



E. B. & E. C. Kellogg.

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Philander Chase

BISHOP CHASE'S
REMINISCENCES:

AN

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

SECOND EDITION:

COMPRISING A HISTORY OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE AUTHOR'S LIFE
TO A. D. 1847.

WITH A PORTRAIT AND FOUR ENGRAVINGS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## FAMILIAR LETTERS OF THE WRITER AND HIS WIFE.

BUT it is time to stop in narrating events from memory, long since past. Truth is better attained by reading original letters, written at the time or soon after the facts took place. One of this sort has been preserved, descriptive of the scenes in the writer's life at his first coming with his family to Ohio. It is as follows, and was sent to his son, then with his uncle in Vermont.

*“Worthington, July 10, 1817.*

“MY DEAR SON GEORGE:—Yesterday your mother and myself took a ride on horseback from this place to Columbus, where, at the post-office, I found a letter from you, dated the 30th of May. If you had known the abundance of mercies which the good God was outpouring on us, in affording facilities, almost to a miracle, to your father, mother, uncle and aunt, and little brother, on their journey hither, you might have spared yourself the trouble of that part of your good letter which related to them.

“While at Columbus, before my visit to Cincinnati, I addressed your mother, supposing her at Clarence, near Buffalo. My letter was dated the 12th of May, and just said, ‘Send the goods to Sandusky—be yourself at Cleveland in about a month from this.’ This done, I went on my journey by the way of Dayton, Lebanon, Cincinnati, Williamsburg, Newmarket, Chillicothe, Circleville, Lancaster, and thence to Columbus again, as I believe I told you.

“At this place I performed service the first Sunday in June. The Monday and Tuesday following I agreed to become the rector of St. John's Church in this place, Trinity Church in Columbus, and St. Peter's Church in Delaware, fifteen miles to the north, a county seat; purchased me five lots in this village and a farm of one hundred and fifty acres of land, within half a mile—both sides of the road—on the way to Columbus; best of land, sixty acres under cultivation, with a good apple and peach orchard—fruit plenty—no

buildings—price two thousand and fifty dollars, one third down, the rest in two annual payments.

“I received from the trustees of Worthington academy the appointment of principal, to oversee the destinies of that institution.

“Wednesday I went to Delaware; Thursday to Norton, on the frontiers of the United States land, bordering on the Indian possessions, ten miles from Delaware. Returned and preached at Delaware on Saturday; and on Sunday, the 8th of June, preached, performed divine service, and administered the holy communion in Berkshire, a settlement about fifteen miles north-east of Worthington, where there is another of the parishes to which I shall occasionally minister till they can be otherwise supplied.

“Monday, the 9th, set my face towards Cleveland, to fulfil my appointment with your mother. My course was north-east; travelled twenty-two miles through a bad road to Frederick, a respectable settlement and village on the head waters of Licking river, which empties into the Muskingum at Zanesville. Tuesday, rode through a fine, dry chestnut and oak country, thirty-six miles to the Lake Fork of the Mehicken, which empties into the White Woman at Coshocton. On Wednesday rode towards Worster twelve miles to dinner, through a country the same as yesterday. Here I took a northerly direction, through a tract of land just beginning to be settled, and proceeded as far as Harrisville, seventeen miles—soil very rich and the roads muddy. Next day, Thursday, went twelve miles to Medina, destined as the county seat—new, but fast settling—soil very fine, and lying beautifully. Next day, Friday, held service in Medina and rode on to Liverpool, eight miles, where again we held service the same day. Saturday, rained all day; rode only two miles to another lodging-place. Sunday, rode in the morning about four miles to Columbia, where live a number of the brothers of the Rev. A. Bronson, of Vermont. Here I preached all day, and was much cheered with the good prospects of our primitive Church.

“Monday, 16th of June, 1817—a day marked in my calendar with peculiar emphasis—I mounted my horse for Cleve-

land, now twenty miles off. I was in company with Esq. Bronson. Crossing the Rocky river twice without any accident, though the water was deep and no bridge, I found we were on the ridge road, which is all along the lakes sandy and very good. My horse, somehow or other, kept the lead, and went very, very fast. 'What's the matter?' said Mr. B. 'Are you riding for a wager?' 'Something more important,' said I. 'I can GUESS what that is,' said he. At half past one I dismounted from my horse at the mouth of the Cuyahoga river, right opposite Cleveland.

