Subject: Bachelorhood

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Norfolk. [Connecticut] Jan 19th 1850. Friend Ralph — I must apologise for not writing you before. For since the receipt of your letter I have hardly had a moments leisure in the Day Time, And I do not like to write by Candle light, as it always affects my eyes. I was very glad to hear from you, and of your enjoying yourself as well, as I think you must from the manner you express yourself. I dont wonder you are contented with your lot & for what I know your Comparison is proper. So for news I think Norfolk [Connecticut] uncommonly Dull this Winter. I know of nothing unusual or that would interest you in the least. Since the middle of December we have had excellent Sleighing just Snow enough and what is uncommon for N. [Norfolk, Connecticut] it has thus far lain quiet. We had a January thaw which lasted One Day, and the next night plenty of snow to repair it. You inquire <after> about the Sabbath School here, or rather our class. I have not attended there two months. Esquire Peck was taken sick about that time ago, so sick that he was obliged to go home every Saturday. and return Monday a little better but worse at the end of the week. They Say he is soon to be Married, I Suppose he will be if his Health mends, And then 'may be we shall commence again. The talented portion of community here, have revived their Lyceum, and the School Boys their Club. By the way Mr Rice has a full school this winter All he can well tend to. Quite a number of boys from other towns and one or two whom Rice looks Black at. You have been to school to him and know what I mean. I think your teacher must be behind the times, as it regards Wednesday exercises, though I think with you his dispensing with them is much to his credit Augustus Pettibone, does not attend school this Winter, His Father is going, or has gone, South and he can not be spared. it is just as well for him, he will learn more I presume. He was out here to keep Thanksgiving, and staid a day or two with me. He would not miss being here if he had to come on foot. I presume Uncle Bradley misses his presence as much as any one or two. As for myself I do not go to school this Winter, but farm it night and morning and stay at Doctors between. I take it pretty easy there as it regards them and read six hours in the day on the average. Huggins is at home most of the time, and a good pleasant fellow he is <most of the time>, Now and then he gets miffed at me, which is all right enough I suppose he has reason to be, but a great share of the time he is what he ought to be. ready to assist me when I need. He is a cold blooded fellow, and keeps the office so hot that I roast with my coat off — I have the advantage of him though, I make him keep the fire, and he is on the trot after wood all the time. I dont know as he will stay another year but I am sure I hope he will. We have had such fine winter weather that People have gone on with their building to good advantage Lawrence's folks have part of their Hoe Works running and the Ryans have got their Factory mostly out of the woods and have a number of hands hewing They have fairly filled up the village with their timber and wood. I believe Uncle Pendleton has got his works in operation as Levi went along a short time ago with a Bundle of Leather about large enough for him to sit on. Harlow Roys commenced raising his new works yesterday they raised two tiers and have eleven more to raise. He will have one of the largest works in the Country. when completed. He does great things or none. From reading over your letter I see you mention Dancing as common as if I were you and could without neglecting my studies I should learn, When they talked of starting a school here, I thought I would attend, but as for going down to Crowells, five miles once a week for that purpose, it wont pay. they muster up ten couple however who go out at night and come home to Breakfast. I believe in Dancing but not in running the thing into the ground. If they would get home in the proper time the good folks of this town would not oppose it as they do, You must excuse the good looks of this letter, Ralph for I have had to jump up and leave it a dozen times, Write me as often as you can, and what you please, anything that interests you will me, and I would like to know if you ever expect to come back and live in old Norfolk [Connecticut], my mind is made up in regard to that I would like to know yours Halsey is well and attending school, and wishes to be remembered to you (I guess) I have not seen him Nor does he know of my writing, Your Friends are all well (that I know anything about understand me), and hoping to (see you soon and hear from you sooner) as the Paddy wrote I remain Your Friend J. H. P. Stevens.

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[In envelope addressed to:] Mr Ralph E Burr. Flemington.
Huntington County. New Jersey.

