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Margaret Hope Bacon

LUCY MCKIM GARRISON PIONEER IN FOLK MUSIC

Among the women of Pennsylvania who made history in the nineteenth century, one of the most intriguing is Lucy McKim Garrison.¹ Daughter of the famous Pennsylvania abolitionist, Miller McKim, and Sarah Speakman McKim, a member of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, Lucy grew up in the reform circles of mid century Philadelphia. Later, by marrying Wendell Garrison, second son of William Lloyd Garrison, she became part of the larger reform movement encompassing Boston and New York. With Wendell, she worked to make the new publication, *The Nation*, a success. Her place as a notable American woman resulted from her ability to combine abolitionism with her love of music. By annotating the slave songs of the Sea Islands during the Civil War, and later helping to publish them, she was a pioneer in bringing the black spirituals to public attention.

Lucy's brother, Charles Follen McKim, became a famous nineteenth century architect. But while Lucy too had ambitions, she found that her role as a wife and mother tied her down, despite the feminism of her parents and her husband, and the end of her life was shadowed by depression which reflected the disappointment of her expectations. Her story is important, not only for her contribution to the history of music, but as a cautionary tale of the place of a woman coming to age in the aftermath of Seneca Falls. To proclaim woman's rights was one thing; to change role expectations took much longer.

Lucy's father, James Miller McKim, born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, had intended to enter the Presbyterian ministry until he attended the American Anti-Slavery Convention in Philadelphia in 1833. There he came under the influence of Lucretia Mott, who questioned his orthodoxy, and later recommended he become the agent of the Pennsylv-

vania Anti-Slavery Society, formed in 1837. Lucretia also introduced him to his wife-to-be, Sarah Allibone Speakman, (1813–1891) daughter of Micajah Speakman of Chester County, a Quaker farmer whose home served as a station in the underground railroad, and Phoebe Smith, his first wife. Sarah's father, though liberal, at first objected to Miller, but Lucretia Mott managed to convince him that Miller was a Friend at heart. The two were married in October, 1840. Sarah remained a lifelong Friend in dress and speech.²

The McKims set up housekeeping in Philadelphia, where Miller worked at the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery office at 31 North 5th Street, sharing the space with William Still, clerk and janitor, a pivotal figure in the operation of the underground railroad. The family lived for a while on North 10th, then moved to Green Street, before finally locating at "Hilltop" in Germantown in 1855. Lucy was born on October 30, 1842, and her brother, Charles, on August 24, 1847. In addition the McKims raised a distant cousin, Annie, adopting her as their own.

Much of the McKim's social life was taken up with the affairs of the hospitable Motts, who lived at 136 North 9th, just a few blocks away, and entertained traveling reformers, their extended family, and a circle of close friends. Martha Coffin Wright from Auburn, New York, Lucretia Mott's younger sister, and her husband and children were frequent visitors.

By the time Lucy was eight years old she had formed a fast friendship with Ellen Wright, born in 1840. The two began a correspondence in 1850 which lasted to 1876, shortly before Lucy's death. The two girls planned never to marry, but to establish careers and to live together in a "Spanish castle." Yet the friendship endured after they had both married sons of William Lloyd Garrison, and had assumed the roles of wife and mother.

When Lucy was ready for higher education, a suitable school was ready for her. Angelina Grimke Weld and Theodore Weld, abolitionists, had recently moved to a cooperative community in Raritan Bay, New Jersey, which included many of the Transcendentalists and reformers of the day, and had there opened a school, Eagleswood, which combined an emphasis on manual labor with a rich curriculum including art, music, drama, and physical education for both men and women.³

Sarah and Miller McKim chose Eagleswood for the education of their three children, although they could ill afford the tuition on Miller's tiny salary. They solved their budget problem with a staggered system. Annie and Lucy went to school during the school year 1857–1858; then

Lucy stayed home while Annie and Charlie attended during 1858–1859. Lucy was to rest her eyes, which had been giving her trouble, and earn money for next year's tuition by giving piano lessons to young pupils, thus launching her career as a professional musician at age fifteen. The effort was apparently a success, for she spent the following year back at Eagleswood, both teaching and studying. She returned in 1860–1861 to teach, and often thereafter visited the school on special occasions.

