

Excerpt from an 1857 Letter from Mary Austin to Jackson Wood.

An excerpt of a 1857 letter from Mary Austin of Whitehall, New York to her cousin, Jackson Wood. The mothers of Mary Austin and Jackson Wood (Eunice Draper) were sisters. Mary Austin is the daughter of Augustin Austin and Mary Ann Draper, of the "Richard Austin" line. Contributed by Linda (Wood) Ott at: leeewood@gmail.com.

Mary Austin of Whitehall, N.Y. addressed to: Jackson Wood, Esq., Crystal Lake, MacHenry Co., Illinois, Dec 28 / 57 (1857).

"Mon cher cousin, I received your letter and perused its pages with pleasure, and hope you will pardon my negligence in answering, as I did not know where to direct. I was at (your brother) Rollin's yesterday and they told me that you were at Hat's.Sally Ann's folks are well and have got a melodeon....I think you will be surprised when you read that George Grey is dead too. He died this last Saturday at 6 o'clock, only one week from the time Mr. Willson was buried. He and Randolph Johnson were in the cattle business and Mr. Grey went to Boston to sell some cattle, one of them died, and in skinning it - he cut his finger. He was sick only 3 days.

I presume you want to hear about Gen. David Barrett's marriage with the Widow Segons. They were married about 11 weeks ago. When they went away, the omnibus came after them with all the style imaginable, and last week he posted her, because she would not get up at 9 o'clock and get breakfast, and she did not like to have dances there and he would have them. That's the story now, I think matrimony is a perfect state of happiness, don't you? You see that you don't let that noose be thrown over your neck. (Mary did "tie the noose" and married Dr. William R. Merwin 3 years later).

There is going to be a New Year's ball at Jeff Collin's.... Sawvener Jucket is married to a young widow over the lake.... William Walker's child is dead, and one of John O'Reilly's little children are dead, next to the youngest I believe. Bradshaw Goodale has got an heir....

Write soon from your Cousin Mary Austin
P.S. Smallpox in Whitehall