

## [Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers](#)

**VMI Archives**

**Manuscript # 00103**

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**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 January 29**

3 Belsize Square.  
London N.W.  
29 Jany '68

Dear Corbin,

Your Newburgh letter was very welcome. Kiss my Maria for me, and tell her, that after caring for her good father and mother as a duteous daughter should, and as she is sure to do that she is not to make any rash resolutions as to what she'll do etc- that we shall want her at the University of the South.

You have acted well and wisely in [renting] F.V. and I have so told Rutson. The Jamaica planters were paid for their negroes and had 7 years notice to prepare for emancipation. None of them are there now who could get away. One of them told me last night that his plantations yielded him \$30,000 a year- that he sold it on emancipation about 30 years ago for \$5000 & that the purchaser- his former manager- still owes some \$2500. As I told you from Mexico neither one of the three great experiments that are now going on in the south is promising enough to tempt any of our people into it, who can afford to stand off & look on as you propose to do. Now if you can only find something that will enable you to live and lay by yr rents, you will be doing what any son of the southern gentry that stick to their old plantations will be able to do. And when your lease expires you will find that events will have vindicated this forecast. The Dutch since that war began emancipated their slaves--in Surinam and Jansen tells me that that colony is already Africanised. The South is no place- especially in this country - for any gentleman with wife and daughters to

live - if he can get away- to live now, nor will it be until the contest that is now brewing and going on there between blacks & whites, is finally settled. Why then do I go to Tenn.? Because I hope to have boys enough there to make that out of the way place, safe. I have no doubt Hasbrouck is acting in Minnesota for the best. I am content tell him with any arrangements that he may make. Elie I do hope, is now in a fair way to recover. All the rest are well- Nannie has gone out to work- and Nanna is a great pet in the neighborhood. She is very full of fun. Your affectionate,

M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
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**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 February 8**

Belsize Square  
London, N.W.  
8 Feb. '68

Dear Corbin,

I write this in connection with what Nannie tells me you said in your last letters about you coming. If you come in the [International] line, the line my family came in , and take a return ticket which lasts for a year I believe, it will cost you about \$100 in gold - not so much than it would take you to live in New York while you are at sea, coming and going - and unless you find something to do, or have a fair prospects of finding something by staying, I fancy the brood would be agreeable and wise. A friend of mine in Lpool is the agent of this line of steamers and therefore I shall go in it. I have not heard yet form the Trustees about the University. And until I do, I shall fix no time for going over. Though it will not be earlier than May I reckon at any rate. I base my idea of yr coming very much if the supposition that I am going to Tennessee and will be able to have house room for you there by next winter, if in the meantime we can't rig up something better. Of course we shall be glad to see you. And it certainly it would be more agreeable all round for you to come, and it might be more economical too - for if Nannie comes to you and you go to the expense of establishing her there, then the breaking up to come to the University in case it be thought advisable and I hope it will, may prove more expensive than yr trip here. Still I am too timid to be very absolute as to what is best. Judge you. yrs. [fond] Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 April 16**

3 Belsize Sq'r  
London N.W.  
15 Ap'l '66 [1868]

Dear Corbin,

Nannie and the boy have both been having a hard time of it for the last two or three weeks. She as nurse and he as patient. The little fellow has been very ill, with congestion of the brain super-induced by teething. We were afraid we should lose him, but he seems now on the fair road to recovery again. He is very much better than he was three days ago, and so hopes have brightened. Elie continues to forge ahead and we begin to think about a time for turning our face westward. Probably not Tennessee ward, but westward in time for peaches. At any rate I have stipulated with Elie to be there in time for that provided she will get well enough for the voyage - and she seems to be in a fair way for that. I hope you will be able to rough it along in your new vocation at least until we all get back. At our last dates you were in Charleston. It's the letter in which you mention the [ ] phosphates. I received a box of them some time ago from New York, but as there was no account of them, I did not know where or why they came- [ ] Dr. Jarrett's letter [now] come to hand, but as you mentioned R.H. Maury, Dr. Ravenel - St. Julien. I suppose-and other friends in connection with them - I immediately put myself in communication with one of the largest phosphate dealers in London. He responded [readily] to the new [ ] so I have turned over the box to him, and shall probably soon know what he has to say about them. There is not the least chance of an outsider as I getting orders for yr principles. The only way of doing that is through special agents, friends and correspondents of their own who can speak by the card. Nothing later from Dick than you have heard. When we come we leave Brave behind to finish his education. Nana has just returned from a play in the "Parsnip's Grounds" She is an interesting little thing and a great favorite in Belsize. Nannie and I have just returned from a walk in the green fields and all send their love.

