

## Letter from DeForest to his niece Voadicea Scovil Penfield wife of David Penfield February 1, 1843

**Notes:** My great great great grandmother, Voadicea Scovil Penfield was the daughter of Uri and Mellicent Southmayd Scovil. She was born in Litchfield, Conn. 12 Aug 1785 and died at Delhi 20 November 1848 at the home of her son David. She married David Penfield at Hapersfield 3 Jan 1802. David was prominent in old Harpersfield history and is mentioned in Munsell's 'History of Delaware County'. He was Deacon in the Church and Postmaster of the Harpersfield Territory in Oswego County, with headquarters in Harpersfield.

--John Chandler Hume, Jr., June 16, 2007

### Envelope

Watertown Ct  
Feb 1

8 3/4

Mrs. David Penfield  
Ridge Ville  
County of Madison  
New York

Single

### Body of letter

Watertown Connecticut Feb 1. 1843

Dear Madam

Yours of the 21<sup>st</sup> of last month, came to hand yesterday – And I am sorry to be obliged to inform you that your Aunt is sick, and has been for a long time. She was taken the middle of August, and has been sick ever since. She was taken with bileous fever, which lasted several weeks, when the fever left her and immediately her nerves were excessively effect & have been in a greater or less degree, ever since: \_ She has not been able to sit up, ten minutes-in twenty weeks \_ neither have we been able to leave her alone five minutes, at a time; for about the same period: \_ Have constantly two nurse, for the last two or three months, to attend your Aunt \_\_ One or the other, attending upon her, night & day \_ The stomach, appears to be the great seat of disease \_\_ We did think for the first few weeks - that she could not live very long \_ still she has been preserved by an overruling Providence, thus far. And it is yet a matter of extreme doubt, whether she will ever recover, so as to be about \_\_ Still we hope for the best - and are rather inclined to think from her present appearance; that she may be in some measure, restored to health again : \_ after awhile \_ still, we may be mistaken \_

I was very sorry to hear that you have again been afflicted, in the loss of your son Aaron \_ It however becomes us all to submit to the Chastisements of our Heavenly Father. You appear to be well pleased, with your place of residence, and I have doubt the situation is pleasant \_\_

I will now attempt to answer your enquiries, so far as I am able \_\_

We have not heard from Southmayd, George, or Mrs Freeman, for a long time \_

I believe your uncle Duttan, makes it his home at New Haven - with Mary & Samuel \_ Dorcas is married to the Revd M Gilbert, of Wallingford\*\* and I understand has married well \_ a good preacher, & well esteemed \_

I believe that Thomas, is preaching in the Eastern part of this state- but do not know, for a certainty \_ Aaron, is at the South, for the benefit of his health \_\_

My son John, is here, following his profession, but his health is feeble \_\_ His wife has rather grown poorer, for the last year—and has not for some time, been able to sit up.

Alma has lost her oldest & youngest Children, but has two left - One son and one daughter\_\_  
Benjamin, resides in tow Town of Waterbury, say six miles southerly from us \_ He is well.  
Alma is as well as usual\_

Huldah went from here two days ago - for her home: \_ She hand her husband, went last Spring to Europe, & returned late in the Autumn. Huldah married a very good man: but she (as Step-Mother) finds it difficulty to get along - satisfactorily. By these remarks - I do not intend to say which side, is in the wrong. I should not have said anything, bout the difficulty. If you had not in your letter, enquired whether :Huldah was happy in her new home” presuming that you might have heard something respecting it - and if so possibly, you may not, have heard correctly.

I had pretty much made up my mind last summer, to go out to the western part of New York, next season- but your Aunt being so poor, I have for the present, given up that project. If I should go - I should undoubtedly call on you and Mrs. Freeman.

In the year 1836, I was so feeble & reduced in health - that I was obliged to give up my business in New York - and come home.

But I have been blessed with returning health, and am now able , to walk about do some trifling business, If I felt so disposed. Six years ago, I could only walk say twenty - or thirty rods. My legs were so feeble\_ Now, I can walk pretty well\_

If you and Mr. Penfield, should visit ? Penfield – we should be glad to have you come and see us.

Very Respectfully  
yours Benjm DeForest

To Mrs V. Penfield

PS. Please give my respects to our friends. I have been obliged to be very brief, in consequence of a sheet being too small.

**Letter from Margaret Stewart Penfield (Mrs. Orrin Scovil Penfield) of Delhi, New York to her mother and father James Kedzie and Margaret Stewart Hume Kedzie of Yellow Springs, Ohio.**

Note: Orrin Scovil Penfield is the son of David and Voadicea Penfield. Margaret Stewart Penfield is the granddaughter of Robert Hume. Robert Hume is my gggggfather through my grandfather John Chandler Hume and gggggfather via Margaret Stewart Penfield through John’s wife, my grandmother Elizabeth Kedzie Lynch Hume. Robert Hume and Adam Kedzie came to Delaware County circa 1795. They met in Scotland as they prepared to come to the US. They and their families traveled to New York on the same ship. Their children James Kedzie and Margaret Stewart Hume married. John and Margaret moved to Yellow Springs, Ohio.

