

BARBARA E. DUNN

William Little Lee and Catherine Lee,
Letters from Hawai'i 1848–1855

"HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, October 1st, 1848. My dear 'Kitty Scott.' Not long since my clerk brought me a newspaper, which upon opening I found to bear the inscription, 'with the respects of Miss Caroline Scott.' Dropping my head in an inquiring mood, I whispered to myself 'Caroline Scott? who is Caroline Scott?' When of a sudden up sprung from the floor beneath me, the dear little witch of my boyhood 'Kitty Scott,' and seating herself on my table sat smiling upon me in all the sweetness of her early youth."

Thus begins a seven-year correspondence between William Little Lee in Honolulu and his boyhood friend, Caroline "Kitty" Scott of Buffalo, New York. After Lee's marriage to Catherine Newton in 1849, she also wrote to Kitty. There are 11 letters in this collection. William wrote five of the letters and Catherine wrote six. The Lees covered such topics as the California Gold Rush, the French Admiral de Tromelin threatening the Hawaiian government and ransacking Honolulu, the smallpox epidemic of 1853, Lihu'e Sugar Plantation on Kaua'i, Lee's work on the Land Commission, and descriptions of Washington Place where the Lees boarded. One letter contains William Lee's account of the harrowing voyage on the *Henry* from Boston to Hawai'i in 1846 with Charles Reed Bishop. [fig. 1]

Barbara E. Dunn is the administrative director and librarian for the Hawaiian Historical Society.

The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 38 (2004)

William Little Lee did not plan to go to Hawai'i, let alone spend his life there. Born in Sandy Hill, New York, in 1821, and trained as a lawyer at Harvard Law School, he began to suffer from tuberculosis at age 25 and sought to find a better climate for his health. In February 1846, he sailed for the Oregon Territory with his friend and fellow adventurer, Charles R. Bishop. After a long and stormy voyage, their ship, the *Henry*, arrived in Honolulu harbor October 12, 1846, needing extensive repairs. Soon after arriving, Lee caught the attention of officials in the Hawaiian kingdom and was recruited by Attorney General John Ricord and Dr. Gerrit Judd, the minister of finance for Kamehameha III. Lee, then 26 years old, was only the second trained attorney in the Islands (after Ricord). The kingdom urgently needed legal assistance, and the king and government officials urged Lee to stay. He accepted and was appointed a judge in the newly organized

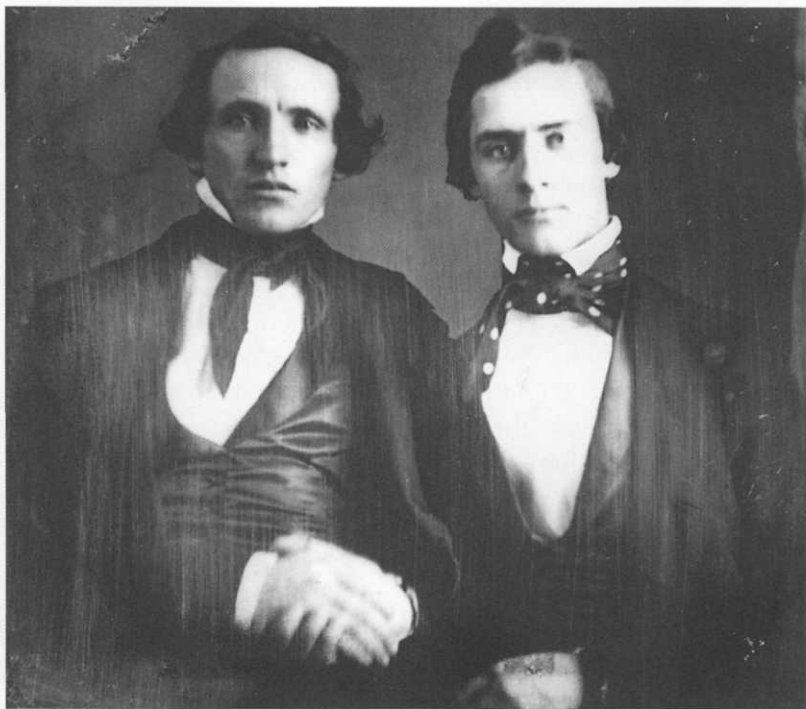


FIG. 1 William L. Lee (*left*) with Charles R. Bishop, Newburyport, Mass., 1846, before embarking for Hawai'i. Daguerreotype, Bishop Museum.

court system by Governor Mataio Kekūanaō'a. Lee, in turn, convinced his traveling companion Bishop to remain in Hawai'i as well.

Bishop stayed for 50 years. He married a Hawaiian royal princess, Bernice Pauahi, became a well-known financier and philanthropist, and founded the Bishop Museum.

In 1847, William Little Lee was elected Chief Justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court, appointed to the privy council, and appointed president of the Board of Commissioners to Quiet Land Titles (the Land Commission), a volunteer post. In 1851, he was elected to the Legislature and became Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The legislature assigned Lee the task of drafting criminal and civil codes for the kingdom. Lee wrote many important laws that governed society throughout the monarchy period including the Masters and Servants Act of 1850. This law provided the basis of contract labor for both Hawaiians and immigrant workers on the sugar plantations. The legislature also asked Lee to draft a new constitution which was adopted in 1852. Lee essentially set up an American legal system for the Hawaiian kingdom. Kamehameha V annulled Lee's 1852 constitution in 1864 for being too liberal for a monarchical government.

Lee became physically ill while assisting in the care of the sick during the 1853 smallpox epidemic, and the tuberculosis reasserted itself. His health was never restored. He and his wife returned to the United States in 1855 to seek medical advice. But Hawai'i drew him back where he died May 28, 1857.

Catherine Newton Lee (ca. 1819-1894), from Albany, New York, was courted by William Lee before he left New York. Accepting a proposal from Lee by mail, Catherine sailed around the Horn with missionaries Dr. Charles H. and Lucy Wetmore and married Lee on board the *Leland* in Honolulu harbor on Sunday, March 11, 1849. She and her husband boarded for several years at Washington Place with Mrs. Mary Dominis, widow of Capt. John Dominis, who was lost at sea on the brig *Wm. Neilson* in 1846. Catherine N. "Kate" Lee was active in Honolulu social circles. She was known to be a clever, literary woman with interests in the women's issues of the day and noted for her advanced thinking.

After Lee's death, she returned to New York. On November 4, 1861, in Saratoga, New York, she married professor Edward L. Youmans, editor of *Popular Science Monthly*. Lee had left her considerable

property, including an interest in Lihu'e Plantation on Kaua'i, and she used her wealth to support the magazine and establish her home as a favorite meeting place of literary people. She also continued Lee's work in actively promoting the sugar reciprocity treaty through influential friends in New York and Washington, D.C. She died August 29, 1894, seven years after her second husband. The obituary notice in the *Hawaiian Gazette*, September 21, 1894, says, "She was regarded by her friends as an example of a woman who knew how to reach and control public men without destroying their peace of mind."