Yr affectionate  
M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 April 25**

No. 3 Belsize Sqr  
London N.W.  
25 Ap'l 68

Dear Corbin,

I have not seen Nannie this morning. She and her mother are both much [worsted] by nursing, and she did not come down to breakfast. She's asleep and it has not been sent to her yet. Her little boy has been having a hard time of it. He has been now in a state of stupor for two weeks from congestion of the brain with violent attacks now and then of sickness at the stomach- just lying quietly and taking no notice. Yesterday he began to crow and coo and, as his mother told me when we started out to walk and I broke down with the foot, to carry on quite a communication, and our hopes raised- but they are dashed again this morning. Brave went off at 5 for the Doctor, for though the little thing was ravenously hungry, his stomach refused everything. But the Doctor did not cheer us. Certainly the dear child can't go on this way many days longer. Indeed a few hours may decide so I'll leave this open for a word at the last moment. It's now 10 a.m. and I have written this early that nothing might interfere with, thinking it quite likely that Nannie would not feel herself equal to a letter- so I'll save room for a word at the last moment this p.m. Her new nurse came last night- she has been without one since Lizzy went crazy.

Elie continues to forge ahead. She and her Ma are going next week to spend a few days with her friends at Kensington. The Bp. told me yesterday he should take my advice and return in the Manhattan week after next. He is very anxious that Nannie should go with them. I am highly gratified that you should so have won upon W. & E. It gives you something to hold on by, at least until you can get hold of a better tow line. When the Dr's say that Elie's well enough to try the seas I shall fix a day. Yr aft. M. P.S. 4.45. Our little 'Davy Jones' is no better. But he is in no pain. Nannie's taking a little nap and Nanna has gone out to ride. She has just come in from a wedding at the church. We'll write again by the next steamer.

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 May 13**

3 Belsize Square  
London N.W.  
13 May '68

My dear Corbin,

Thanks, hearty thanks both to Hasbrouck and you for your kindness in re Lt. Paul's estate. You did exactly right, each of you and tell Hasbrouck I shall write him a letter of special thanks for his kindness and generosity. The property was his, and he might have kept it. Why not turn the bonds over to him for collection?

`The boy' is going to get well. He was downstairs yesterday. He has had such a time of it and has clung on to his little silver painter so manfully when all was so blue, and made such a brave struggle for precious life, that he has endeared himself to us all so much, we cannot now [couch] to give him up. Betty Dabney and other friends say don't come yet. Impeachment will be over in a few days, and I'll have time to read the new leaf that is to be turned over before Elie is well enough for the trip - say last of June or first of July. As soon as its prudent to [venture] on her account, I'm disposed to sail, unless indeed that new leaf should contain something startling. Did you order those herrings for me? Don't disturb yourself about the ways and means for Nannie.

I am glad to see you taking hold of y'r new calling with so much vim. I think its well to leave the pay to Hasbrouck. I hope tho' when I come, we shall be able to chalk out something more to our fancy. If I am to develop resources and encourage industry in Va., what way more effective than introducing steam agricultural machinery. I intend, before I go away to see some of the manufacturers here of steam plows- which are also threshing machines- saws, mills & c. The price of one is some £ 3000. I believe - what would be the chance of introducing them in Va? What would be the duties on one? What's the chance of raising a company to start one? And how would you like to take the management of one? All these questions I ask [ran just so'] for I have [matured] no plans. But I take it that once among the great desiderata of our people now is **Labour saving agricultural machines** -no? Elie keeps forging ahead.

