

**James Fenimore Cooper and Judge Samuel Nelson:
Excerpts from Cooper's Letters and Journals**

James Franklin Beard, Editor, *The Letters and Journals of James Fenimore Cooper*, 6 Volumes (Cambridge
Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960-1968)

Compiled by Norman Barry

Volume II: 1830-1833

207. To Richard [=Dick] Cooper—Paris. **May 25th 1831.** (pp 89-90.)

Quitting these you [=Richard Cooper] will make my respects, in a suitable manner, to **Mrs. Nelson [21]** and Mrs. Bowers, to Mrs. Metcalfe, Mrs. Russell and Miss Nancy—is she alive? You will of course include all our family connexion, not forgetting the Morrisses.

Footnote: 21, p. 91:

Mrs. Nelson (1805-1875), *the wife of Cooper's friend Samuel Nelson* of the United States Supreme Court, was Catherine Ann, daughter of Dr. John Russell (RLB).

Biographical Note, p. 90:

Richard Cooper (1808-1862), the son of Cooper's brother Richard Fenimore, was a young lawyer just beginning his practice in Cooperstown. The novelist later employed him in most of his legal cases; and in 1850, after the death of Richard's first wife, he married Maria Frances, the youngest Cooper daughter. (Cooper family Bible; William Wager Cooper, "Cooper Genealogy," *Proceedings of the New York State Historical Association*, XVI (1917), 206.)

Volume III: 1833-1839

498. To Mrs. Cooper.—Astor House. **May 25th 1838.** | Friday. (p. 326.)

I hardly see *the Chief Justice*, who is busy, morning, noon and night.

510. To Mrs. Cooper. Albany, **10th Nov. 1838** (p. 343.)

Mrs. Duff* is inclined to take a few girls, and *the Chief-justice* is much disposed to put his daughters with her.

Footnote 4 (p. 345):

Evidently Catharine R. and Jane E., the younger daughters of Chief Justice Samuel Nelson.

*William H. Duff and Mrs. Duff:

Footnote 2/Biographical Note, pp. 344-345—

William H. Duff (d. 1847) conducted the Cooperstown Classical and Military Academy from 1839 to about 1843 [Cf. Levi Beebe, heroic survivor of the Erie disaster, in Samuel Nelson's charge]. A colorful Englishman or Irishman, he is said to have eloped to Canada with a beautiful wife. He apparently passed as an alumnus of Trinity College, Dublin., though he was not; and his claim to the military rank of major

is doubted. Duff is listed in *Child's Albany Directory* for 1838-9 as a professor of languages at the corner of Hawk and Spring streets. Mrs. Duff is listed at the same address as the conductress of a Young Ladies Boarding School. *Their school in Cooperstown occupied Apple Hill, which Cooper purchased* during Duff's occupancy. The novelist interested himself in the institution partly because his son Paul studied there.* In 1843 Duff established a school at Shelter Island. He obtained a captain's commission during the Mexican War and died shortly after sailing for Vera Cruz. (Birdsall, *The Story of Cooperstown*, 353-55; *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*.)

*Letter 603 to Richard Bentley New York.

Nov. 10th 1840

"I have to pay for some houses I purchased, in the winter, and shall be nearly *à sec*..."

525. To Mrs. George Pomeroy.* Philadelphia, April 12th, 1839. (p. 375.)

I do not wish to act singly as the committee for building. My opinions and tastes are so different from most of those of the congregation, in such matters, that it would be building for myself and not for them. I will act in conjunction with others, *the Chief Justice*² and Mr. Scott, for instance, or any one else, but not alone.

Footnote 2/Biographical Note, p. 376:

Cooper's friend, *Samuel Nelson (1792-1873)*, Middlebury 1813), who married *Catherine Anne Russell of Cooperstown*, was appointed associate justice of the supreme court of New York State in 1831, chief justice in 1837, and associate justice of the United States supreme court in 1845. He served until 1872, establishing his reputation in fields of admiralty and maritime law, international law, patent law, and conflict of laws. *Cooper and Nelson* were much like in their attitudes and interests; and although they seem almost never to have corresponded, they maintained a warm friendship until the novelist's death. (Birdsall, *The Story of Cooperstown*, 299-325; *DAB*.)

