

August 6, 1800 Plainfield

Though distant yet my dear and unforgotten friend, In the same hour when I once saw you and when you have spent many hours and days on the same table on which you have often written, I now address you, and expect soon to be surrounded by the same children which but a year ago surrounded you. These circumstances which have attended me these three months have been only calculated to keep you on my mind and truly they have had their effect though I needed them not. Believe me my dear friend that my affection and attachment for you are not diminished I to say that when the course of nature shall change and I forget myself and all which is dear to me, then I shall also forget you I presume to that while my heart has any room for love I shall never cease with affection my ever dear my admirable my virtuous Miss Bryant. Allow me my dear a little freedom allow me to speak my sentiments sincere opinion let your generous heart forgive an error. When my dear when shall I once more enjoy the exquisite pleasure of beholding you and blest with your society on some happy fortune reunion, roll on the happy hour when I may enjoy the company of this absent friend. May heaven grant that we may once more meet on this eternity - and may we each be prepared to meet in the world of infinity for this solemn meeting may we make it our business to be ready for we know not but it is now may new and uncertain that it cannot be so distant. I wish to hear particularly from you and to know of your welfare and your circumstances and hope you are more highly favored than ever you have been until now. Perhaps my circumstances were never so favorable to happiness as this summer. I have for three months spent past been employed in the same school which you taught last summer. I have boarded at Mr. David Whitmans, who now lives where Mr. A. Gloyd lived last summer. I have been almost free from all cares except those which respect myself and school--have been at liberty to go and come when I choose only that I must attend to my school my appointed hour - have enjoyed health myself as have my friends in general and have enjoyed almost every outward blessing - but it is a truth that perfect felicity cannot be found on earth. - but it is now nine o'clock - the children have many of them collected and I must attend to my daily employment. I shall this day dismiss my school and attend to it no more this season. I expect to be invited to day by Mr. Hallock and he selectmen and to take my final leave of the school to night, and to return to my Father -With sincerity I myself your friend, L. Richards

P.S. 13 August Wednesday evening, half past eight at home. The preceding lines I closed abruptly and in haste I therefore determined to write a postscript as soon as convenience would allow -and this is the first opportunity which in the course of a week has presented itself - for I have been surrounded with such things as called my attention. Believe my dear that the real cause of the silence which I have kept for these many months has not been the want of an inclination to write, but, of an opportunity for conveyance indeed what opportunity I shall have to convey this I know not

at present. but invite hoping for an unknown opportunity. Not as a formal ceremony, - I return my thanks for your letter of Feb. 24 which to a collections mind afforded satisfaction. The ease and elegance with which it was dictated and the pure and pleasing sentiments therein reported to the idea which I held in my mind of the dear author, could not fail to awaken the most tender sensation too sublime for pen and ink to present - While you have any regard for my happiness write every opportunity . Oh happiness our being end and aim us - this alone is what we seek - In all circumstances in life whether in sickness or health in prosperity or adversity at home or abroad at play, asleep or awake, whether employed in this or that still happiness is the object which we seek - but also of what shall we seek find this happiness shall we seek it in worldly pleasures there are all variety - shall we seek it ourselves? surely hearts totally deprived and minds filled with discontent cannot afford it - shall we seek it in our friends and fellow mortals? They are born of the dirt and to the dirt return. They can give but a moments pleasure shall we seek it in anything in this lonely certainly everything here is fading transitory and uncertain and therefore it is folly to a high degree to seek for happiness but in the Fountain of all good - May God give us wisdom to go to that fountain and find an eternal supply. Reluctantly I must leave this employment but may my heart never leave you - I have much which I might but nothing as I recollect which is interesting to you or I can add with propriety - I fear I have now tired your patience by my empty lines if so, pardon me. Tho with them I am unacquainted, yet please to present my compliments to your sister. May peace and prosperity attend you

Farewell my dear, I say farewell.

Lydia Richards