Because William Little Lee is writing to a family friend, the letters give us some insight into his character and personality. He even offers a description of himself in his first letter to "Miss Kitty." He lived with the Scott family at Sandy Hill, New York, when he was 11 or 12 years old and befriended Kitty, one of the daughters. They apparently lost touch and became reconnected by happenstance after Lee arrived in Honolulu. Catherine Lee also writes to Miss Kitty giving her own insights on life and activities in Hawai'i and her husband's work. Several of the letters are written together on the same sheets of paper as "joint letters." In two letters, November 23, 1850, and April 16, 1854, Catherine employs crossways writing: that is, writing over her husband's words at a right angle. She refers to it in the April 16, 1854 letter, saying, "Crossing letters I abominate and hoping you will excuse me if I have made either William's or my own writing illegible." This crossways writing, today called "crossed" letters, was not uncommon prior to the introduction of postage stamps in the mid-19th century. It was done to save on postage. Two sheets of paper cost double the postage of a single sheet of any size. The letters end with Catherine Lee writing a short note to Miss Kitty in 1855 while she and William are visiting friends in New York and Boston. [fig. 2]

Mark Blackburn of Kamuela, Hawai'i, a private collector of Polynesian art and artifacts, brought these letters to the attention of the Hawaiian Historical Society. Mr. Blackburn purchased the letters from a rare book dealer in upstate New York who knew of his interest in Hawaiian history. He has kindly allowed the Society to publish these letters in this issue of *The Hawaiian Journal of History*.

William Little Lee to Caroline Scott of Buffalo, N.Y., from Honolulu, October 1, 1848

Honolulu
Hawaiian Islands
October 1st 1848

My dear "Kitty Scott,"

Not long since my clerk brought me a newspaper, which upon opening, I found to bear the inscription, "with the respects of Miss Caroline Scott." Dropping my head in an inquiring mood, I whispered to myself "Caroline Scott? who is Caroline Scott?" When of a sudden up sprung

Work, Island of Hawaii
March 1854.

... perhaps when
... letter of Dec 8.
... 11th of March 1854.
... marriage, and just
... a divorce case.
... Nothing perhaps
... without comment,
... Fortune teller
... as you please.
... That my letter
... and naturally
... Shady work, which
... work, is one
... the world, stretches
... about a 100 miles
... the residence of my
... this sunny work
... part of the Metropolis
... that blow so
... Eden country.
... here on the
... health, which I
... to see by your
... of an invalid,

FIG. 2 Crossways writing by Catherine Lee, written across her husband's words to save on postage costs. Courtesy Mark Blackburn.

from the floor beneath me, the dear little witch of my boyhood, "Kitty Scott," and seating herself on my table sat smiling upon me in all the sweetness of her early youth. Oh, you little wizard you, I see you this very moment—yes, just as I did fifteen long years ago, and I cannot, for the life of me, realize that you are grown up to be any thing else than the same little girl that once filled so much of my youthful brain. Kitty, (pardon my familiarity) the thought of you makes me feel like a little boy again, and as I travel back to the days when we played together in all the innocence of little children, a deep feeling comes over me that makes me wish I had the *real* Kitty Scott by my side, rather than her shadow. How much I *would* give, could I only seat you in the empty chair beside me, and talk over the funny times and little freaks that we have had together, in and around your old homestead at Sandy Hill. The picture of my life, when a little boy, 11 or 12 years of age I lived in your father's family, stands out from the canvass of youth in bold colors, and often do the figures therein portrayed step forth and speak to me of the pleasures that clustered so thickly around the path of my boyhood. There, in the back room, sits "Grandpa Scott," all swallowed up in the last whig newspaper, while the old clock ticks loud in the corner, and the mug of cider sits mulling and simmering away on the stove in perfect harmony with the old man's thoughts and tastes. This scene reminds me of how much pleasure I took in drawing his cider, cutting his tobacco, listening to his stories, and in doing a thousand little things for him, which he always repaid with kindness. "Netty" [Antoinette, Kitty's sister] and myself were his pets, and he would allow *me* to tease him in many ways, when for the same liberties he would knock another boy heels over head. But the old man has gone the way of all the living, and I trust rests in the Lord. He was eccentric but kind, irritable but warm hearted, and I loved him. He has gone, and may the earth lie light upon his grave.

The scene changes, and I go to the kitchen. Ugh! how cold I am as I feel the keen wind of the cold winter mornings, when a little boy I used to jump out of bed before daylight and run from Grandpa's room to the kitchen and build a fire. Soon, however, the stove was red hot, the tea kettle began to sing, and then I went to the foot of the chamber stairs and cried out at the top of my voice, "Antoinette! Antoinette!" "Yes"—was the answer, and in another breath down came the dear good girl who had jumped from the bed into her dress with one bound, and with another stood before me with the back of her dress all open ready to be hooked up. I loved that good girl with all the fondness of a little boy, and I love her *now*, for my memory is crowded with a mul-

titude of kindnesses that she has bestowed upon me. God bless her! I say, from the bottom of my heart, God bless her!

Soon after "Netty" came down, the door of Mother's bedroom invariably opened, and out slipped a little girl, who sitting down on the floor before the stove, pulled the bottom of her long white night gown close around her feet, and looking into the stove hearth, sat purring away like a little kitten. That little girl was Kitty Scott, now "Miss Caroline Scott of Buffalo." And well do I remember, that same Kitty Scott in those days used to have a severe pain in the instep of one foot, and how often of a cold morning have I seated myself on the floor beside her and bathed that little white foot with Opodeldoc [camphorated soap liniment]. Don't kick Kitty, I pray you don't, at this pedal allusion of mine, but tell me all about that little foot,—the paths it has been treading for so many years—the obstacles it has surmounted—the burning sands it has crossed in the journey of life,—the thorns it has trod upon,—the cool streams it has laved in,—the flower banks it has pressed,—the nets and pits it has avoided, and whither its steps now tend. Oh my dear girl, may God keep that little foot and its twin companion from the ways of sorrow, and lead you onward and upward through life and death to the gates of Heaven.

Kitty, I have often tried to picture you as "Miss Caroline Scott," and see you just as you are at the present day, but that little girl in the long night gown disturbs my vision, and I can form no conception of the sweet lass of twenty one. I think, however, that you must look much as Netty did, but perchance my reckoning is all wrong, and I beg you to give me a picture of yourself drawn by your own fair hand. How tall—how broad, how weighty are you. What the color of your hair, your eyes, your cheeks etc. etc.? The "*Tout Ensemble*" I ken is lovely, but I would know what goes to make up this loveliness. From those who have seen you, I learn that you are a small, clever, bright and sparkling little girl; sprightly in your conversation, dancing "from grave to gay from lively to severe" with an incredible facility. But as every intelligent girl can judge of her own powers and sketch the prominent features of her own person and character better than any other, I repeat my request for a picture from your own hand.

But you may answer, that it is rutable for *me* to send my picture before I ask *yours*, and hence, not to give you any excuse, you shall have it, drawn for the first time.