Ellen Wright, two years older than Lucy, had left Eagleswood when Lucy returned in the fall of 1858. On November 12, Lucy wrote her friend about her new schedule:

Yes, I am here again at Eagleswood, with only two studies, Latin and Music, and yet so busy that I can hardly find time to turn around. Industry is indigenous to this place! I have ten scholars, take lessons on the violin, practice an hour every day on the piano, perform Gamma Sigma duties, Iadma, Mermaid, and the Eagleswood band, ditto, write compositions and speak, and do a variety of things too innumerable to mention. Russell Bellows, Annie Salmon and I have just been playing a fugue of Bach's, R. on the violin, A on melodeon, and myself on piano, it is splendidific!⁴

Lucy's violin teacher was Frederick Mollenhauer, a German musician of distinction who had come to the United States six years earlier. In March 1859 she wrote to Ellen to say that Mr. Mollenhauer had complimented her on her progress and given her new exercises to practice. Fortunately for history, Mollenhauer did not know how to write music, and he used his talented student to annotate the music he was composing. In July she wrote Ellen of having spent an afternoon at his home, enjoying both writing music and playing it with him.⁵

In the same long, exuberant letter, Lucy describes a 4th of July celebration on the water, and preparations for an upcoming Eagleswood anniversary program of both music and drama. She would perform a number of piano solos as well as accompany Mr. Mollenhauer's violin solo. She would also play a scene from *Richard III* and was working with friends on a costume committee.⁶

Lucy's enthusiasm for Eagleswood did not extend itself to embrace its famous founders. She described Theodore Weld's enormous beard mockingly, and made fun of the pompous way he presided over a scant supper. Of Angelina Grimke Weld and her sister, Sarah Grimke, she wrote Ellen, "the tough Carolina pine knots are as tight fibred as they were; pantalettes also endure."⁷

In the fall of 1859, Lucy was considered a graduate of Eagleswood.

Theodore Weld invited her to return next year as a teacher, but she decided to spend the year in Philadelphia studying. Getting down to self directed study however was not easy. In February 1860 she wrote Ellen:

You ask what I am doing. Nothing as yet, but preparing to study. I see your look of amazement that I am not started at this time, but you would cease to wonder if you knew all the little things that eat up my time. First and foremost of all the bugbears on the list is company. Second is the obligation to return visits, third teaching—not many scholars to be sure, but enough to take me into town twice a week and keep me there all night—Fourth the most necessary and hateful—housekeeping. I consider the last mentioned evil the worst result of Eve's offense, the very core of her fatal apple. When I do get started and seriously, I shall very soon, I expect to take French & piano lessons, and study Latin and History by myself.⁸

Later that month she did begin to take piano lessons with Ben Cross, son of one of the founders of the Musical Fund Society, as her teacher, and she enjoyed some musical evenings with his family. But her plans for other study never materialized, and she returned to Eagleswood the following year to teach.

She was glad to be back, but her joy was shadowed by her concern about the gathering shadows of the Civil War. The abolitionists in the Mott circles were strongly committed to non-resistance, the philosophy that evils such as slavery must be overcome by moral force alone. Miller McKim however did not agree with this position, and Lucy shared her father's sentiments. In a long letter to Ellen in November 1861 she described a delightful visit of William Lloyd Garrison and his non-resister son, Wendell, to Philadelphia, complete with dinner parties both at Roadside, the Mott's home in Cheltenham Hills, and at Hilltop. Wendell, she wrote was a perfect duck. But in a long postscript she added:

It makes one very fierce and un-Christian to hear of defeats. It rouses all the mother in one (or perhaps sister) when those brave young things fall. Don't you really think that "all the young worth love and truth are mustered for the pay"? . . . Can't conscientiously fall in love with a non-resistant these days. . . ."⁹

As the war progressed she became more restless and frequently expressed the wish that she were not a mere woman, and could do something dramatic to aid the Northern cause. Former classmates from

Eagleswood were enlisting and coming to call on her in their handsome uniforms. She flirted with them all and wrote them letters at the front.

An unexpected chance to take action came in the spring of 1862. Miller McKim, having resigned his post with the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society in January, became general secretary for the Philadelphia Port Royal Relief Association in March. This group supported efforts to aid the newly freed slaves on the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina, captured by Union troops at the beginning of the Civil War, the first effort at reconstruction. Miller was asked to visit the islands and prepare an account of the condition of the freedmen. He needed a secretary to accompany him, and nineteen year old Lucy was delighted to volunteer.