"Safe in the boat—'Pray, Mr. Boatman, have you any late arrivals from Buffalo?' 'Yes, the Michigan lies off, and has just brought her passengers ashore.' 'Were there any ladies among them?' 'Yes.' 'Were there two, who, with a young gentleman, had the charge of a young child?' 'Yes, they have just gone up into town.'

"'Pray, landlord,' said I, as I entered an inn, 'do you know, or can you tell me, who—where—I can find——' 'Your family, Mr. Chase? Yes, we both know you and them; they are at a tavern, safe and waiting for you.' It seems my arrival had, in a few minutes, been noised from one end of the village to the other. Soon had I your dear mother, and little brother, and all, in my embrace, blessing God in one breath and asking a thousand questions in another.

"Your mother had, about a fortnight before her arrival at Cleveland, received my letter mentioned above; and, with her usual expedition in accomplishing business of importance, had set about the work. Bad as the roads to Buffalo from Clarence were, (and they were so bad that she was obliged to be drawn through the mud by oxen,) she got safe to Buffalo—arranged all her business about the goods, lately arrived at Black Rock, in relation to freight for the past and destiny for the future—and engaged her passage to Cleveland, in less time than Cæsar 'saw, fought and conquered.' At four, P. M., Saturday, she weighed anchor at Buffalo, and at ten, A. M., on Monday, she was safely landed and walking in the streets of Cleveland! Thus blessed beyond any former example, who could be ungrateful? To what was this owing?

Was it to your prayers for your dear mother's safety? Continue them with pious ardor.

“Tuesday I held service at Cleveland. Wednesday I left your mother, and proceeded to return my horse, which, through all his journeyings, was a borrowed one, the owner (God bless him for his kindness) living fifty or sixty miles to the east of Cleveland, at Windsor, which, you will remember, was the place where I organized my first parish in Ohio. Thither then I went, leaving directions for your mother and her precious charge, to steer her course in the first inland navigation wagon (of which there are numbers of great convenience and safety passing from Cleveland) to Canton, which is about sixty miles a little to the east of south from Cleveland.

“Next day, Friday, mounted my horse with a prospect of twelve miles through a mere forest, to ride to Windsor. In less than thirty-five minutes it began to rain, and fell in sheets through the whole distance. O, if you could have seen me plunging through the deepest mire, midrib to my horse, wet, the blessed while, as water could make me! But the trouble is over. I arrived safe among my loving Christian disciples, and all was well. On Saturday we had Church, a large congregation, all rejoiced to see me. On Sunday I held service all day, and administered the communion to twenty-three, where, till last Easter, the holy sacrament had never been administered before since the creation of the world. Seventeen was the number then—eight new ones—one absent, and one had died.

“Monday, with a man by my side carrying my trunk, which I had left there till now, I proceeded on my old route to Parkman and Ravenna, at both which places I held service. At Ravenna, the county seat, the court was sitting; the audience very large; Church much increased. Here I saw Mr. L—— B——, of Vermont. He told me (will you believe it?) that he had left Mrs. Chase and family, safe arrived and well, in Canton? What news was this for me! It was at least four days sooner than I expected. On Wednesday night I was with them again, rejoicing and rejoiced.

“The same evening I hired a wagon, good and new, with

two fine horses, and on Tuesday started with bag and baggage. Here we cut a figure; good roads and luck through Kendall, seventeen miles—stayed at a mere hut. Friday, started in good spirits—but what? never were such roads; the horses ‘stalled,’—this is the term they give to that very pleasant position moving people are in, who get stuck in the mud, and have to get oxen to draw them out,—and we got on but twelve miles the whole blessed day; and even that would never have been accomplished had I not hired a third horse.

“At Worster, you will remember, I entered on my old track, but there had been so much rain that it could not be pursued by reason of an inundated prairie. A Mr. Skinner said he would accompany and help us to get over the Lake Fork of the Mehicken, at a place about three miles before we came to his house, where we should, at least some of us, stay all night. By the bye, Mr. Skinner married Mrs. Rogers’ niece, Mr. Hezekiah Bull’s daughter.