I stand 5 feet 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in shoes—am rather a lean Cassius looking fellow, ranging in weight from 135 to 150 pounds—with a large bony face, brown hair, broad forehead, hazel eyes, roman nose (rather

long and sharp)—good sized mouth (with clean teeth), long chin, hollow cheeks, sallow complexion, no whiskers, and altogether having a look that says I am 35 years of age, while in truth I am but 27. Generally, I feel rather younger than I am, but now and then I have an old mummy-like feeling come over me that whispers of an antiquity far beyond three score years and ten. I am frank and cheerful—rather impulsive in my feelings and actions. Never “Blue,” and yet never exactly contented—loving the practical rather than the theoretical things of this world—possessing none of the marvelous, and strongly prone to be incredulous and obstinate. Hope, cautiousness, firmness, and combattiveness are prominent features in my character, while no bump rises higher than self esteem, though the craniologists flatly deny me. I am a warm friend, and perhaps what Dr. Johnson would call a “good hater”—very fond of the society of old acquaintances, disliking to make new ones, and at times rather taciturn. Active and energetic, I possess more of the will than the power, and am inclined to skim over the surface of things rather than dive into their hidden depths. I am fond of books, flowers, children, horses and a good dinner, and in fine, have a great many likes and dislikes—many faults and few virtues. There, now, I have given you an honest picture without meaning to fish for compliments on the one hand, or be egotistical on the other. In a word, I am of the *earth, earthy*, but, Kitty, allow your humble servant to say, that great and numerous as his faults truly are, he does not live without the hope of reformation. In other words he expects soon to be married to a young lady who will rub down, soften and polish, if not wholly obliterate many of the rough ugly points that disfigure his character. This lady is Miss C. E. Newton of Albany, with whom I hope you are acquainted.

Heartily ashamed, and begging your pardon for saying so much of myself, I shall hold you responsible for a faithful picture of *yourself*, and will now turn from the above chapter of vanity to more pleasant subjects.

What of your father? Tell me all about him. What of his habits, looks and person? How old is he—is he as erect as ever—is he lean or corpulent etc. etc.? I will remember that 15 years since he was the very soul of fun and good society, a short, straight, white haired and active man, possessed of a large fund of anecdote, humor and practical knowledge. The last time I saw him was one cold winter evening in Charles Dewey’s store, sitting between the stove and counter, telling stories, and eating keg raisins, which I remember he said, to my great astonishment, were better than box raisins. Present my best compliments to your father and tell him I remember him with much gratitude as the kind teacher who

made clear to my young mind many a hard problem in Algebra and Geometry. Why will he not write to me and give me some good lessons for my riper years?

And where is your dear Mother? Is she among the living or dead? She was so much confined to her room by sickness when I lived with you that I knew but little of her, and only remember that she *was* from the fact that whenever I slammed a door or thundered through the house with my heavy cowhide boots, Netty would call after me, saying "Willy you will disturb Mother." I think I have heard of her death, but it may be all a dream.

Where and how is Antoinette? I heard some years ago that she was married, but to whom or where she resided I have forgotten. Wherever she may be, I ask no greater blessing for her, than that she receive what she *merits*. More than any other member of your family has my heart turned towards her with a fondness akin to that of a brother for a darling sister.

And last though not least, what of Harriet? I know that she is Mrs. Haven of Buffalo, and I have heard all manner of complimentary things of her and her worthy husband. I hear that she is a fine noble woman, a devoted wife and fond mother; and that with a husband in every way deserving of her, leads a very happy life. This certainly is very gratifying news, but it is too *general*, and I ask that you will give me something more detailed. For instance tell me the number of her children, their ages, names, looks etc. etc. Remember me affectionately to Madam Haven and to her good husband though I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance.

This part of the world is much disturbed at present with the great Gold Excitement of California. It exceeds anything you can conceive of. I have several friends who have accumulated large fortunes there within the last few months. Six men, says a private letter from a person of good authority, have gathered \$12,000 within the last six weeks.

Another subject of great interest with us is the Trans Pacific Steam Navigation from California or Oregon to China via Honolulu. By the steamers via Panama we shall get letters from the U.S. in 50 days, but we wish to have them in 30. We have a very pleasant and intelligent society of Americans, French & English in our good little city and nothing makes such a feast among us as the arrival of a large mail. I know of no part of the world where letters have such a value as here. No matter what the age or contents of letters be, all are devoured with a gusto.

Among the 600 foreigners that dwell in Honolulu, we have a good deal of heart and intellect, but politics, the conflicting interests of trade

and other minor matters have split up the society in every direction. However, we have most of the comforts and luxuries of the world, and take a vast deal of enjoyment in this charming climate. I have conversed with many who have enjoyed the far favored climate of Italy, and they tell me that it will not compare with that of Hawaii. Don't, I beg you don't think we are living in a land of savages and darkness. No, no, the fair blossoms of an enlightened Christian civilization are fast opening in our midst, and you and I, I trust will live to see and taste their fruits. Perhaps it may not be possible to save the Hawaiian race from melting away, before the iron march of the sturdy Saxon, but one thing is certain, no people or power can ever extinguish the pure fire here kindled by the humble Missionary of New England, and these islands will ever be the brightest spot in the broad ocean that laves our coral shores. Hawaii is the sun of the Pacific and long will be.

Healthy and happy, my very dear friend, Mr. Charles Bishop of Sandy Hill, and myself dwell here as contentedly as two single men well can at this distance from home. We expect to remain here a few years longer and then return to our dear native land. I am just now anticipating a great deal of happiness in the prospect of meeting Miss Newton next Spring. Best I do not allow my feelings to run away with me in this matter, lest He whose thoughts are not as man's thoughts, may see fit in his wisdom to scatter the burning ashes of disappointment over the fair flowers that ardent hope has reared. Six months are yet to roll over us ere the vessel that is to bring her will arrive, and I have learned that it will not do to count upon the future. A wide ocean has yet to be traversed before we meet, and who will say that its wild waves may not swallow up that gallant ship and all she bears. I never cast my eye over that six months track, but what I turn away sick with the thought of what *may* be.

If all goes well, I expect we shall be married on or near next May Day, and presenting my best compliments to Miss Scott I beg to request the honor of her attendance on that interesting occasion. Come and be Bridesmaid, and you shall have one of the loveliest groomsman for a companion that lives. I mean my dear friend Bishop. Don't say that it is impossible for you to come, for by taking the steamer in April you can be here in good season. But whether you come or not, I hope you will not forget that I have invited you, or fail to give me due notice of *your* wedding.

What of my old school master Seth E. Gill? Through the public prints I learn that he is a Judge etc., and, notwithstanding the many

severe floggings he has given me, I am happy to hear that he is distinguishing himself. What of the Cleaveland family? I have not heard from them in years. What of Mrs. Houghton, my old crony George Cleaveland etc. etc.

By the Ship "Tsar," 200 days from Boston via Rio Janeiro & Tahiti, I have just recd my first letter from brother Cyrus. If you see him please give my love to him and all of his family and say that his letter shall receive immediate attention. This letter and your newspaper are all that I have recd from Buffalo, but I hope for better things from you in times to come. Your newspaper went on a regular voyage of discovery, and if it could speak, might perchance, cast "Omoo & Typee" [Herman Melville novels] all into the shade. From the U.S. it doubled Cape Horn and first landed at Valparaiso. From thence it took passage in a Chilean Vessel for Tahiti. At Tahiti it exchanged the Chilean vessel for a French Man of War, the "Sarcelle", and went to Callao and the city of Lima in Peru, and then by the same vessel came with a large American mail to Honolulu. But the stupid Frenchman, forgetting that he had a mail on Board, sailed without landing it, and carried the newspaper to Christmas Island, where after an absence of a month it returned to Honolulu and made a safe landing, all "tattered and torn" with the multitude of perils and hair breadth escapes that had befallen it both by sea and land. So far, I have never had any letters directed to me at the Sandwich Islands miscarry, but all my Oregon letters and papers are still on their way, or perchance have long since been devoured by some backwoodsman on the Columbia River. To lose letters at this distance from home is provoking beyond all measure.