After several delays the trip was scheduled for June 2. The day before she wrote triumphantly to Ellen, "The ARGO actually does sail for Port Royal tomorrow afternoon, and we have been as busy as bees getting ready to leave tomorrow morning in the 8 o'clock train for New York. What larx, ain't it?"¹⁰

On the voyage down she met a young Union doctor with a fine tenor voice, and an army doctor and lieutenant who were baritones, and promptly got up a quartet. "We played cards a little, talked an infinitude, and sang all the rest of the time," she recalled. "I enjoyed myself so much that there is even a halo around seasickness and an ecstatic thrill in every flea bite."¹¹

Landing at Hilton Head, she heard for the first time the "wild sad songs of the Negroes." They made a deep impression on her, and though she continued to have fun and flirt with Union soldiers as she and her father toured the islands, she also began to write down the words and the music of the spirituals. She went to "shouts" and "praises" conducted in the cabins of the freedmen, and was moved to tears by one old black preacher "Calling down blessings on their new friends who had come so far way from de beautiful norf to deliver them, instead of cursing every Anglo-Saxon as he had cause and right to do." It was a turning point for Lucy. "I vowed then and there that if I ever forgot them so might Heaven forget me."¹²

In all, the McKims spent three weeks on the Sea islands. Lucy kept a diary in order to preserve her impressions. Unfortunately the diary was lost and all that remains are extracts from a long letter addressed to her adopted sister Annie and copied over by Ellen Wright at some later date. In this letter she describes in detail their arrival, the trip from Land's End to St. Helena, accompanied by the singing of the black boatman, and then the trip inland to their first destination, the former Pape's

plantation, the Oaks, where a Unitarian teacher, Laura Towne, had set up a freedom school, later to be named William Penn School. Traveling with them was Ellen Murray, Laura's lifelong companion, coming to join her friend in teaching the freedmen.¹³

Altogether, the McKims visited four islands: Hilton Head, St. Helena's, Ladies, and Port Royal. They also went aboard a ship of the Union blockade, the *Onward*. It was the people who chiefly interested Lucy:

Most of all we are with the Negroes—I cannot tell you how interested I am, I have jottings of their talk to tell you, etc. We live in the greatest state—two cooks, three coachmen, always a footman, never touch our rooms!!!! How would you like to drive with Dance in front and Cupid behind? Besides these there are Plenty, January, Rochard, Dido Scylla, etc. They sing and grin all day long. I never saw such a set. Susann the cook says she knows it can't last long. "It is too much happiness." What horrible cruelty there has been on this plantation! One woman's back is covered with welts, like wens. There is a bent tree in the yard, and Aunt Phillie says it can tell a tale . . . it feels smooth and human to touch. . . ."¹⁴

Lucy's keen ear picked up the cadences of the Gullah spoken by the Sea Islands ex slaves, who had come as a body from Africa and retained some of their native language mixed with English. In the former slave quarters at the Oaks she was introduced to the contraband as "Miss Lucy, who sent the clothes & molasses and bacon to them." The slave praised her extravagantly. "Sweet Jesus, can't be, can't be." "Dear Lord, jes look at her O! Missus! De tings too good, too good!" The black children fought over holding her skirts or those of Ellen Murray. "o you git out, you Dido, dis yer my missus!" "keep off, Elsie, keep to y'own missus!"¹⁵

By the time the tour was over, and the McKims returned to Philadelphia Lucy was already making her plans to introduce the slave songs to Northern abolitionists. One of the first steps was to sing them at Roadside for the Motts. On August 17 of that summer Lucretia Mott wrote her sister Martha Wright that Lucy had entertained her company by singing and playing, "the Port Royal Negro hymns which were very touching and some of them sad."¹⁶

On July 9, 1862, Miller McKim spoke at Sanson Hall, in Philadelphia, on "The Freedmen of South Carolina." In it he described the trip, and some of the music Lucy had collected.¹⁷ On August 9, *Dwight's Journal of Music* published an extract of Miller's talk, under the title

“Negro Songs,” and including the words of “Poor Rosie, Poor Gal,” which Miller had described as deeply moving.