New York Oct 3d 1850. Friend Ralph — I have been walking my room this half hour, whistling & thinking what I had best do with myself. I did not feel like attending any of the Evening Meetings and there is not much fun in walking the Streets when you have no place to go to. I have made up my mind I could do nothing better than to write to you. You see what a blunder I have made in writing New York at the top of the Sheet, I thought at first I would give it up, but I am afraid I would do no better if I were to try again. of Course you will not care for the looks, for between a poor pen & my dullness this Evening I do not expect a very showy Letter. I have been in New York now one Month, & conducted myself with Propriety No easy thing to do either (that is for me.) attend Lectures studiously Six pr Day. from 9 am. till 1. & from 2 1/2 till 5 1/2. the Lectures one Hour each, and an Evening Lecture at 7 PM. Three Evenings in the Week. That Keeps on pretty Steady whether he will or no. I Know of nothing to write that would interest you particularly. I see Augustus Pettibone two or three times a week. I Board about two Miles from their Store. Up Town, Camp & I, Room with a fellow from Maine, whom he got acquainted with last Winter, I do not get invited to as many Parties, Weddings &c as you had the luck to be last Winter in Jersey. I Can not Account for it any way unless the People were more Civil with you or else you are more Agreeable, I think it is the latter. The Boarders here are mostly Old Married People & I Do not have much company & <as> except Sundays have no time to go to August Pettibones. So you see I have no Chance to Show myself, not that I care anything about it for I cannot Study & Play at the same time & do both well. I intend to do the former & if a Chance turns up for the Latter, why then improve it. The Weather has been quite Warm here to what it was in Norfolk [Connecticut] when I left. I never was so bit & Chewed up by the Mosquitoes, (get a dictionary & look up that word will you) as I was here During the first two Weeks but their Day will soon be over, & besides I have got used to them & their Music. I Suppose You have Singing Schools in Norfolk this Season, Do you attend? I Shall expect to see you in the Choir when I return, which will be about Christmas. You must write me all the news Gossip that has been the rounds since I left, I do not know the reason but I cannot find, anything of it in the Papers here. Tell me also, whether you do to School, what Boys go that I know, how many Scholars &c and I Shall expect a list of all the Marriages, Births & other wonderful Phenomenon that come to pass, in their regular Order. You know North End, is a famous place for them things to occur, but I hope none of them will happen to you personally I Suppose you have had your fill of all sorts of Hunting I think it must have been a good Season. Write any way & let me know, for I Hate to be in Ignorance. I know nothing further to Edify you with at this present time but will endeavour to Send more beauty in my next Epistle End of Chapter First, Your friend J. H. Stevens. PS Direct your letter to me, at 409 Broome Street N.Y.

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New York Dec 5th 1850. Friend Ralph,

There being no Lectures to Day in Consequence of the Death of one of the Students, whose Funeral will be attended this afternoon I take the Opportunity to Answer your last. I have not found the time to do so before, & you must not think me forgetful of you or attribute my long Silence to Neglect. I Suppose Augustus Pettibone told you all the News &c. that has <happened> been worth repeating I saw him a few Minutes Yesterday Said he had Seen you &c. I have not heard about Thanksgiving as yet, but Suppose you had the Usual Sermon Dinner &c I would have liked to have been there, but thought it better to Stay a few weeks longer when We will have a Vacation of a Week & then I can enjoy myself at Home, without loosing any Lectures. The last Week has been Warm & Wet & the Streets so Muddy that you would not have know them from that New Road you have got in Norfolk [Connecticut] across the Curtiss Meadow — I hope the Weather & the Wind will get Settled before long — & that it will seem more like Winter. Augustus Said he attended a Shooting Match a Day or two before Thanksgiving, but said Nothing of your being there & Therefore I conclude you were not present but Employed in