My dear Miss (not to call you Kitty any longer) I beseech of you not to take offence at the freedom or length of my letter, and filled with a sense of injured dignity resolve never to write me) but sit down like a good girl, as you are, and taking the full benefit of the *lex talionis* [law of retaliation] pay me off with a regular long drubbing letter.

Hoping to receive that picture and a long family letter very soon, I make my best bow, dear Miss, and bid

Adieu

Yours Very Truly

W. L. Lee

Miss Caroline Scott
Buffalo, Erie County
New York

William Little Lee to Caroline Scott from Honolulu, September 28,
1849

Honolulu Sandwich Islands

28 Sept. 1849

My dear Kittie

I had the satisfaction this morning of welcoming your letter of April 15, 1849, and I hasten to answer it before the thrill of delight it gave me has passed away. What a good letter you have given me. So kind, newsy, sisterly and graceful. Without any of the formalities of a stranger, you walk right up to me, take me by the hand, and treat me as a brother. This ease and familiarity is just what I like, and with a most grateful bow, I beg you to accept my thanks for every line of your Eighteen pages.

Really then, the little Kittie of my early days weighs ninety five solid pounds! Very well done! This ranges near the weight I love best, namely, that of the darling Kitty of my older days. My little pet has just looked over my shoulder and swelling with importance, says "My weight is 110 pounds see"! You never saw such an ambitious little creature in reference to weight and height as my good spouse, and she is sure to take it in high dudgeon my comparing her with anything less than an elephant. I have a strong fancy that you and my *cara sposa* [dear wife] are much alike. Perhaps I am confirmed in that fancy by the sight before me, which is no less than my little Kitty Lee sitting in the large rocking chair with her feet curled up under a long white night gown as of yore sat my little Kittie Scott before the stove in the cold winter mornings of Sandy Hill.

Despite your unwillingness to officiate as bridesmaid, I am a married man. My precious darling came to my arms one bright Sabbath morning the 11th of March last, and passing over the scene of meeting, let me usher you into the spacious cabin of the good ship "Leland," where with the Parson [Rev. Samuel C. Damon] and a few friends, was performed the ceremony that made us one. Our courtship and marriage was a perfect romance, but thank God, the finale is that of *real* happiness. My partner (excuse me if I am somewhat foolish in speaking of her) is all a wife should be. Well may you say "Such a girl is worth having," Truly she is, and I hope by a life of tenderness and devotion to repay her for every sacrifice she has made. The trial she underwent was a severe one, but she knew how readily I would have braved wind, waves, fire and death in every shape for her; and casting off all foolish

pride launched forth, like a noble little woman, as she is. Kittie, believe me when I tell you that I am not only a *happy* man, but that after being nearly seven months married I can truly say, "The wife is a thousand times dearer than the bride."

How interesting your review of bygones was. I need not tell you. It carried me quite back to the rosy hours of boyhood and brought to mind the scenes of our early days in all the vividness of reality. The image of my playmate Kittie, is as fresh to my mind as ever, and fifteen years of separation have not been able to obliterate a single look or feature. Your delicate form cunning little eyes, rosy cheeks and sweet mouth come up to me with smiles and half tempt—ahem! I had quite forgotten that I was a married man.

The picture of your father is very lifelike and pleasant. A man of sixty and yet how active! I fancy I can see his soldier like form moving with the elastic step that once trod the walks of good old Sandy Hill, and his countenance luminous with all that mirth and cheerfulness that so charmed us little ones. Turned German has he! To see your father buried in Germanic poetry, theology and philosophy in all its transcendental ramifications is too much even for my imagination. Your account of his studies and acquirements during the past six years fills me with equal astonishment and mortification. I blush to say that I have dabbled in three or four languages and know nothing of any. However the labors of so old a man as your father excite my emulation; and if spared to his age, I hope to rival him as a linguist. For the high opinion your father has been fit to express of me I am both proud and grateful; and be pleased to remember me to him with no ordinary affection.

To your dear mother, present my love, and make the best apology for what I said in my last that the case will admit of. My memory has brightened wonderfully since the receipt of your letter, and if I had but little to remember her for last October, I certainly have much now. May she live many years without finding life a burden. What a world of comfort I received in hearing such good news from my dear Netty. I *should* say Mrs. Cobb I suppose, but bygones cling to me with such tenacity that I cannot think or speak of your family otherwise than as I *knew* them. Remember me to Mrs. Cobb with every kind wish for a long and continued life of happiness. I smile whenever I think of that fine boy of hers, 24 years old! and ask myself, can it be that Netty will ever become the mother of my interesting little correspondent. What pretty names Harriet has given her three children. "Little Netty," I select for my pet,

and just step in—give her a kiss and say it came from Uncle Will. Don't forget, by the way, to leave my kindest regards for her mother.

You ask for an account of my voyage. It is too monotonous—too much like most voyages around Cape Horn that you read of, to possess the least interest. I kept a full journal, however, which the passengers raised funds to publish, but I was not vain enough to give my consent. Not to trouble you with details, I would say we left home in midwinter under favorable auspices, and were told we should be in the Sandwich Islands in four months and Oregon in six. A few days out, in crossing the Gulf Stream we met a severe storm which swept our decks carrying away our spare spars and every boat but the long boat. As soon as seasickness would permit, we crawled out on deck and faced head winds with cold spray until we neared the Cape de Verd Islands. From there to the Equator we had bearable weather, and then came a succession of calms which putrified our water, maddened with thirst and exhausted our patience. "Calms breed storms," and so with us; for our calms bred storms both within and without. First, we had a mutiny, which ended in throwing our mate more than half overboard—then a storm accompanied with lightning which struck the poor man almost dead, leaving him a cripple, and carried away part of our weather bulwarks. Three months from home we anchored in the bay of St. Catherines on the coast of Brazil, where we ate fruits, shot birds and monkeys, saw sights and enjoyed life as I never did before. The release from our pen on board ship was delightful beyond expression. Every soul of us felt as if Columbus like we could fall down and kiss our mother earth. Here we left our mate, wife and two children, also a Miss Peabody, (a damsel the wrong side of fifty) and in June 1846 put to sea bound round that dreadful Cape Horn. I would have given worlds to have been home, but pride would not let me turn back. From St. Catherines nothing worthy of note occurred until we fell in with storms and ice-bergs off the Cape. For more than a month we were enveloped in snow ice and darkness. Our days were only five hours long at the best and for sixteen of them we drifted about entirely at the mercy of the winds and waves without once being able to catch a glimpse of the sun. Bibles were used then by hands that never opened one before. On the 17th day I caught a peep of the sun, took several observations, and the Captain and I then succeeded in finding our true position, which was far to the south and east. The weather mended—all hands turned to and cleared the vessel of ice—set sail and doubled the Cape. Without fire or warm food our sufferings were very great, and nothing but the kindness of God kept us from a grave in the ocean. You cannot conceive of our joy at the expect-

tation of entering the Pacific where we supposed the winds just ruffled the face of the waters. Imagine our disappointment then, when I tell you that after leaving Cape Horn we had nothing but storms, head winds and rain for a month. Not one fair day did we see until we approached Juan Fernandes, when we took the pleasant Trades and came bounding to Honolulu right merrily. After making the longest passage on record and being abandoned as lost for some months, before we arrived at the Sandwich Islands in safety. We expected to go on to Oregon after obtaining some refreshments, but, upon examination, our vessel was found to be so badly injured as not to be able to make her necessary repairs in three months. We concluded to seek some safer conveyance—stopped—and here we are.