Yr affectionate  
M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
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**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 July 2**

Liverpool  
2 July 1868

Dear Corbin,

Nanna is here [after eating] out. We are all well and the day is fine. We sail at 3.30. Then Va. is a 'slow coach. I have been [entrapped] into [here]. For the chance of this reaching you before our arrival I write to say we have an immense amount of baggage, say in all some 20 trunks and boxes besides carpet bags and bundles - many- can't you make some economical arrangements for storing it away or have a baggage wagon to take it off? or both? The hacks will carry off what we want to use. Perhaps it will be best the express wagon to come and take it at once -: I reckon it would be cheaper to send it off to Richmond that way at once, than it would be to [freight] about with us. What does Rutson advise? He knows.

Yrs in haste  
M.F. Maury

S.W. Corbin, Esq'r.

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**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 July 2**

The last! and no mistake.

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Liverpool 2nd July

Dear Corbin

We are off at 3½ p.m.-

We have much luggage.- Can't you have an Express wagon on the wharf to take it for Richmond? It will cost less to send it that way at once than it will to lug it about with us. - There's too much of it to go in 4th St. or any private house. Do what you and Rutson think wisest, cheapest and best.

All well, and weather superb.

Yours  
M.F. Maury

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Note by R. Maury 13th July—

Monday night.-

The above came as intended via Southampton , per "Harmonia", a very fast craft, which left there on 3rd July and arrived here this afternoon. She reports light, variable winds throughout the passage and dense fogs the last 4 days.-

I got the letter out of our box at 5½ p.m.-

All in the hand of Rutson Maury

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**Letter son-in-law S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 August 3**

Richmond  
3 Aug '68

Dear Corbin,

I had a long talk with Charles & just as we finished W. Barton stopped in and introduced the subject himself. All the bonds have been endorsed by order of the court. That's all right unless it be decided hereafter that the payment in Confederate money was no payment. A special term for hearing this case had been fixed for this month- But [Cab ] had written to say he could not attend. B. promised to urge C. up to the mark- for it's impossible to get a hearing [in] the regular term- the case is so long it would crowd all others out. The delay this time is not B's fault, & for that reason I told you not to write to B. until you heard from me. Cha's thinks M'Casky's case is much stronger than B. represents it, and that should the case go against him, the case will be carried up- If so, there's a suit for y'r life time.

Chas thinks & so do I that in case there's no settlement this term, a compromise ought to be tried. He seems to think that the whole may be compromised for some \$15 m or \$20 m. Rather than stand and risk the uncertainties of the law, I think I should be inclined to pay the whole. As soon therefore as you learn that the case is not to come up as appointed, make J's coming of age & y'r own situation an excuse and try the temper of the other side for a compromise. Better let me [sound] for you. Maybe other parties will agree to arbitration. Nannie's letter with yr sent this morning. Next Monday go to Albe.- stay a week. Go to Lex then to the White, where I join Will, B. & the girls- We as guests.

All well- Love to N. the children & the H's.

Yrs  
M.F. Maury.

(FRAGMENT)

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
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**Letter to daughter, Diana Maury Corbin**  
**1868 August 8**

Richmond  
8 Aug 1868

Dear Nannie,

Have this p.m. yours of the 6th. Kate is here. Tell Corbin I shall get John Herndon to [sound] about compromise as soon as the Aug. term be disposed of. We - all except y'r Ma, leave for Albemarle Monday. Dabney's [Nannie] is at [Rugged] [Mts]. Lucy & Eliza both under the weather which is very hot

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**Letter to daughter, Diana Maury Corbin**  
**1866 August 11**

Rockbridge Baths  
4 Sep. 1868

Dear Nannie,

I am grieved to hear you and the children have been so poorly. Yesterday morning I sent the girls down under escort of Jerry Morton's grandson- a cadet, and toured at Goshen till 5.20 p.m. for your Ma and Nannie Bell. We arrived here at a little after 8. Betty and Will went on via Charlottesville for a visit to Charlie Blackford. Mary & Alice came up with your Ma on a visit to Sally F.

