

COPY

April 16 '01

Dear Cousin John,

I've enclosed copies of the Bale material I mentioned, most of it provided to me by George Harbour Jr, now sadly deceased.

1. His grandfather typed up a family history in 1927, and I've enclosed a copy of that. There are some errors in it w/ regard to dates, etc. when compared with cemetery & other public records.
2. Letter from Celia Foster to her daughter Phebe Bale dated 1824. I think Celia has a beautiful clear hand, but if you have any trouble reading it I'll be happy to type up a transcription.
3. LONG letter from John Bale to Phebe written from New York 1848. He starts off by saying he has very little to communicate and then runs on for three pages & continues on the back of the envelope! I have not transcribed this one (simply lack of time and application) but if you find it difficult to read I'll do so.

Summary of contents:

[p. 1] He had returned from Quebec a week earlier from business dealings with unnamed Canadian banks . . . got very wet in "incessant rain" but caught no cold. Notes that New York was in a drought, though, and the hay crop threatened. All his NY relations well. He was looking for a Mr. Thorp to deliver a letter, doesn't say why. He found Mr. Thorp's residence "by inquiring amongst the clockmakers" but he had gone to Connecticut to visit some relations so he left the letter with his next door neighbors. He was staying at his brother's at 96 Fulton Street. He notes that he has purchased but a few goods & has them packed and ready for shipment either by the *New York* or the *Columbia*, probably the latter although he might prefer the former "both however appear to be good firm ships by noticing the departures in Bennet's Herald." [ed. note: James Gordon Bennett at the time was the controversial and rather notorious Scottish-born proprietor of the old *New York Herald*.] Both ships were to sail to Charleston SC. He has gotten her a subscription to the Herald.

[p.2] He has bought Josephine a bonnet, parasol & trunk but has been unable to find a fall/winter dress "such as she would like" because all the stock is either sold out or put away for next season [it was July]. He will try in Charleston. He also has shoes for Victoria. He will ship out at the end of the week, very little freight consigned for Charleston at this time of year and he expects a ship will not go out until heavily freighted. He expects the ship will go by way of Philadelphia, Baltimore & "Washington City", and he expects to stay in D.C. a few days and may stay a few days in Phil. and Baltimore as well. He indicates he may also stop by Decatur "about the time of Amanda's confinement." [Decatur is just east of Atlanta; Amanda would live until 1850; she is buried in Decatur city cemetery.] He received her letter a week ago yesterday "I was sorry to hear of your bad luck but such things are unavoidable and we can only do the best we can under the circumstances." [bad luck unspecified.] He expects he will be delayed substantially at Charleston & Augusta GA and could easily become homesick "if I were to indulge myself with such thoughts." He hasn't been to see any extraordinary sights, except that he went to the theater once to "Glance of New York" which represented the tricks and methods of the confidence men and thieves of the city. He, Thomas, and Charles went on the morning of the letter "to the principal Universalist Church of this City." His sister while he is writing has just come

[p.3] to his brother's house to see him. She particularly sends her love to Phebe and the children. Last Wednesday he went to "the funeral procession of the officers from this State who were killed in the War with Mexico and also of Alexander S. Forbes who was employed to bring home their remains and who himself sickened and died at New Orleans on his return with the five deceased Officers. Baxter Barclay Pearson Gallagher & Chandler Six in all." The city militia companies turned out in force, "six bands of muffled music and an oration from John Van Buren." Many wounded and disabled soldiers attended; "Their appearance was by no means such as to inspire Military Ardour in the Spectators present at the Procession." He has a stone bruise [he means a blister] on his right heel, doesn't know how he got it, but uses the old remedy of running a needle and thread through it so it will drain. As of Wednesday morning he has purchased everything he intends to in NY - lists items including a keg of nails. The Columbia is to sail Friday morning, and if so she may see the notice of sailing in next Saturday's Herald. Yesterday he went to the falls of Passaic at Patterson. He notes it is a considerable manufacturing town and that the situation is romantic but the falls are "quite inconsiderable" both from the drought and "from the fact that the water of the river being used up before reaching the falls to Propel the manufacturing Machinery of the town."

[p.4]

This is the cover sheet (reverse of the last page of the letter, folded for mailing). It's addressed to Mrs. Phebe G. Bale

Arbacoochee Gold Mines

Randolph County

Alabama.

Postmarked NYC July 19

upside down is written "Columbous Hill"

He adds a postscript that she would have gotten the letter sooner but that he ran into Mr. Thorp at a broker's office on Wall Street.

Another postscript: on Monday of his shipping his things off he went to the American Museum.

In addition to "the other curiosities of the place" he saw the Belgian Giant 8 feet high and a Boa Constrictor 30 fet in length. He expects to leave tomorrow morning for Philly.

your Affectionate Husband J Bale.

4. A Family Record prepared by John Bale some time after 1850 (most recent date entered) I have typed it out as my copy is very difficult to read already!

5. John Bale's will, in typescript. The original (copy by the Probate clerk) is in an oversized Probate ledger book & I had to copy it in sections, it's a mess! Judging from paragraph 2, his visit to the Universalist church "took." (I was mistaken in my earlier comment that Phebe Bale was a Methodist, she was a Baptist. But she abided by her late husband's wishes; his monument in the family plot is the only stone there devoid of religious sentiments.) I love the bequest to meritorious unmarried females - such bequests are not very common in this country but fairly well known in England. Mr. Bale was an Englishman through and through (and more power to him!)

6. The executor's report of Mr. Bale's estate. Except for the first page, these oversized pages are copied in pairs, and you can line each pair up top to bottom. They overlap considerably.

He had a few busted investments such as Confederate notes and bonds (and the Augusta bank that I think is mentioned in one of the letters you sent to me . . . he was absolutely right that he would get burned on that one!) but his other investments were sound . . . a number of the railroads are still in business today although they have been absorbed into other roads. The Atlanta and West Point and the Georgia R.R.s were still operating as independent lines until very recently, and of course Atlanta Gas Light is still paying dividends today (they bought out Augusta Gas Light some time in the early 20th century as I recall.) You'll see many familiar names in the payouts, and the virtuous unmarried females are there too!

6. John Bale's naturalization petition and declaration, in original and typescript (I used my Colonial Printshop program to get the old-fashioned terminal "s"s right. . . Caslon Old Style.)

I hope you find all this material "amusing and instructive" as Mr. Bale might have said, and I hope that his expectations of "benevolence, wisdom & prudence" in his Creator were amply fulfilled!

Best regards,
Cousin Martha