You ask my opinion of the Missionaries. Well you shall have it. I never met their equals. Their line of conduct comes nearer the path marked out by the meek and lowly One than that of any other Christians I ever had the fortune to know. Meek, humble, kind and self-sacrificing, they seem to live for God and their fellow men. All that these Islands are is owing to the good influence of the Missionaries. Mr. Hunt [Timothy Dwight Hunt], the gentleman whose sister you say lives near you, left the Mission some 18 months since and is now in San Francisco doing much good. He is a man of decided talent and one of my cherished correspondents.

This nation will soon pass away and give place to the more sturdy Saxon. The white man with his civilization seems to carry effeminacy and death into every savage nation he visits. Depopulation is at work throughout all Polynesia. The measles have decimated the Hawaiian race within the last year and we fear more epidemics will complete its ruin. Alas! for the poor Hawaiian. My heart bleeds at the thought of his approaching destiny!

My yarn is already too long and I must bid you adieu. Before I go, however, allow me to introduce you to Mrs. Lee, to whom I shall hand this sheet with the request that she give you some particulars respecting our home etc. I will send you and brother Cyrus a few curiosities by the next good opportunity.

Hoping to hear from you often, I close by saying as a friend just said to me—"Happiness, *much* happiness to you! and if this is not enough, *all you wish and all you want forever!*"

I remain, my dear Kittie,
Ever and Truly Yours,
Wm L. Lee

Catherine N. Lee to Caroline Scott, from Honolulu, September 28, 1849

My dear Miss Scott

Trusting you will deem my husband's request as sufficient apology for adding a few—coils to the yarn he has already pronounced too long, I will introduce you to our Pacific home. Honolulu as you may already know, is a town of some twelve thousand inhabitants, eleven twelfths of whom are natives. The remainder is composed of Americans with a sprinkling of English, Spanish, Chinese, and French.

Unlike good old Sandy Hills in days of yore, Honolulu is by no means deficient in "stated preaching," and two large coral churches with a snug little Bethel are weekly filled with attentive, orderly congregations. Our *stationary* society is composed of missionaries, the families of a few merchants, professional gentlemen and foreign representatives, but there is seldom a time when it is not enlivened by the presence of naval officers from different countries. This society is intelligent, social and refined, and could you drop down in the midst of one of our brilliant parties you might easily imagine it a gathering of the elite of our own land. Scarcely a house in Honolulu is destitute of a Piano, and there have been no less than four fine instruments at our boarding place since I have been here. Our house [Washington Place] is a large white coral building surrounded by broad pillared verandas into which open by glass doors the rooms of each story. It is situated in a beautiful grove adorned with every procurable variety of tropical trees, and is certainly one of the most charming residences you can imagine. We board in the family of a widow lady, (Mrs. Dominis) [Mary Dominis, wife of Captain John Dominis who was lost at sea], who runs the estate, and so long as we can enjoy such a delightful home here, I scarcely think we shall burden ourselves with house-keeping cares.

Of our recent disturbances with the French I suppose you have already heard, but I will give you a few particulars concerning it, at the risk of its being a thrice told tale. On the twelfth of last month [August 12, 1849] the French Admiral De Tromelin* arrived here in the ship "Poursuivante," and he in concert with Mr. Dillon [Guillaume Patrice Dillon] the Consul of France, made ten demands of this Government,

* Legoarrant De Tromelin, a rear admiral in the French navy, conducted a series of "reprisals" against the Hawaiian Kingdom after presenting 10 demands drawn up by the French consul Dillon.

threatening if they were not complied with to enforce them at the cannon's mouth.

The principal of those demands were—First that the duty on French brandy should be reduced. By the treaty with France the Hawaiian government was allowed to place what duty it saw fit on liquors, provided it did not amount to a total prohibition. So far is this from the case that our town is flooded with the vile stuff.—Second, that the French language should be introduced into all business affairs between the Hawaiian government and French citizens. The law requires that the business of the Departments of State shall be conducted in Hawaiian or English, for the plain reason that those languages are universally spoken on the islands. There are not a dozen French on all Hawaii, and to grant this claim would not only require a host of interpreters, but would afford every other nation a right to make a similar demand. But I will not enter into these claims—suffice it to say that brandy and Catholicism were the foundation of every one of them, and the government determined that neither of those commodities should be forced down its throat, mildly but firmly resisted. After exhausting his catalogue of threat and bravado, the Admiral landed three hundred armed marines who took the Fort, broke up the cannons, emptied a large quantity of powder into the sea, cut down trees, rifled the Governor's house [Kekūanaō'a], and finally sailed off taking with them a number of ancient relics and the King's beautiful yacht, the "Kamehameha 3rd." The King [Kamehameha III] and cabinet, well aware that peace was the best policy, ordered that no resistance should be made and these gallant Franks perpetrated their outrage without a finger being raised against them. On their own shoulders rests the entire odium of the affair. Every foreign Consul sent in a protest against their proceedings, and they left loaded with the execration of the entire community not excepting their own countrymen here resident. You must not think this untoward affair had annoyed us personally, for not a soul here felt the least alarm, and visiting, business, etc. went on just as usual.

The California fever of which you speak has had its course *here* too, but the crisis has long since passed. Many who left here filled with extravagant anticipations have returned wiser but sadder men, and others have digged themselves graves where they sought only for gold. Many will acquire fortunes in this new Ophir**, but the number of dis-

** Ophir is a region mentioned in the Old Testament as the source of gold.

appointed victims will be fearfully great. My husband is receiving continually the most pressing solicitations to go to San Francisco with the prospect of soon realizing a fortune in his profession, but as yet he remains unmoved. He would not take *me* to such a Pandemonium and he will not go without me. Besides he is laying up two or three thousand a year and with the excellent investment he can make of his funds (legal interest alone is 12 per cent), he thinks he is accumulating fortune rapidly enough.

You mention the possibility of these islands resting under the folds of the stripes and stars. It is a vain possibility, for Great Britain and France would resist such an accession. As an American I should most heartily deprecate that acquisition. I think we have yet to learn whether California will not prove a deadly curse to its new owner.

William has written you such a dismal account of his voyage, that I shall send you a paper giving a slight sketch of *mine* that you may know there is sunshine as well as storm at sea. I claim no credit for "braving the dangers of the deep," for I have had from very childhood a perfect mania for voyaging. The trial of which my husband speaks was merely a struggle between pride and my better self. It was the question—"Shall I go to him, or allow him to give up his business and come home for me?" Thank God I decided as I did! It is with a feeling of bitter self contempt that I now look back upon that same "struggle."

My husband retains so vivid a recollection of you that I can hardly believe thirteen years have passed away since you saw each other. He says he has changed very little since boyhood in person, and I think in character he remains the same. At any rate, as a man he is industrious and energetic, rigidly upright, but generous and warm hearted, and I believe those traits are said to have characterized him in childhood. I can see you laughing over that portrait and saying a wife is no judge, for she will of course speak *con amore*. You must make us a visit one of these days Miss Kittie and decide for yourself. To your manner of addressing him, I do not at all "object," for you were certainly "dear" to him before I even knew I had such a nice cousin.