“The sun was about an hour and a half high when we reached the river—the stream not very wide, but deep and rapid. Two or three men were with Mr. S.’s wagon, and there were two or three sons of the forest who had come to our assistance, well acquainted with the water, and good swimmers. They were from fourteen to sixteen years of age, and the most alert and obliging fellows I ever saw.

“The only means of transportation we had was a canoe, from twelve to fifteen feet long, and broad enough in the broadest place for a man of my size to sit down by squeezing a little. Well, how sped we? The horses first were mounted one by one, six in number, by our brave young lads, and plunged headlong into the rapid current. Pray, fancy to yourself this most interesting scene. Your mother with your little brother in her arms, who could scarcely be restrained and confined to his place, for mere love of the wild flowers that grew on the rich bank around him, with Almira sitting on the baggage. The young woodsmen mounted the horses, with more adroitness than a riding-master, without a bridle, and dashed them down a steep bank into the stream, to them bottomless. The first you would see, after such a process, would be the heads of the boy and the horse, and then, from



the rebound and struggle of the animal, would be the fore legs striking in quick succession the swift surface of the stream; then, by cuffing one side or the other, as they steered either this way or the opposite, up or down the stream, they got them all safe across and feeding in the luxuriant pastures on the other side.

“Now for our wagons, our baggage, and our precious selves. The bodies of the wagons were put, I should say poised, on our little canoe; a pound's weight seemingly would have been, on either side, fatal to them; yet the lads managed them. Did you ever see rope-dancers? I have, and I assure you it was nothing to it. They stood, in the presence of the gazing spectators, on the bow and stern of this little bark, and, if you'll believe it, got them safe across the flowing tide. The wheels were transported in the same way, and such was the smallness of the skiff and the rapidity of the current, that the wheels, as the bow of the canoe was kept nearly up the stream, were set in motion as if they were on land passing along. Then, with your little brother in my arms, like Æneas with young Ascanius, (I believe you call him,) I committed myself to the mere pig's trough. Did I look back at your mother as we pushed this precious load from the firm land? I did; a mother's prayer was read in her every feature, and a mother's prayer was graciously answered. We got safe to shore.

“What think you of my feelings as our brave lads took on board their next precious cargo, your dear mother and aunt Almira? I watched the motion of the little ark of safety till all was well. Blessed be God, all *was* well! Unconscious of its rapid speed, we saw not the sun set till the shades of the evening told us how much in haste we ought to be.

“Soon was our carriage arranged, our goods replaced, and we on our way to the very new settlement, where Mr. Skinner is *beginning* to reside. I say so, for it is not three months since he first commenced his town and plantation on the finest site north of the place where I am writing this. Good cheer made us amends for the fatigues and dangers we had undergone.

“In the morning, Sunday, it set in to rain, and we had two

*forks* more to pass. At this moment they were fordable, but might not be so with one hour's rain. To proceed then was a matter of necessity. We did so, and got that night to Frederick, the place above described. On Monday, through the bad roads, without any accident, we travelled to Berkshire, and on Tuesday were set down in this place of my future residence.

"The next day your mother, though quite fatigued with her journey, went, in company with your uncle Cyrus Fay, to see my farm; and happy am I to say that she is pleased beyond my fondest expectations. The apples are fit to make pies, and the peaches almost begin to blush. Last night your aunt Almira also took a walk to see it. I am now busily employed in building me a barn and farm-house; as to my house in town, it will be left till I am better prepared.

"My parishes will engage all my attention, and I have told your uncle Cyrus Fay that if he will take care of me till he gets into business, I will reward him. His health is much improved and his old complaint has left him; at least he has had no return of it since he left Hartford.

"My dear George, remember my prayers are always for you, that you may be kept from vice, in peace, in health, and in prosperity. Do nothing without your good uncle's advice; let his every wish suggested be your guide, under the Divine law and blessing. Write to me often, and remember with what tender affection I am your father,

"PHILANDER CHASE.

"GEORGE CHASE."