Dabney's Nannie with their children is at the Mason's. Rose sick with chills. Tomorrow Smith comes to fetch me to Lexington. Totts or Elie, perhaps both will go with me. I am to be installed on the 10th and deliver an address with pomp & circumstance and with all my decorations. After that we shall return here and wait till frost for Richmond. I go to work immediately in preparing a preliminary report of the natural wealth & c of Va. such as its climates, productions and favored position. I strike for a line of steamers between Norfolk & Holland, expecting to turn a stream of immigration - German- thro Va. as it flows to Ohio and forts beyond. And so hasten the completion of James River Canal, and Va. Central to the Ohio branches getting some immigrants to stop by the way. Tell Corbin, C held this special term expressly, but lawyers were not ready. Jno Herndon will go to F'bg next week. I have asked him to sound about a compromise. That I am seen is the best way of ending that matter. Ask him to get from Rutson the m.s. of P.G. and Astronomy and the first time he comes South to bring me them. I am not in a hurry for them. "Where had you best live?" In a New York City Boarding house when the dog days are over. Taking care to spend enough time in Va to keep up the idea of Va residence on ac't of them suits with which Corbin was threatened. Tell him the chances of being useful to the state in my own vocation are very fair. Everybody appears to be looking to politics for help. I almost [ ], exclusive to agencies outside of this political arena for material help. Stir up about J.B.'s grapes. Love to the H's with kisses to Maria. Tell Nanna I wish she was here to eat maple sugar. Yr. aft father.

M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 September 22**

Richmond

22 Sept '68

Dear Corbin,

I returned yesterday with N.B. & Alice leaving all hands including Mary in Albemarle, say till 1st Oct. Stir up Nannie as soon as she gets well for that grape information for Jno B.

Saw John Herndon last night. He worked with the case vs. Corbin- read commissioner's report. Says it's all in your favor- and he thinks the case must come off next term, and does not, he nor Will, advise compromise. It's important for you to know this, before you get to Fredericksburg.

Be sure to let me see you as you pass through- give me the average price of grain wheat & corn- oats & c. for each month during this year- Can you? and oblige yrs truly

M.F. Maury

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**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 October 4**

Richmond  
4 Oct 68

Dear Corbin,

Thanks for the statistics. It's a useful table, nicely got up. If I was going to `keep' such a table, I would do it as a chart of engraved squares. How do you get your averages- from the quantity sold, or from the price on each day? I have been on crutches with the foot. The furniture over from Fredericksburg yesterday. Glad y'r business is on the increase. What do you & Nannie say to Betty's suggestion about xmas. Don't you want your £ 35?

Dick may be in New York last of next month. Expecting all hands down from the mountains, tomorrow or next day. Wife now having a bout with ague & fever. Be sure you stop to see me when you do go south.

Cal wheat is a larger grain & therefore makes more flour to the bush. than ours. Has not that something to do with the price?

That's a good letter of yours. Brodie is off to [ ] this week. Give a letter to Hasbrouck. Love to N & the [children].

Yrs, M.

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**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 October 11**

Richmond  
11 Oct 68

Dear Corbin,

A letter last night from the admirable Rutson tells me you were to leave New York day before yesterday & be with us Tuesday. There is no sleeping place, but you must come to dinner & tea on arrival. Dabney is at the General's. I expect him down in the course of the week. I hope the Burtons did not submit to a postponement of the case in re Corbin. It would be cruel of the judge to permit any more trifling. We are all pretty well, my wife has not quite recovered from her bout with the chills.