Mrs. Gould (the Julia Morgan of my girlish days), I remember perfectly well. I was not much acquainted with her, but she was an intimate friend of one of my cousins, and she used frequently to speak of her with much affection. Please remember us to her very kindly, and tell her that my home for a long time before I left Albany was in the family of Mr. Wm. Newton and that my room-mate was her old friend Mattie.

Well, Miss Kittie, I think I have trespassed long enough upon your patience for an uninvited correspondent, and with the hope you will not only avail yourself of the privilege of which you speak with regard to "a married man," but that you will take the same with a married man's wife.

I remain
Very sincerely yours
C. N. Lee

Catherine Lee to Caroline Scott, no date

My dear Miss Scott

I had intended to fill a sheet to you & say a few words to brother Cyrus in this letter, but William has just told me it must go immediately, as a vessel is about to sail for Panama, so I must dwarf my lines to the compass of a note. My moiety [portion] of William's letter met with a cordial welcome and I hope to be the frequent recipient of such favors.

So you were "the first love" of my fickle spouse! You Miss Kittie, when he had so many times assured me I was the only woman who had ever touched his stony heart! You whom he has deluded me into the belief he admired from a fancied resemblance to my unworthy self! What a whirlwind this "big grownup" rascal has yet to reap from the luckless seed you have sown! By the way would you have any objection to favoring me with your ideas as to the expediency of, agreeability etc. of marrying widowers. The question is of some importance to me under the circumstances, as I have a strong presentiment I shall not survive my liege lord.

On looking over William's letter I see he has given you all the items of interest I could muster; so you will lose nothing but a tedious infliction by my lack of time.

You ask if it is thought that Admiral de Tromelin acted by order of his government in the Honolulu outrages. I believe it is—at all events the French government sanctioned them after they were committed, which was just as dastardly. Have you read Jarves' History of the Sandwich Islands? That will give you a chapter or two respecting the exploits of the "Grand nation" in the Pacific. It has long been a favorite plan of my husband's to spend a year or two in Paris, and he intends doing so on our way to America. Perhaps we shall like the French somewhat bet-

ter after a domestication in their metropolis. You see I have but an inch of blank space left, and I must say adieu though I would willingly chat with you an hour longer. Very truly yrs. C. N. Lee

William Little Lee to Caroline Scott, from Honolulu, November 23, 1850.

Honolulu
23 Nov. 1850

My dear Kitty

Your interesting letter of Jan'y 24, 1850 was duly received, and this being one of my leisure Saturday evenings, I have seated myself for one of those tantalizing chats on paper, with one whom I so much wish to talk with face to face. How much I *would* give to spend a few hours with you in recounting the little incidents of our childish days—incidents which you as well as myself seem to have treasured in a choice niche of memory. When shall I have that pleasure? Next year? No, nor the next, but, God willing, sometime. I hold myself in readiness to return home whenever my dear Kate says go, but as she concurs in my opinion that it is advisable to remain here until we can take the overland route, via China, Egypt, the Mediterranean and Europe, perchance we shall not meet until you have become Madam _____ with certain sequences unnecessary to mention. Probably we shall see Father land again in four years.

You say an old Sybil once told you, that you were destined to cross the ocean, and though I do not wish to rob your parents or other friends of your pleasant companionship, yet I trust that oracle may prove a truthful one, if, as you hint, it may waft you to our shores. Sister Mary says, you are a facsimile of my own dear Kate, and if this be true, certainly the fear you express that your arrival will discolor the pleasant pictures I have formed of you, is quite unnecessary. Still, I much doubt your ever getting so far astray as Honolulu, for that "nephew," whom you labor so hard to convince me is too much of a *brother* to be a lover, or some other happy fellow will probably bring you to an anchor before you are fairly out of port.

How blessed your family has been! Your good father has been spared so long to comfort, guide and cheer you—your dear mother sustained as it were by a miracle—Netty well married and happy—and Harriet "fat and fair—gay and cheerful," with a husband all kindness,

and children charming and good. Give little Netty Havens another Kiss and remember me to her stately mother with the kindest regards.

What a thriving, busy, important mart Buffalo has become. I wonder if she feels one throb of gratitude in her strong young heart to the meek but gospel-lacking village that has bequeathed her so many of her worthiest citizens. You have the honor of giving us a President, and you may well be proud of him. Fillmore [President of the United States Millard Fillmore] I always liked, though I am no whig, and I rejoice in the success which has thus far attended his administration. The admission of California is grateful news to all Americans in the Pacific, and especially do we of the Sandwich Islands rejoice at this approach of our native land.

I am very grateful for your information respecting the scattered Sandy Hillers, for I like to watch the rise and progress of these stray pilgrims. Scott Sherwood, of whom you speak, was my chum for some years, and I know him *au fond*. He was talented, ambitious, and moral, but I hear that, like too many of earth's gifted ones, he has been nearly drowned in the cup.

I have just shipped a box per the Brig "Noble," which sailed this afternoon for New Bedford, addressed to brother Cyrus, and filled with curiosities for you and his children. It is a small box, however, and you must not expect anything wonderful. I have some large or rather long curios, which I found it impossible to send, because I had not enough small articles to fill in a box of the requisite size and length. One of these days, I will make up another box for Buffalo, and then you shall receive them.

There is nothing of general importance in this part of the world worth relating, but we are daily expecting a visit from the cholera which has reached San Francisco, and another from the French who are at Panama. Which of these evils is most to be dreaded is not difficult to determine, for we have more contempt than fear for the chivalrous Gauls. You may think it strange to hear me speak thus of the brethren of Lafayette, but when you know them as well as we of the Pacific, you will agree with us, that they are utterly devoid of all justice, especially when dealing with such a weak nation as this. Our Mission to France has entirely failed and our reliance is upon the justice of our cause and the support of the United States and England.

I have just discovered in looking over your letter that you ask for autographs. I will see that you have some, and will send them either in this or the next letter. I have some fine specimens of the white branch

coral, so common at home, but I did not send it, thinking you were supplied with that variety. If there are any shells in the collection I send to the children that you would like, let me know, and in the next box for home, I will forward you some.

You ask if our Mr. Bishop is any relative of Mrs. Dewey's first husband. He is a nephew. He is Collector General of the Kingdom, and was married last summer to a young half-caste chiefess [Princess Bernice Pauahi]. Bishop is a fine looking and noble young fellow, who was my *compagnon du voyage* and has been my bosom friend for years.

A friend of mine has just asked me who Mr. William Treat of Buffalo is. I echo the question, only knowing that he is the compiler of that excellent little book, "Angel Voices."

Remember me to your parents and sisters—brother Cyrus & family—write often, and believe me

Yours Ever Truly
W. L. Lee

Catherine Lee to Caroline Scott, 23 November 1850. Cross writing in the left margin of all four pages of W. L. Lee's letter.

Dear Miss Kittie

Will you please remember me affectionately to brother Cyrus & his family and tell him I fully intended writing him by this opportunity. William wrote a long letter to him in the box, & I sent a note to the children at the same time. Yours etc. C. N. L.

I have just thought of something in the way of a curiosity that I wish had suggested itself before—viz a book of pressed specimens of our flowers & leaves. In our own yard we have over twenty varieties of trees, including the olive, tamarind, pomegranate, guava, india rubber, lime, algeroba, etc. I will arrange a book for you & the children to forward by the next good opportunity. When you see Mrs. Gould please remember me to her affectionately. I hope if cousin Mat does come to Buffalo she will not fulfill her promise of bringing my daguerreotype for my face, which is a very plain one at best, is most distressingly set forth in that same likeness. I would fain spare your compassion my much esteemed but unseen friend.