**Envelope**

Feby

Mr Jas Kedsie  
Yellow Springs  
Greene Co  
Ohio

**Body**

Delhi, Feb. 1848

My Dear Parents Sister & Brs.

I have at length taken my pen to commence the performance of a long neglected duty. I wrote you last fall respecting shawls for Mother and Isabella wishing you if you could obtain them from NYork (sic) by your Merchants to write us and we send by Mr. Gould and have them in readiness for you, we feltit would be a privilege to

contribute a smile in this way for your benefit is their (sic) none of our friends that talk of coming east soon, we have looked for and expected a letter for a long time and I have put off writing myself till it has troubled me much there is constantly something on hand that takes up my time, yet I know this is not a sufficient excuse \_\_\_I have not written a line to anyone since I wrote you, we have not written or receive (sic) anything from John since he left us last Spring except hearly from him by way of S, and E and it is a good while since we heard from them. I intend to write to them all soon. How do you all get along. Your situation has weighed upon my spirits very much since the burning of your house how do you get along are you comfortable and happy – Worldly property is not the highway to holiness it has been my prayer that the Lord would teach you by this afflictive event high and important lessons in divine things and effectively wean you all from everything that savors of a worldly spirit & how little we need, and how short the time that we shall need that little. All my observation teaches me that it is vain and wicked thing for Parents to give themselves up to accumulate

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and horde up property for their children Uncle James rant has made a will that does not satisfy the most of his family Adam ha hot an undue proportion Margaret and Duncan have sued for wages. D has had to clear out Aunt Betsy is badly treated and no doubt friendship and harmony are banished forever John Henry is teaching in that district this Winter John Ks wife is very low with consumption will not probably live but a shourt time the rest of our friends are well as far as I know Daniel Grant here in the mill, Eliza Jones came down three weeks since and staid (sic) a fortnight She was getting her health fixed Margaret's health is better than it has been for years. Robert's family are all comfortable they have two Cousins of R\_S boarding with them. The lady helps A some with her work. There is a great deal of sickness among children in this place they are taken with a hard cold fever and inflammation follows our little girls have all been sick more or less and the babe is quite unwell yet but expect she will be better in a few days I have had a girl between two or three months expect to keep her all winter she has a part of the time for herself and I give her 50cts for the winter months –

We have a very good minister Mr. Wynkoof (or Wynkoop) He is about fifty has two daughter and one son, think his labours must do good haves very large congregation Sabbath evening he is only hired for a year and half – there is little transpiring in the shape of news Mr Amasa Millard and old Mrs Goodman have died this winter Mr Robert Leal is about breaking up housekeeping Mr and Mrs Leal are going to live with Sarah in Walton and Helen is going to Catskill to live with Maria Ms James Leal and family are well

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Mr Gough the celebrated temperance lecturer has been here and lectured five nights — The people were perfectly delighted with him, His manner of exhibiting the subject surpassed anything we have heard before, The only difficulty was the courthouse could not begin to hold the people that wanted to hear, The house would be filled till there was not room for a person to stand up and a hour and a half before the time to commence meeting one night he had to walk in the back of the jury seat to get to the desk literally stepping over the heads of the people Very many had to go away every night without getting in although they had to pay a shilling for a admittance A great many names were obtained to the pledge from all lapses the confirmed drunkards fashionable drinkers and some hard cases among the Scotch, although it was almost impossible to circulate the pledge- When he went away there was not so much as a dog to lift its tounge against him his life is published, we have it, he is a reformed man was seven years drunkard now is a bout thirty has drunk the cup of sorrows degradation and poverty to the dregs – He appears now to be a lovely christian, he constantly held up our intire dependence upon God for success and the reason why no more had been done was an event of the faith in God We have an organization here called the Sons of Temperance They are all doing good but husband stands aloof from them because they are a secret society, Do you have any in your neighborhood – on Saturday PM Mr Gough met with the children there was the greatest turnout you ever saw There was hardly a child in the village but was there a band of smiling faces and sparkling eyes I assure you, they were formed into a cold water army, consisting of 225 names Mr G\_s talk was very appropriate sung with them and closed with three cheers for cold water, which made the house ring fold

p.4 (on back fold)

How very anxious we do feel to hear from you hope you will lose no time in writing - I do want my dear Father & Mother to give up hard labor and the cares of the world and feel that they must spend the last remnant of their days toiling for the merit that perisheth – they have already labored excessively – Our Minister tells us that he would not give a farthing for a religion that does not cost us something our religion should cost us time. I hope when you build again you will build again a plain house and just room enough for convenience and comfort, when do you think of building – Perhaps you will think my advice very gratuitous But I meant right

p.5 (on back fold)

Tell Uncle Georges folks that Robert was here a few days since they were well – Uncle James Hume,s folks has just sent them a very nice present two good quilts two nice shirts cloth for a pair of pants

???? We intend in a few years when the railroads are finished if our lives and health are spared and we are prospered to take our four children and make you a visit. Perhaps you think that sound extravagant it would be a gratification to you to see them and for them to see you – but all is uncertain

when you write be particular and mention about your health Mother P wishes to be remembered in much love –

with sincere affection Margaret