*Mrs. George Pomeroy: Cf. Biographical Note, Vol. I, p. 152—

Cooper's sister Anne (1784-1870), called "Nancy," married George Pomeroy (1779-1861), grandson of General Seth Pomeroy, in May 1803. Trained in both fashionable and practical arts, she became a conservative woman of much will and energy, whose benevolence was felt throughout the village of Cooperstown. Her later life was clouded by financial reverses and family misunderstandings. Pomeroy, a Yankee pharmacist with a delightful manner, was as much a fixture in Cooperstown as the fine stone house constructed in a herringbone pattern which Judge Cooper gave the couple as a wedding present. (Cooper family Bible, William Wager Cooper, "Cooper Genealogy," *Proceedings of the New York State Historical Association*, XVI (1917), 203; Benedict, *Voices Out of the Past*, 17-23; *Legends and Traditions*, 229-30.)

Volume IV: 1840-1844

604. To Paul Fenimore Cooper. Hall, Cooperstown, Nov. 29th, 1840 (p.105.)

We have no news here. The *Colonel* [Congressman John H. Prentiss] has gone on his Winter's campaign, *the Chief Justice [Samuel Nelson]* is just back from his special term, and I believe Dick has got in his rents.

622. To William Branford Shubrick. Cooperstown, April 13, 1841. (pp. 149-150.)

The *Chief Justice [Samuel Nelson]* has just got back from Albany, and he says he thinks the following will be the termination of *the McLeod business*. The prisoner is now before the Supreme Court on certiorari. A case can be made to try the question of Law. This question can not be urged until July, or decided before October, and if decided against him, it can be carried up to the Court of Errors. In short, a year can be very handsomely <be> expended before the man shall be tried, supposing the decision to be against him. In the mean while, the law being doubtful, and the case one without malice or strong points against the prisoner, he would be bailed on application. This would carry him down to Albany or New York, and then he might get to Canada via Halifax. The English government could indemnify the bail with \$6, or \$8000, and there the matter might end. I think this is likely to be the end of Mr. McLeod's martyrdom, although I do not think he would be hanged if tried, or that war would ensue if he were hanged, drawn and quartered. John would say, what do we fight for? McLeod is dead, honor [won't?] set a leg, and fighting is expensive. When John had honor, it was gen[erally?] a cloak for profit. We should not fight for any American living, nor would John for any Englis[hman?]. As for d[isgrace] it is not an easy matter to disgrace an individual in these palmy days, much less a nation. *The Chief* says they can not well let him go on Habeas Corpus and that Uncle Sam may be d—d, or words to that effect as old [Totten?] says.

Footnote 5, p. 151:

Alexander McLeod, deputy sheriff of Upper Canada, had been arrested by New York authorities at Lewiston, New York, on 12 November 1840. He was charged, unjustly, with arson and with the murder of Amos Durfee, a United States citizen, in the destruction of the ship *Caroline* at Fort Schlosser on 29 December 1837. See Cooper to Richard Bentley, 21 January 1838. McLeod's arrest and subsequent trial aroused much public interest and controversy because the British government had assumed responsibility for the attack on the *Caroline*, making the affair *properly* the subject of negotiation between the two national governments and not grounds for proceedings against individuals in state courts. (Alastaire Watt, "The Case of Alexander McLeod," *The Canadian Historical Review*, XII [June 1931], 145-67.)

638. To Charles Jared Ingersoll. Hall, Cooperstown, Oct. 9th, 1841 (pp. 175-177.)

[The entire letter with footnotes:]

Dear Sir,

My recollections of the McLeod affair are as follows.¹

The Chief Justice [Samuel Nelson] told me that Mr. [Jonathan L.] Wood[s], the district attorney of Niagara County, who was once his partner, had sent him an abstract of the testimony, as it stood last spring, when *the Chief Justice* was required to go and try the cause [case?]. According to this abstract, several respectable Americans, who happened to be in Canada, swore that they saw McLeod get into, and come out of the boat &c. The alibi, it was also said, was attempted to be shown by a woman, or women of doubtful character. This, substantially, I repeated to you, with perhaps some further details to the same effect.

Since then, I understand *the Chief Justice* to say he has examined the testimony for the prosecution, and it struck him as insufficient to convict, unassailed. A general impression has got abroad that McLeod was not present.

All that the chief justice first said, appears to be proved, in terms, and by many witnesses, and every thing now depends on the characters of these witnesses. I have read the opening for the defence, and I confess I begin to think McLeod *was* present. At all events it is pretty clearly proved that he boasted of having been present, and that deprives him of all just grounds of complaint.

