



Letter to Orange & Achsa Johnson, visiting Mansfield, CT
from Mary Johnson of Worthington, Ohio, 5/6/1844

Subject: enjoys being mistress of the household, entertaining company,
servant girl Julia having breakfast ready by 6 AM, cousin William
managing the "Manor" corn planting, lambing season, and worms in
apple orchard

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continues running vertical up the front page when pages are full]

Worthington, Monday Evening

May 6th, 1844

My Dear Parents

Before you left, I thought it doubtful about my writing; unless something worthy of notice should occur.

But the reception of your letters, have almost added new life to my being. The many things which have happened since your departure I would like to dwell upon, but I forbear on account of their prolixity. That which would most interest you, my Father would be, I suppose, matters and things concerning the Manor.

Although, allow me in the first place, to say for myself that I have thus far done admirably. Am perfectly contented and delighted with my new station, as matron and mistress of the household; and hope Ma will (if at all uneasy) dispel her fears and think not of the cares and duties devolving upon me, "for the yoke is easy, and the burthen light." If at night weary go to bed and rest, and arise at dawn refreshed.

As far as I know, William has done very well on the farm. Mr. Armstrong worked 5 days the next week after you left, & the following week (the 1st May) one day for Mr. Barker. Eliphet Barker worked 1 1/2 days, which was the only help he has had. He finished plowing on Thursday the 2nd of May. The corn in the orchard above the barn has come up. Mr. Burr and Wilkison have to replant their corn fields, the corn having rotted in the ground, from the frequent rains. The sheep and lambs have done very well. One of the oldest lambs lost its mother, and William keep [*sic*] it in the dooryard, and feeds it 3 times a

day. There is living and in fine condition one hundred and upwards, lost several. A number of our neighbors have sheared their sheep; ours are not washed as yet and the weather is wet, cold and changeable I presume they will not be for a week or two. Mr. Madden has been here to work (did not come until last Saturday) and was very anxious to get his note, you hold against him. He said you told him you would leave it with William. I told him I knew nothing about it, that he must let it rest till you come home.

The Dutchman has been after his cider, he only took 4 barrels & 1/2 and the molasses he should have for 10 ct a quart, he was very loud in saying that your mother said I should have it for three dollars, being in a hurry I told him to take at that, he is coming this week.

William requested me to mention to you, not forget to get a lock of hair from Uncle Slafter's daughter.

Tuesday Morning

Very clear, and a delightful ambient air, which is much more acceptable to farmers than yesterdays noon and night. I arose this morning before 5 o'ck. and seated myself at writing without attending at all to the household, having given my directions for breakfast last evening, and further orders will be attended to after that hour. Julia is one of the very best of girls; rises early & breakfast at 6. Yet she has two faults, rather slow and sometimes wastful; [*sic*] the only time I have known her out of humor arose from my talking to her about that fault. But I followed your directions, said what I had to say, and not seem to notice her displeasure. She was rather sullen during the afternoon & evening, but did not refuse to do what I requested. In the morning next, was kind & pleasant as usual. I have not discovered anything of the kind since. I have been thinking it might be a good plan for you to purchase some little article for her, it would please & tend to encourage her to well doing, also be a gratification to her friends. I have endeavored to inspire in her feelings of respect & I think thus far have been very successful.

Laura is with me, she came on the 1st May, would have come sooner but Cousin Mary & Persis were visiting here that week, which made our family six in number, & I thought it would be pleasanter to all for her not to come until the family was smaller. On Friday the week May was here I invited several of the girls in to tea. I was a little fearful how I should manage, but they all gave me great praise & it was remarked that they did not see any difference when Ma was at home.

As yet I have had very little company, several called Sunday but have seen only two of them, Horatio and Call, who was here on Sunday last. She gave me a short sketch of the circumstances connected with your (or Miss Smith's rather) stay in Columbus. I imagine Pa did not regret her leaving you & placing herself under another's care.

The Wetmores were here on Saturday evening the 4th. We were retiring and had put out the light, when they knocked. Mrs. Griffith has not shown the light of her countenance, nor a displayal [*sic*] of her wisdom. School has commenced under as favorable circumstances as usually [*sic*] attends the summer term. Mr. Armstrong is at work here today. We are going to have for dinner boiled ham &



cabbage, and a bread custard. I must relate a little circumstance about William. The week we expected Mr. Madden we cleared out his room to have it in readiness, consequently he slept in my chamber. Being out of his room & bed sound sleep & rest forsook his pillow. scenes & unreal objects floated before him, which filled him with fear. The next night when he retired he fastened one door, but the key was gone to the other & no other way but to set a chair against it; the next day I discovered it there & mentioned it at table; when he solved the mystery which was followed by a hearty laugh. We occasionally give him a frit [*sic*] & speak of the fearless character we have for our protector. We have not suffered the least from fear since the first night, when I could not sleep until W. came home from the wedding. I did not attend.

Your affectionate daughter

Mary Johnson

The appletree worms are very thick especially in the north east orchard some of the trees are as naked of leaves as they were three weeks ago. I told William he ought to destroy them, but he said it would take him two or three days. I said no more, if you think they ought to be destroyed please write to that effect.

M.J.

[address] Mr. O. Johnson

Mansfield

Ct.