

Colby



Colby Quarterly

Volume 20
Issue 1 *March*

Article 7

March 1984

An Unpublished Jewett Letter

Alice Hall Petry

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq>

Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, Volume 20, no.1, March 1984, p.51

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

An Unpublished Jewett Letter

by ALICE HALL PETRY

THE FOLLOWING Sarah Orne Jewett letter is offered as an addendum to the two editions of Jewett correspondence (1956, 1967) prepared by Richard Cary and published by the Colby College Press:

Tuesday 10th January

Dear Eva

We send the money for the tickets with great satisfaction and Mrs. Fields and I hope to hear a good many out of the list of interesting lectures. I meant that you should have my answer sooner—

Yours affectionately

S. O. Jewett

“Mrs. Fields” is, of course, Annie (Mrs. James T.) Fields, Jewett’s companion for many years beginning in 1881. I have not been able to identify “Eva,” although someone (presumably a dealer in autographs and rare letters) has pencilled on the verso “Eva Tetlow!?” Perhaps this is the same “Eva” who is mentioned only once in the 1967 edition, in a letter (#135) to Elizabeth J. Gilman (p. 161). That the Gilman letter is dated “[September 22, 1905]” suggests the possibility that the letter transcribed above was also written in 1905. This possibility is substantiated by the fact that January 10 did fall on a Tuesday in that year.

The letter is written on part of a sheet of conventional folio; the sheet had been torn in half to create a writing surface of suitable size for such a brief note, and in fact the message covers the entire 4½" × 7" writing surface. The torn edge of the sheet is at the left; the paper has been folded once across the middle. There is no letterhead or decoration of any sort, although the paper is watermarked with a leaf device. Jewett’s penmanship exhibits the “linked” words which Cary has identified as characteristic of her writing (1967 edition, pp. 4–5). This Jewett letter is from the private collection of the present author.

Rhode Island School of Design
Providence