It is odd that Capt. Appleby² should think he saw McLeod on board the *Carolina [sic]*, *that very night*, on the American side of the river, and that others on the English side should swear they saw him embark.

You will perceive Appleby tells a companion that McLeod was one of the party before the vessel was out of sight.

Capt. Drew³ also refuses to testify, on very insufficient grounds, when a man's life is involved in the issue. The reporters evidently incline to *peace*, and their accounts are to be taken with grains of allowance.

I was right in thinking the Supreme Court must sentence. I mentioned the discrepancy to *the Chief Justice* to-day, and he laughed at his own forgetfulness in advising the Circuit judge not to sentence.

If the verdict is given this week, of which there seems to be a prospect at present, the case will be taken to the Sup. Court, week after next, in the event of conviction, for sentence. I think with you, however, that there is a great chance that the jury will not agree.

[Spencer]⁴ holds queer doctrine, when he says McLeod is not a murderer, even admitting he was of the party, and that a murder was committed. If twenty soldiers fire into a crowd an[d] a bullet passes through one man's heart, is it necessary to show from which of the twenty guns the bullet was fired?

I think the counsel are getting warm, and are taking sides with zeal.

I remain, dear Sir, | Very Faithfully Yours

C. J. Ingersoll E[squ?] J. Fenimore Cooper

You perceive that [Spencer], who is in confidence of government, says that he believes the Hunter's Lodges extend as far as Lake Huron.

MANUSCRIPT: R. Sturgis Ingersoll, Philadelphia.

Biographical Note, p. 176:

A brilliant lawyer, Ingersoll (1782-1862, College of New Jersey [Princeton] n.g.) was also known in his time as a distinguished writer and legislator. Author of an early declaration of American cultural independence, *Inchiquin, the Jesuit Letters* (1810), he was too gentlemanly to pursue permanent fame in politics or letters. His writings include two plays (one of which was a stage success when Ingersoll was only nineteen), a work on foreign policy, a four-volume history of the War of 1812, and a book of memoirs. A Republican Congressman (1812-1814, 1840-1849), Ingersoll was a well-informed, energetic debater, entrusted by his party with the chairmanship of the committee on foreign affairs. His interests and attitudes were often similar to Cooper's. (William M. Meigs, *The Life of Charles Jared Ingersoll* [Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott, 1900, 1900].)

1. Alexander McLeod, then awaiting trial in a jail in Whitesboro, New York (see Cooper to Shubrick, 13 April 1841), had written to Ingersoll on 20 September 1841 requesting Ingersoll's authority for his allegation in the House of Representatives that McLeod "was at the burning of the *Caroline*, that seven or eight unimpeachable witnesses swore that they saw me return from the expedition and heard me boast that I had killed a damned yankee, and I had attempted to prove an alibi by the testimony of a woman of ill fame and her daughter." Ingersoll's source was Cooper, although, as Ingersoll pointed out in his reply to McLeod on 27 September 1841, "I did not ascribe, as you state, to my informant, but to those he said testified, knowledge of your

participation in the crimes for which you are to be tried.” Enclosed with a letter dated 7 October 1841, Ingersoll had sent Cooper a copy of his correspondence with McLeod. (MSS:YCAL.)

2. Captain Gilman Appleby, master of the *Caroline*.

3. Commander Andrew Drew, R.N., was the actual leader of the expedition against the *Caroline*.

4. Cooper wrote “Spencer” here and elsewhere in the letter. Joshua Austin Spencer (1790-1857) was a well-known lawyer at Utica, New York, appointed United States District Attorney to conduct McLeod’s defence (Franklin B. Hough, *American Biographical Notes* . . . [Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1875]). McLeod was acquitted on 12 October 1841.

675. To Mrs. Cooper. New-York, **May 14, evening, 1842.** (p. 288.)

I had a few minutes talk with *the Chief [Samuel Nelson]* this morning. It was all about grasses and farming.

677. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, New-York, **May 21, 1842.** (pp. 290-291.)

The arbitration commenced on Monday, at half past 4 P. M. I opened in a speech of about two hours. It is generally admitted that the opening was effective. . . .