Dying to see you,  
yrs affectionately  
M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
**VMI Archives Manuscript # 00103**  
**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 December 3**

Richmond Va.  
3 Dec. 1868

Dear Corbin,

I suppose you have got back after I hope a trip that pays. I have heard thro' Rutson & [Carrie] of your having left New Orleans the day before Nannie's telegram reached there.

I hasten to write you. I learn confidentially that your tenant is insolvent- that everything that he has is in a fair way of being gobbled up by upcountry creditors, that the wheat crop has been sold and there are no signs of anything being done towards that [house]. That he has had to leave the house in which he was in Fredericksburg 'cause he couldn't pay the rent, for which he still owes. In short that he is wholly [unreliable], a bad case, & that unless you are pretty quick, the corn crop will be gone too & you may whistle for your \$1000 & your house too.

So from all I know you had better run down and look after things. If you do I hope you will give us a hail.

The girls tell Nannie had a small party last night- about 50 dancers- sprinkled only with 5 or 6 married couples. Totts did the honors. Betty was top [ ] and they all four looked splendid. We missed you and her, Dick & Sue. It went off 1st rate. Dick left day before yesterday for Kanawha. May come down from the mountains some day, to take up Sue, who is getting well but still in bed. Lucy Ellen passes through today on her way to Savan'h- your Ma & I go down to the cars to meet her at 2.25. I gave yesterday to the Whig Preliminary Report No 1 Ph. Survey. I like it. Now for a favor- I should like to send a barrel of first rate apples to Tremlett, and 1/2 bbl. to Bold, in time for their xmas dinner- freight and duties paid. Bold the consignee, must pay R. Road freight to Tremlett. Rutson will manage this when you get the Bbls. ready. Don't get any apples unless they are very good. Let them be pippins or Lady apples, which ever be the best. Hasbrouck could not get any in Newburgh. All well. Kiss the children.

Yrs affectionately,  
M.F. Maury

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**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 December 11**

Richmond  
11 Dec. '68

Dear Corbin,

Thanks for the apples. You managed this nicely. When you want the £35 I. O. U. - go to Rutson. I have asked him to pay. I sent Nanna 10 cts in a letter- Did she get it? Your tenant's bill of sale that you ask for is no good. It is sufficient that the sheriff should find the mules & horses in his possession to pitch down upon him with his execution. It's only produce in the shape of rent that you can keep out of his clutches, & then it must be divided & your pile set off to itself. The wheat is gone, & you can't claim the balance of that in corn. All I know is what I gather from John about it. He thinks the case much more dispirited than you seem to do. T! Good night with love,

Yrs  
M.F. Maury

**Matthew Fontaine Maury Papers**  
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**Letter to son-in-law, S. Wellford Corbin**  
**1868 December 23**

Richmond Va.  
23 Dec. 1868

Dear Corbin,

Nannie's letter to her mother recd yesterday tells us you are going to F.V. after xmas. & then to N.C. Be sure to give us a call. You do well to go- Bear in mind, that R's bills of sale or notes of hand are worth nothing as against the demands of the sheriff- and that you are safe in your rents only after you have set apart your share of the crop. But if R. sells it, or you don't divide it, the sheriff can clap his clutches upon it. As for the prison advances better let them be bygones and ask Rutson for the £35 when-ever you get "hard up". C.B.R. talks about forking over in "a very few days"- I hope so - for the work already done comes to when it's paid for- \$10 [m] in gold, though it's not all done yet, for you know I have not delivered all the m.s.s.

Lucy is still a great sufferer. Had a pretty good night, but is now wracked with pain.

I went last night to spend the evening with [Weckham] - against the grain- but one has to do things sometimes that are not altogether delightful. Ask Nana if she thinks old [Christinger] lives in New York, and how he can go from here there in a night-for he is now I know a stuffing of his pack, I've seen him put two doll babies in it for Alice. A happy xmas to you all,

Yrs  
M.F. Maury