

Ask Lewis if by virtue of his office as Post Master he is  
exempted from the necessity of acknowledging the receipt of  
letters —

My dear Monroe

Liverpool Decem<sup>r</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> 1829

The Florida as you will already have been informed  
arrived after the very short passage of seventeen days during which  
it appears that nothing was experienced but the finest weather  
you will have had good cause for surprise at not hearing from  
me by the John Jay which Tacket sailed two days after the arrival  
of the Florida. but if it had been announced to me that two  
persons of my acquaintance had just descended from the moon. I  
could hardly have been more astonished that I was when Mr Chapman  
on Tuesday (the ship arrived on Sunday) told me that Mrs Douglas and  
Miss Margaret had come in her. I had heard for three or four packets  
before that negotiations had been going on for their passages. I had  
heard the report from a variety of sources that Miss M. was to be  
married in the morning and immediately embark on board the  
packet. but the Calceonia the Canada and the Manchester  
having arrived without them, and Captain Smith of the latter informing  
me that he had heard nothing of them, induced me to believe that  
all idea of the voyage had been abandoned. I lost no time in  
calling on them and of course in offering my services, as I should  
most sincerely under any circumstances, with or without your letter  
which Miss Margaret handed me two days after. Mr Chapman had  
heard by accident of their being on board the ship, for a letter from  
Mr Holliday to him, that he has since heard of has not yet come to hand.

went immediately to them and insisted very kindly and most fortunately that they should go at once to his house instead of a hotel. and how my dear Mother as all disguise with you would be worse than folly, as I am convinced too Betsy Mary would likewise think it with regard to herself I feel myself bound to state to you candidly the state of Mrs Douglas's health. she is really very low and although her Physician says, ~~not~~ perhaps in immediate danger, there is but little chance of her recovery. there appears to be a total prostration of her physical powers while her mind, like a sharp sword cutting its scabbard, is constantly increasing her debility. she has fallen into the hands of kind friends and nothing will be omitted to make her as comfortable as possible, she has the best medical attendance Liverpool affords, and as good a nurse in constant attendance as any in the world, whilst Mrs Chapman is indefatigable in her attempts to anticipate every want. W.M. must therefore be satisfied that every thing will be done to assist and alleviate but she must make up her mind for the worst.

According to the usual temporizing policy, the first letter written to Harriet would have induced her to believe that nothing extraordinary was the matter and that her mother in a few days would be able to leave Liverpool for Bath, and perhaps to join her on the Continent. at my suggestion and indeed on my almost insisting on it, Miss Margaret has however, as she assures me, written exactly the truth. but whether it will be in time is yet a matter of doubt, as by a letter from Sir James Shaw it appears

that having given up all expectation of their arrival this fall Harriet, with George & William, was to have left Paris on the 30<sup>th</sup> ult. for Italy - the usual family failing, however may in this instance have been favorable, as if they have only put off their departure for ten or twelve days, letters will reach them in Paris. if not you know when - Between ourselves M. appears to me to be if possible more fidgety than she ever was. at one moment she is complaining of the hardship of being obliged to leave New York, contrary to her inclinations, of the sufferings she has endured, of her shattered nerves &c. - in the next she asks what dresses are worn at parties here, expresses her wish to go to one or two while she stays, just for curiosity, wonders what kind of beauts those of Liverpool are &c. &c. complains how hard it is that Harriet should be enjoying herself while she is unable to leave the house. and she might add her bed, for it appears to me she only leaves it for her meals. God helps the rich, the poor can beg! - It is an absolute fact that she gave the chamber maid of the ship for all her services out but one shilling & six pence New York Currency.

God bless you. remember me to your wife and remember also yourself that you have one that any man ought to be proud of. Kiss Fan for me & wife & the young one, and recollect, I tell you if you are not happy with such possessions, it is your own fault - I will write you again by next packet - in the mean while believe me  
Yours truly  
Fra<sup>d</sup> - B. Ogden