In closing this letter, written nearly a quarter of a century ago, the writer feels a thrill through his breast of a deep and pervading nature. That son to whom it was addressed is long since gone; the dear mother of the son is mouldering to dust, yet the providence and goodness of God remain as fresh on his mind as ever; the same hand that then upheld, and kept him and them from perishing, now sustains the aged frame of their surviving relative in the discharge of all his painful trials and overwhelming duties.

Of the mind, cultivated talents and Christian sentiments of

the wife and mother, spoken of in the foregoing letter, the reader doubtless would wish to witness some specimen. It may be found in the following letter of hers, addressed to a dear friend whom she had left in Hartford.

*Copy of a letter from Mrs. Mary Chase, in Worthington, Ohio, to Mrs. Mary Tudor, of Hartford, Connecticut.*

“MY DEAR MRS. TUDOR: It is not because I have forgotten my good friends in Hartford, or my promise to you in particular, that I have delayed, thus long, making you acquainted with my situation and the events that have occurred since I saw you. Indeed, so rapid, so unexpected, and so evidently directed by Infinite wisdom, are the late scenes of my life, that I have had no time but to wonder and be grateful.

“On the 13th of May, about an hour before sunset, I imprinted the last kiss upon the cheek of my dear son George, who had lingered behind the carriage, unwilling, as it were, to take his final leave of his mother and infant brother. To say with what emotions I drew down the curtain would be impossible. To my regrets of the past were added doubts and uncertainty of the future. ‘Father of mercies,’ said I mentally, as I took the last view of a place where I had once hoped to spend my days, ‘Father of mercies, into thy hands I commit myself and the events of my future life. Whatever it be thy will to inflict, give me grace to endure; and for whatever of prosperity thou hast in store for me, give me grace to be thankful. Preserve, O God, the life and health of my dear husband, and for the rest thy will be done.’

“The Sunday after I left Hartford I passed in Utica. The Rev. Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Wadsworth, son-in-law to good Mrs. Adams, called to see me. At Canandaigua Miss Clark, Miss Chapin, and Miss Holly called to see me. There is a beautiful church erected in this most beautiful village, since the return of the above-named young ladies from Mrs. Royce’s school, and they have in their clergyman a very amiable and promising young man, Mr. Onderdonk, of New York.

“On the tenth day after I left Hartford I reached Batavia without accident, and in much better health and spirits than when I set out on my journey. At this place I left the stage,

and hired a wagon to take me twenty miles to my sister's in Clarence. On the evening of the 25th we arrived in safety at the habitation of my sister, and were welcomed with much cordiality to the woods and comforts of an infant settlement. The next day, without allowing myself rest, I set about arranging all things for a summer residence in the woods, and preparing myself to be as comfortable and as little trouble as possible. A fortnight passed away, and I was content and happy, anxious only to hear from my husband, of whom I had no certain intelligence.

"On the 9th of June, a person who had been at Buffalo on business, called and delivered me a letter, saying, 'From Mr. Chase, I suppose.' I broke the seal and found these words: — 'I am on my way to Cincinnati in perfect good health. Send the goods to Sandusky, and come yourself in a packet to Cleveland, where I will, God willing, meet you by the middle of next month with wagons, horses, conductors, &c., to your heart's content.' Dated at Columbus, May 12th, 1817. I found, by looking at the date, I had no time to lose, and immediately set about preparing myself for my journey. At the same time it set in to rain, and it was not until the 15th of the month, about four o'clock in the afternoon, that I was able to go on board for Cleveland.

"The wind was fair, and the hope of soon beholding my beloved husband put me in uncommon good spirits. 'I think you have been at sea,' said a passenger, 'and must be somewhat acquainted with the danger of overloading a vessel. Pray, do you not think we are in danger if we should have a blow?' We had, besides other lading, nine hundred barrels of salt on board! I pressed my darling closer to my bosom, and Hope for a moment let go her anchor.

"Blessed be God for all his mercies! I was safely landed at Cleveland on the 17th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning, and, with a number of other passengers, proceeded to the only decent public house in the place. As soon as I was seated and the host made his appearance, 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'is there a clergyman in this place by the name of Chase?' 'No,' was the reply. 'Has there not been one here by that name?' 'No. A Mr. Searle has been here, but no Mr.