I tell you this. My love, because I know it will give you pleasure. Dick has just come in, and says he has seen *the Chief Justice [Samuel Nelson]*, who tells him that all he has heard speak on the subject, say we have altogether the best of it.

691. To Benjamin Silliman. Cooperstown, **Sept. 16th, 1842.** (pp. 313-314)

My present object, in addition to thanking you for your politeness, is to ask your kind offices for my young friend Rensselaer [*sic*] Nelson,² who goes to join the new freshman class at alma mater—you see I do not call her a *step*-mother. Mr. Nelson is a son of my friend and neighbor, Judge Nelson, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York. We all feel an interest in his career, and, as he will surely be entirely among strangers, I venture to recommend him to your counsel and friendly offices.

2. *Rensselaer Russell Nelson (1826-1904)*, Yale 1846), *the son of Judge Samuel Nelson*, went west shortly after his admission to the bar in 1849 and took a prominent part in the development of the Minnesota Territory. He served as a federal district judge for Minnesota from 1858 to 1896. (*DAB*.)

697. To Charles Jared Ingersoll. Hall, Cooperstown, **Nov. 7th, 1842.** (p. 321.)

We have magnificent weather up here, and are girding our loins for a great victory tomorrow. I think we shall beat by from 5—to 10,000—My friend, *the Chief Justice*, says by 15.

699. To Daniel Dewey Barnard? Cooperstown, **Dec. 1st, 1842.** (p. 322.)

The Chief Justice was nearer the truth, this time, than I was. Our majority is within twenty of 22,000. This secures the rule for a good many years to come, I think.

703. To Mrs. Cooper. Albany, **Jan. 4th, 1843.** (p. 337.)

Tell Dick Weed's case stands 192, and Stones 242. The calendar is about 300. Including frivolous demurrer's, about 40 cases were disposed of yesterday. *The Chief Justice [Samuel Nelson]* thinks he is quite safe until next week.

.....

Tell Dick Col. Young got \$900 damages.⁵

Footnote 5, p. 338:

Apparently Colonel Samuel Young also sued Thurlow Weed for libel, though Weed's *Albany Evening Journal* did not report the suit.

713. To Jedediah Hunt, Jr., for *The Tompkins Volunteer*.

Cooperstown, Feb. 28th, 1843.

(pp. 371-372.)

Mr. Webb, in a recent article denies some of my statements. Among other things, he flatly denies, that he was under bonds to appear at Fonda, in 1841- I was under bonds to appear at Osego, he says, but after the *venue* was removed to Montgomery, *none were asked, &c. &c.* now this is true in one sense, and yet it conveys a deliberate falsehood, as the facts will show. The case was in the *Oyer and Terminer*. Mr. Webb applied to Chief Justice Nelson, to remove it to the Supreme Court, under the statute. Now this statute *commands*, as any one can see, who will turn to it, that the judge granting a Certiorari* to a *defendant* in a criminal proceeding, *shall* take bail for his appearance above, in order to plead if necessary, and to compel *him to render himself to judgment*, if found guilty. The Certiorari cannot be granted without this bail. The Chief Justice took this bail of Mr. Webb, having two sureties in addition to his own bond, and Mr. Webb *was* under bonds to appear at Fonda, in 1841, his deliberate and prevaricating assertions to the contrary notwithstanding.

*certiorari: a writ or order by which a higher court reviews a case tried in a lower court.

Volume V: 1845-1849

793. To Mrs. Cooper.

Head's, Friday [March] 14th/45

(p. 16.)

I have seen nothing of *Judge [Samuel] Nelson*. He has probably passed through without stopping.

[Introduction]

“A Troublesome Clergy: 1843-1846”

(pp. 59-60.)

The sixty-fifth Annual Diocesan Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of New York, at which Cooper and *his friend Samuel Nelson* represented Christ Church, Cooperstown, convened in St. John's Chapel, New York city, on **24 September 1845**, in an atmosphere of crisis. On 3 January 1845, Bishop Benjamin Tredwell Onderdock had been convicted and suspended by a court of bishops on “certain charges of immorality and impurity.” According to the majority report of a Special Committee, this unprecedented calamity had compelled the the majority report of a Special Committee, this unprecedented calamity had compelled the diocese to “realize the solemn truth of the maxim, that there can be no Church without a Bishop. The churches, societies, and individuals of our communion are daily suffering for the want of Episcopal acts. Our children cannot be confirmed, our edifices for worship cannot be consecrated, ministers cannot be instituted and settled, clergymen cannot be ordained, in fine, the flock is without a shepherd, a condition of disaster and peril which no words can magnify.”