On November 8, 1862, *Dwight's Journal of Music*, announced the receipt of “Song No. 1 of Songs of the Freedmen or Port Royal, collected and arranged by Miss Lucy McKim.” The song was “Poor Rosie, Poor Gal.” Lucy also wrote a long letter describing the songs:

... it is difficult to express the entire character of these negro ballads by mere musical notes and signs. The odd turns made in the throat; and the curious rhythmic effect produced by single voices chiming in at different irregular intervals, seem almost as impossible to place on score, as the singing of birds, or the tones of an Aeolian harp. Their airs however can be reached. They are too decided not to be easily understood, and their striking originality would catch the ear of any musician. Besides this, they are valuable as an expression of the character and life of the race which is playing such a conspicuous part in our history. The wild sad strains tell, as their sufferers themselves never could, of crushed hopes, keen sorrow, and a dull daily misery which covers them as hopelessly as got from the rice swamps. . . .

Perhaps the grandest singing we heard was at the Baptist Church on St. Helena Island when a congregation of three hundred men and women joined in a hymn—

Roll, Jordan, roll!

Roll, Jordan, roll!

It swelled forth like a triumphant anthem. That same hymn was sung by thousands of negroes on 4th of July last, when they marched in procession under the Stars and Stripes, cheering them for the first time as the “flag of our country.” A friend writing from there said the chorus was indescribably grand; “that the whole woods and world seemed joined in that rolling sound.”

There is much more in this new and curious music, of which it is a temptation to write, but I must remember that it can speak for itself better than anyone for it.

Lucy's letter has been described as the first sympathetic discussion of slave music to be published. Writing to her sister Martha later that month, Lucretia Mott commented on the response: “Lucy really makes them [the slave songs] quite interesting—her letter to the Music Editor has been much praised.”¹⁸

On January 17, 1863, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, announced that Lucy had now published a second song in her series, "Roll Jordan, Roll." However neither of the two songs did well enough in the music stores to warrant her proceeding with publishing six, as she had projected. Instead, Lucy settled back somewhat restlessly into her old routine of giving music lessons. In addition, as her contribution to the war, she began to pick lint for medical bandages. Two sons of a cousin of Lucretia Mott, Dick and Beverly Chase, had enlisted in the army. Bev courted Ellen Wright; Dick paid his attentions to Lucy. Lucy worried about the safety of both boys, but insisted that she and Dick correspond as friends only. She said she was not interested in sentimental ties:

O, I'm so thankful I'm not married or engaged. There is too much to see, hear, do and feel first. Life opens up so grandly in 1862, Elle, even if we "only stand and wait" and I cannot wish to write finis to my story yet and of course the end of the story is "so they were married and lived peacefully and happily ever after." One dreams of every other fate that on this historic day, the 4th of July, 1862, especially when one has been to the Sea Islands.¹⁹

She proposed playfully to Ellen that instead of setting up housekeeping together in a Spanish Hall, they ought to go live on the Sea Islands.

As the battle news rolled in, she became more and more belligerent. "Annie and I have had a steady influx of patriotism since the Richmond battles, and are not going to countenance young men who stay home from purely selfish motives," she wrote Ellen on July 30. "Every day it comes to me with greater force, we must conquer. Why are the men so sluggish?" She saw a copy of the Emancipation Proclamation when Major John Fremont dined at Oak Farm, the home of a Mott daughter, Maria Mott Davis, and her husband, Edward M. Davis, and reacted by bemoaning the fact that she was not black, or a man. In November she was complaining to Ellen that she alone was a spectator in the war, while everyone else at least had a soldier at the front.

In January 1863 came the news that Richard Chase had been killed in action at Murfreesboro. Despite her platonic feelings for him, Lucy was devastated by his loss. She was not so calm and philosophical about it after all, she wrote Ellen. But by February her spirits had recovered and she was once more belligerent:

Give up the struggle? . . . Never, never never! Not when Rober Purvis leads a black regiment in the heart of South Carolina. If there is anything in having moral forces & justice on our side &

moral obliquity & tyranny on the other, we shall succeed. O! This war is a great, grand thing! A sharp resistless cure for a huge disease. It is only hard not to envy those who are part of it. Is it not anguish to be a comfortable nobody in a heroic age?²⁰