Lecturing Science into the Heads of the Rising Generation in the Johnson School House, with a Beech Sprout &c — I would like to know if Any Young Ladies are to be indebted to you for the finishing touch to their Education, I Say all this as a Joke you will Understand. & you may expect to have your School visited one of these Days when I get back again. You must not call on me for any Remarks however just before Closing School which I believe is the Custom, at all counts it used to be. I Shall Decline the intended Honor expressing at the Same time my Conviction that the School Teacher is Lone. O Ralph we must have a Time about them Times. All that worries me is your Living so near Goshen & You know how Gold Beads shine, I cannot tell You anything New on that Subject. by the way tell me whether they look as they used to, I was rather disappointed to hear of your taking the Chair you occupy I thought you would have been Coming down here on the way to Jersey & Staid a Day or two with me, but I am not going to break my heart about it, by the way now when I think of it let me give you this advise to have Your School (Unkept) Christmas Week & then I will do the Same by mine & as for the Boarding Round let that alone for the same length of time, I must Adjourn now a few Minutes for Dinner, which needs my Special Attention &c — Well Ralph I have been thinking this 1/2 Hour what next to (rub you with) but Come to look at it all, it seems too bad, & if it were not that I have not time to write another, I would burn this Letter, but as it is I think I may rely upon your Good Nature & fortune to send it & if you have Time & the Tools just answer some of my Queries, in the manner they Deserve, & what that Manner is I Do not think Will Puzzle you Greatly to Determine, Write me all the Marvels that Come to pass & Believe Me always Your Friend J.H. Stevens. Mr. Ralph E. Burr. PS I am going down to see Guson & shall make particular enquiries about you, so if you do not write one the Facts, I shall know it,

[Written on outside by address:] I have pulled this open to insert a parting Word So you need not think any one Else Did it

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[in pencil: John Cowles Grant to Abigail Cowles Grant]

[penciled on back] I send this of Johns just received – send it to sister Caroline if you think best. I think his descriptive powers are pretty good

H March Mrs. S.E. Edwards 326 Fed St. Camden

Mr. An Mrs. Aaron Butler Cape May

Harlem, Ills. [Illinois] Dear Mother, I have hardly written you a decent letter since I have been pedagoging but it was not for lack of inclination but rather of opportunity, for when in the schoolhouse the young ideas get noisy & want to run around & play & that joggles my desk & ideas & when boarding around I find writing materials scarce. I have got a gay little school of 36 promising youth all of whom expect I doubt not to be Presidents & Mrs. [Harriet Beecher] Stowe's in time, their ages vary from 4 to 20 & some of the boys could throw me out of the window with one hand if they possessed the inclination; one of my boys is going to be a lawyer or Bank Prest. [President] for he can't write legibly to save him, probably he will go to Congress if he don't he ought to. Boarding round is the largest thing out of the penitentiary. I have as good as there is around, and I must say that I never lived so well in my life as I have here, all sorts of every thing & so much of it. I find one trouble that is sitting, eating, & cooking all in the same room, but am getting used to that so I don't notice it except when they have babies to cry while their mother is cooking, if they were not so dirty I would try to comfort them a little my self but as it is I let them cry. The Scotch have a regular oldfashioned bluestocking Presbyterian Church a little way from my <adec> academy in which primitive religion is shown in some of its beauties; service commences at 11 o'clock, about ten they begin to assemble, they come in crowds, families & tribes, by ones' tens'

& forties,' after discussing the marriages & deaths of the week past, the prospects of the weather for the week to come, each one meantime informing his neighbor that it is a fine day, they go in to hear words of burning, soul-stirring eloquence for an hour & a half; the complacency with which the Fathers in Israel sleep through the sermon is very refreshing & the regularity with which they wake for the singing & prayers is marvelous: all stand during the prayer, & sit during the singing; they have no choir or instrument, the Deacons saying they will "ha' na' sooch thing en Gods h-us." The singing is conducted or led by an old cracked voice brother who makes terrible noises which all follow as closely as they can & for this interesting performance he is paid $60. per year: there is one old man just like Mr. Storms, who takes his snuff as regularly as he wakes up, & spills about half of it over his coat collar, making it snuff-colored, a very fashionable color just now. I went to a scotch party N.Y. [New York] night & was very much amused, pleased & instructed. Some of the older girls who don't go to school & "went for me" & tried to steal my heart I judged from their actions, but I had seen such before & if any one <was in the least> had any advantage I guess it was, Yr [Your] aff [affectionate] son

J Grant [John Cowles Grant]

Box 300 Roscoe

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