Chase.' 'Go, my dear brother,' said I to Cyrus, (for you know he accompanied me,) 'go to the post-office and ask for letters for me.' He returned in a moment with none. I am sure it was not more than ten minutes after this that a person inquired for *Mrs. Chase*, and being shown into the room, observed, that he had just heard of my arrival in that place, and thought it might be gratifying to me to learn something of Mr. Chase. 'I heard him preach yesterday,' said he, 'and he will be here in a few hours.' In a few hours indeed — three only — I found myself in the arms of my beloved husband — browner and older some — in good health and in uncommon good spirits. May the goodness of God to me this day forever warm and animate my bosom! We stopped two days in Cleveland, and there Mr. C. left us to visit some of the newly-formed Churches on the Reserve, and return a horse which had kindly been lent him to visit the various parts of the state. I and my family proceeded in a covered wagon to Canton — distance about sixty miles from Cleveland — where we waited five days for Mr. Chase.

"He having joined us, we again set forward, passing through Kendal, &c., to Wooster — distant thirty-five miles from Canton, and over the worst roads that can be imagined. From Wooster to Frederick — forty miles — the roads are good and the country delightful. Indeed, when I passed over this part of the country, I forgave those writers, who, in describing this new world, appear rather to be speaking of a world of imagination than one that had any real existence. The country is alternate plain and upland, and you have only to loosen the reins of imagination to convert the prairies into highly cultivated meadows, adorned with a variety of the most beautiful and fragrant wild flowers, and skirted with an intermixture of the wild plum and crab-apple.

"The uplands are gently ascending and thinly covered with the most beautiful forest trees. Here you may imagine some gentleman of taste has fixed his residence; and in adorning the lands around his habitation, has so artfully disposed of his vines and trees as to be mistaken for nature's rival. Were it not for the certainty that this beautiful and highly picturesque country is inhabited, in its first outset, only

by persons not famous for their neatness, taste, or civilization, one would be almost tempted to go in search of some castle, or palace, or some gentleman's villa, which one might imagine must be found amid scenery so delightful.

“From Frederick to this place the soil is rich, but the country is new, yet everywhere affording abundance where man is not sparing of his labor. On the first day of July, we arrived in this place. I cannot tell you with what emotions I first beheld a spot which is probably to be my residence for life. At any rate, if I shall ever be called upon to change my place of residence again, I shall be spared the misery and pain of breaking attachments and separating from friends, who are to be valued as much for their mental attainments as for their native good dispositions and pious affections. But may God avert the necessity of another removal! With my husband and children around me, and living in the midst of people on whom the ordinances of religion evidently have a beneficial effect, and where the sphere of my husband's usefulness is greatly enlarged, I am content till the Great Shepherd shall call me to the fold of everlasting rest and salvation.

“Oh, if there is anything that wholly loosens our affection from the world, it is having no place in it you may call *your home* — living, like our ancient exemplars, strangers and pilgrims even in a land of promise!

“Worthington, the place of our present residence, is pleasantly situated on the left banks of the Whetstone, one of the branches of the Scioto river, and about nine miles from Columbus, the present seat of government. It is but thirteen years the coming Christmas since the first family moved into the place, then an entire wilderness. The inhabitants, or ‘settlers,’ as they are called here, are most of them from New England, and of a sober, industrious disposition. There are also erected a large brick academy and a number of handsome brick dwelling-houses, together with a manufacturing establishment; and the coming summer they contemplate building a church and a cotton establishment. Mr. Chase is appointed the principal of the academy, an office at present merely nominal, as the foundation of its future fame and usefulness is yet to be laid.

"Shall I tell you that this is the field designed for Philander, if it shall please God to preserve his life and health, and to keep him pure and unspotted from the vices by which I know he is surrounded. To you, who can so readily enter into my feelings, I can say, that if any evil should happen to this dear boy, it would require the utmost exertion of my Christian affections, with unfeigned sincerity and resignation to say, 'Thy will be done.' Knowing my own heart, I pray to our Father that he would spare me a trial I should be so little able to bear.