Kate

You ask if I ever received your first letter—I answer no, and I am sorry for it, as no doubt said missive contained many a rare tid bit and jewel. Please send me another in the place of it.

William Little Lee to Caroline Scott, Honolulu, December 8, 1851

Honolulu Dec. 8, 1851

My dear Kittie

I have been your debtor since last June for a most excellent letter, and should have answered it long ere this, but for a pressure of business and an absence of several months from home. This apology however, I know is an insufficient one, and hereafter I promise to be a more punctual correspondent.

I am gratified to hear the small present I sent you last fall afforded you the least pleasure, and am more than repaid by the simple expression of your thanks. We intended to have sent you and our little nieces another small box this season; but on drumming up our articles, found we had scarcely enough for a sizable box. The first vessel that sails next fall will bear you an addition to your cabinet. Most we have worth sending comes from China, that land of one-toed feet, fans, and fixins, where the people stand still, not having moved one inch since the days of Confucius. Though so obstinately stationary, they are the most wonderful of all the sons of Adam. We see much of these Celestials at the Islands, and they are a never-ceasing mystery.

The news of your illness during that long siege from July to October—the constant care—the unsleeping watchfulness—the tender love of your honored father, and your disappointment in not visiting the dear old home of our childhood, touched me keenly. My memory often travels back to the “Old Scott House,” now profaned by a shoe shop on each side of it, and mourns over the departed scenes of other days. I know but little of Sandy Hill of late, for its good people are miserable correspondents, and as for learning any thing from its “Herald,” a stray number of which now and then falls in my way, the idea is absurd. Did you ever see such a trashy milk-and-water sheet as our worthy Elisha sends forth. The weak—poverty—stricken fellow never has an idea above “Jabe,” “Cy Stevens,” and that phantom “quarter” which he has been chasing and cornering for the last ten years.

Our oriental tour is yet, you know, three years in the future, but rest assured that when we make it, I shall bear you in mind, over sea and

land—in garden and desert—amid Jew and Gentile, and if possible grant your request.

At present I am tied down to these Islands by business which I cannot well leave; but I am one of those obedient husbands, oftner read of than seen, and shall be on the wing for home at the first intimation of such a desire from my good spouse. We are not as far out of the world as we were a short time since, for by the Steamers, via Panama & San Francisco, we receive our home mail regularly every two weeks. All our friends have to do to communicate with us, is to write their letters—drop them in the P.O. at any country village, and in 50 days they are in our hands at Honolulu. Many thanks to your friend, Postmaster General Hall.

Your items of family news were very interesting. I am glad to hear that your mother is so cheerful a sufferer, and that the hand of time rests so lightly on your dear father. Remember me to both of them, and indeed to all of your family, those happy sisters and their “good husbands” among the rest, with much affection. Certainly that law firm of Fillmore, Hall, and Haven, has been a marvel in the way of success. And Buffalo too is a most remarkable place—yet in its infancy, it exhibits the bone and muscle of manhood, and displays a vigor and enterprise that defies competition. I hear you have had a destructive fire lately, but I trust neither your father or Cyrus have suffered thereby.

Your picture of William Treat was a *Treat* indeed. What a sad fate you predict for the poor unfortunate as a penalty for old-bachelorhood. Fie Kittie! one would think from your severe judgment you were an old maid, which I know you are not, and never will be.

In the line of news I have nothing calculated to interest a lady, and I leave that department to Mrs. Lee. I may remark, however, that our damsels have not yet taken to “Bloomers,” [short loose trousers gathered at the knee] though some of our matrons have, probably from the force of *habit*. I’m a strong Bloomerite myself, for I think the proposed reform a sensible one. The talk of annexation grows louder, but I do not imagine we shall become a portion of Uncle Sam’s dominions in a day, though we may in time.

Hoping to hear from you very soon & to learn of your health and prosperity

I remain
Yours Very faithfully
W. L. Lee

Catherine Lee to Caroline Scott, Honolulu, December 8, 1851

Honolulu Dec. 8/51

My dear Miss Scott

I wonder if you will allow me to shelter my delinquency in writing behind the broad apology & etc. my husband has made. I deserve no such consideration for I have abundance of leisure, but I thought a communication from me would be of little value in your eyes unless it figured in the rear of one of *his* epistles. I write you know, just to gently remind you that this ardent admirer of yours—this living embodiment of “organic remains” is no longer a bachelor—in short that he has a “little Kittie” of his own who watches his outgoings and incomings with an Argus eye. You do not believe that—do you? The resemblance of which you speak has often been remarked to me and struck William very forcibly when he first saw me in my grown up days. Sister Mary (Mrs. Hunt) who has seen you more recently, also thinks us exceedingly alike. What we are mutually to gain from this resemblance is not clear to me, but is certainly something of a coincidence.

I have been away from Honolulu quite a time visiting our Plantation [Lihu'e Plantation on Kaua'i]. William was obliged to be from home three long months on a “Land Commission” tour of the Islands, and as it was too fatiguing and unpleasant journey for a lady to undertake, I accepted the invitation of the Marshalls (my old ship-mates) [Mr. and Mrs. James F. B. Marshall], and went down with them to Kauai. Our Plantation I believe I have never described to you. It is a tract of twenty five hundred acres of well-wooded, well-watered land with between two and three hundred acres of sugar cane ready for grinding this month. Eighty native laborers are now employed upon it and a large number of coolies or Chinese operatives are expected in a short time. Mr. Marshall, a partner in the Plantation, has built upon it a Chinese house and removed trees, and he has certainly one of the most charming homes on the Islands. His house is a low, but rather extensive building, commanding a fine view of the sea in front, and inland of a magnificent range of mountains. The trees are principally *kukui* or “candle nut” trees, from the nuts of which the natives obtain their oil, bread-fruit, *ohia*, or the native apple, *koa*, the Island mahogany, and a very few orange trees and cocoa-nuts. The under-growth consists of arrow-root, ginger, sandal wood, bamboo, and a variety of shrubs to me unknown. In the way of fruits we have the *ohia*, guava, pine-apple, papaya, banana, oranges and cocoa-nut. The latter is not considered eatable here in the

state you see it home. They are picked before they harden, and the soft, white pulp is eaten with a spoon. My visit I enjoyed as well as a woman *could* in the absence of her husband. Our host had other guests most of the time during my stay, and with the aide of their pleasant society, a fine library and one of Hertz' superb pianos within doors, and pic-nics, sails on the River, horse-back rides, and excursions to the neighboring Plantation to give us a taste of out-doors enjoyment, the dreaded three months passed swiftly and cheerily away. I found Honolulu rather quiet on my return as she had just run the gauntlet of a series of balls, pic-nics, etc. given by and for the Admiral and other officers of two English "men of war," which left our port a while since. There are three "men of war" now in the harbor—two of them American and the third a British vessel [H.B.M. *Daedalus*], commanded by Captain Wellesley, a nephew of the Duke of Wellington. Last evening we attended a small party given for Capt. Hudson of the "Vincennes." I had intended giving you another leaf but my husband has just come in with an imperative summons "to close directly as the mail is about to leave." Hoping you will excuse such an abrupt leave-taking.