.....

Although Cooper was curiously reticent about his plausible solution to the controversy, the constitutional aspects of the debates assured his active participation. From the first day, when he requested the reading of the canon to settle a point of order, he was in close attendance, with such friends as John C. Spencer, Daniel D. Barnard, Luther Bradish, Hamilton Fish, Gulian C. Verplanck, John Jay, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, and *Samuel Nelson*.

821. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, Thursday morning—[23 September 1845] (p. 63.)

The Clergy will be against us, probably by twenty or thirty votes. There is every prospect of our carrying the laity. Last evening laity stood on vote for President, which some think a test vote, 8 ahead.

Tell Dick Amos Beach gives material testimony, and so will *[Samuel] Nelson* I think, though he comes to the scratch reluctantly. He *can* tell a great deal, if he will.

822. To Mrs. Cooper—Globe. Sunday morning, Sept. 28th, 1845. (pp, 65-66.)

Don Cushman professes a disposition to tell every thing, but is prejudiced against, though he has been shaken. You may judge of the sort of influence to which he has been subjected by the following fact mentioned by Mr. Beach.

“Cooper lords it over you, at Cooperstown, and you are afraid of him,” said Cushman. “Now he spoke of you lately, as ‘my clergyman.’”

“I know he did, Mr. Cushman, for I heard him. A friend of his asked him, by what right he sat in convention, in answer to Mr. Cooper’s questioning his certificate, all in pleasantry, and the answer of Mr. Cooper was *‘There is my clergyman and this is my colleague,’ pointing to Judge Nelson and myself.*”

...

I write to Paul to-day. Tell Dick [Richard Cooper], *Nelson distinctly recognizes what his wife told me, and has intimated that he will converse with her on the subject as soon as he gets home. Still he plays ‘possum.*

824. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, October 1st [1845] (p. 67.)

Tell Dick to ask Henry Ernst² if T[iffany]* did not leave an order for him to pay half his current salary to the Doctor*. If so, he has been guilty of palpable dishonesty, for the Doctor did officiate, or got others to officiate four months, and was entitled to receive \$125; whereas he *has* received but \$59, T[iffany] appropriating *all* the rest of the salary to himself. This will tell. *Nelson [=Samuel Nelson]* distinctly admits that the salary was \$700 and the house. I *distrust him however*. Don Cushman is to meet me in a few minutes, when we shall see how candid he will be.

2. Henry B. Ernst (1809-1868), jeweler and silversmith, son of John Frederic Ernst, Jr. (Hurd, History of Otsego County, 260; Gertrude A. Barber, Records of Christ Church, Cooperstown, Otsego County [Manuscript, 1932], 42, Carbon copy at American Antiquarian Society).

*John Lathrop Tiffany (1793-1878), brother of Frederic Trenck Tiffany [=The Reverend Frederick Trenck Tiffany (1797-1873), rector of Christ Church, Cooperstown]. (Nelson Otis Tiffany, *The Tiffanys of America, History and Genealogy* [Buffalo, New York: privately published, 1901?], 127). —footnote 2, p. 360, *L&J*, Vol. III.

See **822**. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe. Sunday morning. **Sept. 28th, 1845**. (p. 64.):
Tell Dick I have not seen Dr. [Leverett] Bush, but he is here, and I hope to see him to-morrow. Mr. Beach has seen him. He tells me that the doctor says he received \$50 from the vestry and 9 more from John Tiffany. This was for about four months salary. Now, at the time, Dr. B[ush] told me that T[iffany] had given him authority to get one half of T[iffany]'s salary from the treasurer, but it could not be had in consequence of T[iffany]'s having pledged it to other persons. The whole amount would be say \$113, for which \$59 only has been paid; he (T[iffany]) received *all his salary for two years for his own purposes*. The Dr. is a little savage I understand.

*Dr. Leverett Bush (d. 1856), rector of St. Paul's Church of Oxford, New York, from 1818 to 1842. Bush apparently filled the pulpit of Christ Church, Cooperstown, for about five months in 1842 and 1843. (Henry J. Galpin, *Annals of Oxford, New York* . . . [Oxford, New York: Times Book and Job Printing House, 1906], 218).