"Mr. Chase has purchased a small farm about three fourths of a mile from this village, on which he is now building a house, intended hereafter for a farm-house, but which must shelter his family the coming winter from the winds and storms. This, together with the care of five parishes and occasional parochial duty during the week, so completely fills up his time, that his face is seldom seen at home except at table. But his health is good, and I trust he may be doing some good to the Church of the ever blessed Redeemer. The greater part of the people in this country may appropriately be said to be like sheep going astray; and though one shepherd cannot do everything, yet every one may do something towards calling them home to the flock and fold of the Great Shepherd of our salvation.

"I endured the fatigue of my journey to this country much better than could have been imagined, but my health since I have been here has not been as good as usual. Dear little Dudley too, has not been well since our arrival. He is very thin and pale, and requires more care and attention than when six months old. I trust, however, that it is his teeth that occasions his present indisposition. Cyrus and Almira are well.

"October, 20th.

"You see, my dear Mrs. Tudor, by the different dates of my letter, that I have been a long time neglectful of my acknowledged obligation. This has been owing, in the first place, to the illness of my dear babe, and in the next, to our living here as we do without the possibility of procuring 'help.' With a sick child, that requires day and night my

constant attention, it was not surprising, at least to myself, that it should bring on a complaint to which you know I have been many years subject—a spitting of blood. This has produced so great a degree of weakness as, at times, almost to deprive me of the power to rise from my bed; but as the little boy gets better and the weather becomes cooler, I think my health grows better than otherwise, particularly within a few days. The weather is very fine, and I have been able to ride every morning, which I think has contributed much towards my own and my little boy's recovery. May I be duly thankful for all my blessings!

“I have just learned, by a letter from Philander, of the alarming sickness that prevails at Cambridge. May the good God protect my dear boy! I know not how it is, or why it is, but my heart has been full of anxiety ever since I have been in this place. My imagination is not apt to get the better of my judgment, but in this case I own myself a very, very child.

“By a letter from the Rev. Mr. Searle, I learn that Mrs. Sigourney was feared to be in a decline. Poor, dear lady! I feel it would be a great comfort to me to be near her in her sickness. She has been so good and kind to me and mine, has ministered so often to the wants of my sick family, that I feel a something I cannot name when I count the miles that separate me from her. My prayers are now all I can offer for her benefit. May He, who supported the agonized spirit of a suffering Redeemer, be her support and comforter!

“Mr. Wainright, I hear, is still with you, and has received priest's orders. I trust you find in him everything you can reasonably expect in a clergyman, and I *know* that he will find in your little society everything a clergyman ought to expect in parishioners. May you long be happy in each other!

“Pray have the goodness to write to me everything relative to your little Church. I do not feel the less interested, now that I am absent, than when I was present with you. As a branch of the Universal Church, I shall ever delight to learn that you bear much fruit.

“I hope all Mr. Chase's friends will forgive him his seem-



ing want of attention to them. He has scarcely a moment that is unoccupied. The care of his parishes and of the infant Church in this new world, and the necessity of providing a shelter for his family this winter, completely fill up his time; but after the new year, I trust his time will not be so wholly taken up, but that he can devote a few moments every day to his friends.

“Pray have the goodness to mention me most affectionately to all my friends in Hartford. Tell dear Mrs. Adams that I have the satisfaction of informing her, that I am not likely to become joint inhabitant with the pigs and fowls of a log cabin; and though we may not have everything we wish for, we have enough to be thankful for.

“Among those whom I knew in Hartford, I know of no one I am likely to forget. I beg you will not punish me with a three months' silence. My illness, and that of my family, ought to be an apology for the delay of my promises. Even now I am obliged to write with my boy at one elbow, talking or crying, while at the other is the daily provision for my family.

“To Mr. Tudor and your family remember me most affectionately; and may God have both you and them in his holy keeping.

“Ever your most affectionate friend,

“MARY CHASE.

“MRS. MARY TUDOR.”

The declining health of the author of the above letter, was the subject of the deepest solicitude and incessant watchfulness, which, joined to the care of erecting and finishing a comfortable dwelling for his family during the coming winter, caused the circle of the writer's missionary duties to be somewhat confined. Worthington occupied half his services, and Delaware and Berkshire each their portion. In these alone he baptized this year more than one hundred, and before winter his communion had increased from a very few to sixty-five. He moved into his newly-erected house before Christmas.