am attending school enjoying myself  
finely. Mr. Gurnee is our teacher, I am  
studying Algebra, Arithmetic, Philosophy

Arithmetic, and Familiar Science, school  
has kept 3 weeks, we are in Town in Algebra  
and Proportion in Arithmetic. Eliza Hale  
and Beckett, Miss Mark the merchants sister  
have great times I tell you, there is lots  
of music here two "Melodians" Cordians  
and 4 Piddles and Photos, every one there  
is playing somewhere, I am taking  
music lessons, and going to have a  
Melodion next summer. I have got  
one a watch and am going to send  
for a chain, O Mary how I wish you  
were here to night wouldst our Congress  
fly. I have got words to say to you, but  
I cannot write font it on this social sheet  
it is so formal, I have got acquainted with  
a young fellow that wears a Westhans and  
I suspect and I was speaking of you  
to him telling him about my Cousin  
Kate and he really fell in love with  
you and asked me if the night  
I have you I told him yes, he sends his  
love to you, and says till you he is  
coming to see you, (something secret only  
for you can self Kate) any one can get  
married any day if they want to) but  
enough of this at present at some future  
time I will tell you some of my affairs

Daily after my thoughts leave the Clarie  
Page they turn to you, how I wish you  
were with me I should be more happy than  
I now am, Pitt is finally launched her  
boat upon the sea of matrimony, I hope  
she has placed the oar into careful hands  
and that her wedded life will be calm  
and blissful, O how I loved her I feel  
it more since I heard that she was  
married for I think she will not have  
so much time to spend thinking of me  
but I want to still have the same place  
in her heart as before, But has you and  
I not take any one to spend our days  
at present, I am going to school yet  
this 3 years, Mr. Smith told me of Wilks  
marriage he says he is glad of it for folks  
will let him alone now he guesses, he thinks  
a good deal of a young lady here.  
O Mary I wish you could see "Willie"  
he is a year old to day and is the  
prettiest young one I ever saw in  
my life. hazel eyes, brown hair and  
just as lovely as a rose, Mother thinks  
there was never one like him before.  
are you going to school now. I hear  
a (Lagg) presides over the District School  
of Elyburgville. O Mary I would not come