825. To Richard Cooper. Head's, Philadelphia, **Oct. 2, 1845**. (pp. 70-71.)

Dr. [Leverett] Bush's affair is serious too. Ask H[enry] Ernest if T[iffany] did not give the Dr. the right to receive one half his current salary while the latter officiated, and, if, under this agreement he, Ernest did not pay B[ush] \$50, declining to pay any more on account of the other demands on him. I think the answers will be yes. B[ush] got \$9 more from John Tiffany. This is all he ever received for four months services. Now, it will not do to say B[ush] did not earn or deserve his money, for T[iffany] has since drawn every dollar of his salary and not paid B[ush] what is due to him out of it. This smells rank and must be enquired into. It may be well, to save time, to write to Dr. B[ush] propounding queries.

You will remember that T[iffany] has often admitted to Amos Beach* that his salary was \$700 and the house—*[Samuel] Nelson* says the same—

*Amos Billings Beach (1814-1885), Union 1832, General Theological Seminary 1836), brother of A. B. Beach and rector of Zion Church, Butternuts (Morris), Otsego County, in 1845, held pastorates also in Binghamton, Otsego, and Ithaca, New York (*The Ithaca Democrat*, 22 January 1885).

JOURNAL XXXIII: 12 FEBRUARY TO 29 FEBRUARY 1848

Tuesday, **15 February 1848** (p. 284.)

Miss Beebe¹ passed the evening with us, to take leave of us—

Footnote 1:

Miss Beebe may have been **Emma F. Wright Beebe** whom *Rensselaer R. Nelson*, son of *Judge Samuel Nelson*, married on 3 November 1858 (*DAB*).

JOURNAL XXXVII: 15 MARCH TO 21 MARCH 1848

Friday, **17 March 1848** (p. 313.)

[Samuel] Nelson has got home, full of Washington news.

Saturday, **18 March 1848**

(p. 313.)

Chess, one game. I beat, when *Judge Nelson* came in, and sat until near ten—He is full of Washington news.

**JOURNAL XLIV:
13 MAY TO 14 MAY 1848**

Sunday, **14 May 1848**

(p. 350.)

Numbers. Raining and cool. Most of us went to church, notwithstanding. About seventy persons attended. *The Judge [Samuel Nelson]* was there, having got home last evening. In the afternoon I read the service for my wife, who did not like to risk the weather.

962. To Stephen Henry Battin*. Hall, Cooperstown, **Nov. 6th, 1848.** (pp. 388-389.)

The meeting of to-day was full, all being present but *Judge Nelson*, who is now in town holding the circuit, and Mr. [Henry] Scott, a warden, who is sick. I saw this last gentleman myself, and he is favourably disposed towards you. I understand *Judge Nelson* is of the same way of thinking. Thus you may view the call as unanimous.

*Battin (1814?- 1893, Trinity 1839, General Theological Seminary 1842) was officially called as rector of Christ Church, Cooperstown, on 10 November 1848; and he served from 24 November 1848 to 1 August 1858. At the time of his death, he was rector emeritus of Christ Episcopal Church on Jersey City Heights. (Hurd, *History of Otsego County*, 275; *The New-York Times*, 24 February 1893.) (pp. 389-390.)

Footnote, p. 390:

A statement on the holograph signed “Stephen H. Battin” reads: “I succeeded Dr. Alfred Beach, and my salary was at once raised to \$800 per annum. I baptized Mr. Cooper and also buried both himself and Mrs. Cooper. He was about sixty years old when baptized, having been brought up a ‘Quaker.’ Mrs. Cooper was the sister of Bishop De Lancey, and was also distantly connected with Mrs. Battin—thro the Van Cortlandts—I also performed the marriage ceremony for two of the daughters Mrs. Finney and Mrs. Richard Cooper. Along with this momento should go, the letter written to me after Mr. Cooper’s death, by his daughter Miss Susan, at the time the family united in sending me a pocket communion service of silver.”

Volume VI: 1849-1851

979. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, New York. Sunday, **March 11, 1849**

(p. 17.)

Amariah [Storrs] says *the [Samuel] Nelsons* are to be here to-day. I shall look them up. Rens[sealer R. Nelson] has gone through New Haven; *the Judge* is delighted with old Zac*, they say, and likes the cabinet.

*Zachary Taylor, Whig, 12th U.S. President, March 4, 1849 – July 9, 1850.

987. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, Tuesday, **May Day, 1849.** (p. 32.)

I have also seen Amariah [Storrs], and *the Judge [Samuel Nelson]* passed an hour or two with me last night.

990. To Mrs. Cooper Globe, Tuesday, **May 7th, 1849.** (p. 37)

Tell Dick that [Joseph L.] White has not made his motion, nor does he know when he can. It is judicial anarchy, as *[Samuel] Nelson* terms it.

1002. To William Branford Shubrick. Hall, Cooperstown, **August 5th, 1849.** (p. 60.)

My neighbor, Judge Nelson, has just left me, and without entering fully into the affair, I read to him the paragraph which offends Comm. Stockton, and he was strong in declaring that he had no right to make it personal. He even goes much further, and says that any citizen would have the right to make the same comment on a public measure like this.

1036. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe, Wednesday, **Jan. 30th, 1850.** (p. 121)

[James E.] De Kay* was here yesterday, and I dined with him. He complimented me highly. He is now quite at ease, has \$3000 a year, and his place on the Island. This is the result of the decision made by *[Samuel] Nelson*.

*James Ellsworth De Kay:

Biographical Note, **Vol. 1**, p. 372 (148. To James Ellsworth De Kay. Florence, **May 25th, 1829**, Villa St. Hilario, near the Porta Romana—

The orphaned son of a sea captain, De Kay (1792-1851, M.D., Edinburgh 1819) obtained a medical education, although he was far more interested in the study of zoology and botany than in the practice of medicine. An early member of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, he acted as librarian and added much to its collections. An author, he liked the society of literary men, and it was he who brought Fitz-Greene Halleck and Joseph rodman Drake together. He was an active member of the Bread and Cheese. De Kay's most important work was his five-volume Zoology of New York, which appeared between 1842 and 1844. (*DAB.*)

CORRESPONDENCE, Vol. II: To Mrs. Cooper, Cooperstown. Globe, N.Y., **Feb. 20th, 1850** (pp. 666-667.)

Rens. Nelson is below, and I postpone the rest until to-morrow. . . .

Rens. Nelson came to see me yesterday. I suspect he is here for a frolick. He looks thin. There is to be an extra session in April, May, and June, and *Mrs. [Rensselaer] Nelson* is to go to Washington.

1046. To Mrs. Cooper. Globe Hotel, New York, **Feb. 23rd, 1850** (p. 142.)

Dick's [letter] turned out to be a letter from *[Samuel] Nelson*, all about the troubles at Washington.

1095. To Mrs. Cooper. Broadway Hotel | **Sept. 22nd, 1850** (p. 222.)

I sat with *the Judge [Samuel Nelson]* an hour yesterday, and found John [Nelson]* there. “An old A— is a hog,” is a byword among us. We laughed a great deal.

*John W. Nelson:

743. To Paul Fenimore Cooper. Hall, Cooperstown, Nov. 9th, 1843. (p. 427.)

John Nelson is [in] New York. He is troubled with some affection of the throat, and I believe dreads consumption, the disease that killed his mother. I think the apprehension groundless.

Footnote 6. *John W. Nelson (d. 1857*, Union 1839), *son of Judge Samuel Nelson*, became a lawyer (Union University; Centennial Catalogue, 1795-1895, of the Officers and Alumni of union College . . . [Troy, New York: Troy Times Printing House, 1895], 56.

1102. To William Branford Shubrick. Hall, Cooperstown | **Nov. 3, 1850.** (p. 230.)

Paul has made a very good and creditable arrangement at Albany. He is partner in a firm that is well established, and which is doing a good deal of business. He has charge of the office, which gives him plenty to do, and just the experience he requires, and has one fourth of the earnings, which exceeded \$3000 nett, last year. This is a pretty good beginning, as most young lawyers do not make their salt for the first year or two. *Judge Nelson* has given Paul the offices of Master & Examiner, Commissioner &c., in his court, and thinks they will give him enough to live on.

1105. To Mrs. Cooper. | Broadway Hotel, Thursday, **Nov. 21st [18]50.** (p.234.)

[Samuel] Nelson goes home this evening.

“A Tiel Tree or an Oak” —1851
(p.256.)

When he rallied at intervals, he took pleasure in seeing *old friends like Judge Nelson* and in hearing his letters and the newspapers read aloud to him.