I remain very truly yours. Kate Lee

William Little Lee to Caroline Scott from Shady Nook, Island of Kaua'i, March 15, 1854

Shady Nook, Island of Kauai
15 March 1854

My dear Kittie Scott

You will smile perhaps when I tell you that your pleasant letter of Dec. 8, 1853 came to hand on the 11th of March 1854. The fifth anniversary of my marriage, and just as I was in the midst of a divorce case. Why, what of it? you'll ask. Nothing perhaps, but I simply state the fact without comment, leaving it for you and the Fortune Tellers to claim such inferences as you please.

You will see that my letter is dated at Shady Nook, and naturally inquire where is this. Well, Shady Nook, which I think should be called Sunny Nook, is one of the brightest little spots in the world, situated on the island of Kauai, about a 100 miles from Honolulu, and, is the residence of my dear friend Judge Bond [Edward P. Bond]. To this sunny nook I have fled from the heat of the metropolis to breathe the sweet trades that blow so kind and gently over this Eden Country. In

other words, I have come here on the sad errand of seeking health, which I long since squandered.

I am sorry to see by your letter that you are something of an invalid, with "a tendency to colds and a cough," and yet half glad of it too; for if you had never been sick, I should bore you to death with this tale of my complaints. Invalids you know, especially pulmonary ones, are very apt to recount the history of their ills from the first sneeze of a cold down to the present miserable moment, and should never any but invalids for listeners. Poor Kittie, I pity you, but you must submit to my inflictions, so stir the fire a little, in that "cold pitiless winter" you tell about, and make yourself as easy as possible, while I relate my ills to you from the charming Tropics, with the green earth smiling and blossoming around me.

Well, in August last I broke down from excessive labor in-doors, and the care of small pox patients out-doors, and for three months was kept on my back, subjected to all the medicinal & physical evils you can imagine. Was I unhappy? you ask—not for a moment. How could I be with such a dear wife to bend over me, to comfort me, to care for every little want, real or imaginary, and to cheer me up with kind words and kinder nursing? Under her hands I have grown into strength again, & am now permitted to go abroad without her, though I should be much better were she with me. The fact is, I'm a weak child, hardly able to withstand the temptation of pastries, puddings and good living, and need a guardian to watch me constantly.

Are you fond of riding on horseback? If so, you should be here to gallop over this beautiful country with me, and feast on the mingled beauty of ocean, mountain, stream and plain. I am in the saddle every morning before sunrise for a six or eight mile ride, and a thousand times I have wished I had some nice little woman by my side, who could take care of her horse and *keep up*.

"Did you know one Herman Patten?" Yes, and was heartily ashamed of him too. He brought me a letter of introduction from San Francisco—represented himself as a familiar friend and frequent visitor in your family—knew brother Cyrus, etc. etc., and endeavored to impose himself upon the public as my particular friend. But his swell, swagger and disgraceful conduct in Honolulu soon banished him from all decent society, and he left here heartily despised.

"What think of you taking shelter under the wing of our big Eagle?" Very well indeed, if at the same time, we can avoid his *talons*. Perhaps the Giant Douglas [U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas from Illinois] will condescend to tack us on to his infamous Nebraska Bill.

Leaving the last page to be filled by my dearest Kittie, and with much love to your dear parents and all the family, I remain as ever

Your sincere friend

W. L. Lee

Catherine N. Lee to Caroline Scott, from Honolulu, April 16, 1854. Letter written on last page of William's letter and "crossways" on the first page.

Honolulu April 16, 1854

My dear Miss Scott

More than a month since Mr. Lee brought up this unfinished letter from Kauai and as the mail is about leaving, I must add my quota to the sheet and send it to the Post Office. I am very glad you received the box at last, though I fear its contents were too much injured to make it an object even to pay Express charges. The vessel in which it was sent sprung a leak and was condemned at Tahiti and I was so confident the box would never reach its destination, that I had concluded not to subject you to the disappointment of knowing it was ever despatched. Did not everything in it bear the marks of having been saturated with salt water?

While I think of it, I must deliver a message to you from my next door neighbor, Mr. Angel [Benjamin Franklin Angel, U.S. Consul to Honolulu]. He sends his kind regards and wishes to know if you remember traveling under his protection from Detroit to Buffalo? Mrs. Angel leaves tomorrow for the U.S. intending to return another year if annexation does not render her husband's recall necessary. By the way, I am very sorry you "deprecate so earnestly" our admission into the Union, and I assure you that though *at first* we might be a little "incongruous," we don't intend to be the least bit "discordant." Don't be afraid of us, for we shall behave most beautifully. My husband has always remained a true American. As he declined taking the oath of allegiance, the King made him a denizen.

After boarding for five years, I am now in the midst of preparations for house-keeping. We are as pleasantly situated as boarders can be, having five rooms and a nice garden all to ourselves, but we begin to feel that it is time for us to contribute our mite to the entertainment of the community as house keepers. Our new home is a large coral house

with verandas on each side, extensive tasteful grounds with plenty of trees and shrubbery, and is altogether I think the most charming place in or about Honolulu. Will you not come and make us a visit Miss Kitiie if for nothing else than to rid yourself of that "tendency to cold and cough." You must not point to my husband's illness as a bad example of the sanitary effect of this climate for if he had drugged himself with poison he could not have taken more effective means to kill himself. During the prevalence of the pestilence he took the charge of between fifty and sixty of the loathsome small-pox patients, necessarily crowding the labors of the day into unwholesome night hours. *Of course* he caught the variolus [smallpox] fever in the height of which he took a cold (by sleeping in a strong current of air) which settled on his lungs. The moment he could crawl from his room he resumed the care of the miserable sufferers together with his other multifarious duties, paying no attention to his threatening lungs. Only a miracle could have saved him from the sad effects of his recklessness and if he but lays his dearly bought lesson to heart, I shall feel that his sickness has been a blessing in disguise. My husband, though perhaps a wife should not say it, is one of the most generous, unselfish, self-sacrificing persons I ever saw, and he never seems to regard either his own time, comfort or health when the interests of others are concerned. Every one here says that he performs as much labor as half a dozen people ought to *prudently*, and by far the greater part of his work (his arduous duties as President of the Land Commission Board for example), is wholly gratuitous. The poor kanakas in their figurative language call him their "City of Refuge," and it is amusing sometimes to read the address upon his letters such as "To the friend of the poor and those who have no helper"—the "Father of the poor and fatherless," and "Friend of the widow and orphan," etc. I never said so much in my dear husband's praise before, and I must hurry this to the office before he comes home, or it will never see the outside of my room. You, the affectionately remembered friend of his boyish days, will pardon me I know for whispering this much in your own private ear. Crossing letters I abominate and hoping you will excuse me if I have made either William's or my own writing illegible. I remain—

Very truly yr friend
Kate N. Lee

Catherine Lee to Caroline Scott from N.Y., September 8, 1855

New York, Sept. 8, 1855

My dear Miss Kittie

Since my return I have rummaged among my papers to find you the promised autograph of our young King [Kamehameha IV], but can scare up nothing but letters, which might not, for political reasons, to meet a stranger's eye, except the shabby note which I enclose, written to me a day or two before we left Honolulu. He is a fine epistolizer and in justice to him I ought to say that the enclosed is a poor specimen either of his style or chirography [handwriting].

William bore the fatigue of our long journey remarkably well and has now gone on to Boston, leaving me to spend a few days with New York friends. Please remember me very kindly to your father and to your sister & her family, and believe me

Very cordially yours

Kate N. Lee