Ellen's younger brother, Willie Wright had enlisted, and was injured at the battle of Gettysburg in July. His father and his stepsister, Marianne Pelham Mott, rushed to his side. As soon as he could be moved, he was taken to a nearby farm where an older Wright sister, Eliza Wright Osborne, could nurse him. In August, Charles McKim, just sixteen, joined Wendell and Frank Garrison and Will Davis in a walking trip to Gettysburg to visit the invalid, once he was past the crisis. They set out from Philadelphia on Tuesday, July 28, arrived within seven miles of West Chester the first day, reached Lancaster by Friday and finally arrived in Gettysburg on August 5.²¹

Late in August, the four pedestrians arrived at Hilltop, sunburned and hot. Lucy's mother was away, and Lucy and Annie were getting ready for Annie's approaching wedding.

When Annie and I had got them off to their rooms and baths we looked at each other and wept . . . when the youths appeared there was no way but to take the whole cargo up to the third floor west and let them watch the interesting process of trousseau making. After lunch we adjourned to the parlor & while Wendell was playing "The Raw Recruit" madly on the piano and everybody else whistling and cracking bones, Mother did appear. Never did I hail a sweeter vision . . . if you ever want to arouse my worst hatred I cannot wish you a greater punishment than entertaining a parcel of men through a series of hot August days.²²

Fred Dennis, Annie's finance, and Wendell got along well, Lucy reported, and Fred said if "Wendell were not a 'non' [nonresistor] he would be prime." Wendell and Lucy were paired off several times in tete-tetes, but as she wrote Ellen, "nothing happened."²³

What happened in fact is that Wendell Garrison lost his courage. He had come to Hilltop intending to propose to Lucy but he found he couldn't bring himself to say the words. Instead, after he returned to Boston, he wrote to Lucy of his love and desire to marry her. She did not reject him, but put him off for a while. Her letters to Ellen after this were full of references to Wendell and the whole intriguing Garrison family.

At the same time that Wendell was courting Lucy, his older brother

William was paying suit to Ellen Wright. Lucy had mixed feelings when Ellen announced her engagement in February of 1864. "Is it really & solemnly true that you are going to be married & leave me to keep our Spanish Hall by myself?" she asked. "I'd like to bet with Mrs. Mott that by the end of five of ten or twenty years, up to your golden anniversary day, there will be no such happy and thankful wife as you."²⁴

Romance was in the air, and the whole Garrison family seemed to be smitten. Fanny Garrison, the only daughter of William Lloyd Garrison, was being courted by Henry Villard, a newspaper correspondent. Then in June, Lucy admitted to Ellen that she and Wendell now had an understanding. "it is quite true that I've agreed to love Wendell and be very happy. And I am very happy and thankful," she wrote.²⁵

Wendell had a job on the *New York Independent* under the editorship of Theodore Tilton, a reformer. The job was interesting but paid very little and had no future. He would have to wait, he told Lucy, until he found a more secure position before marriage was possible. Fortunately Lucy's father was engaged in an enterprise which would provide Wendell with the opening he needed. Miller McKim had come to the conclusion that the needs of the newly freed slaves had to be kept in the forefront of public attention if the gains of emancipation and the emerging Union victory were to stick. As corresponding secretary now for the American Freedmen's Relief Association, he began to raise money in Philadelphia and in Baltimore with the idea of developing a new journal to meet this goal. He soon joined forces with Edwin L. Godkin, an Irish born journalist who had traveled in the South during the Civil War for the *London Daily News* and was trying to raise money also for a weekly journal of politics, literature, art and science. In April of 1865 Miller called on Lucretia and James Mott to outline the plans for the new periodical the two had agreed upon. It was to be called the *Nation* and be sponsored by a new organization, "the Reconstruction Union."

When the *Nation* was first published on July 6, 1865, Godkin was editor and Wendell Garrison literary editor. Although Wendell's salary for the new magazine was described as "the pay of an oysterman," his future seemed secure enough for him and Lucy to set a wedding date for December, 1865. Lucy was in conflict between wanting a big wedding, and planning one in keeping with the income of her future husband. She was apparently not resigned yet to sacrificial poverty. After an outburst to Ellen she chastised herself:

Come—it becomes the wife of such a rising Woolman [John Woolman, a Quaker advocate of simple living] to speak in that scornful way of camels and needles, don't it? You may have to give out of your stuffed coffers a few cents to your poor literary bro. whose loosing all his wool for the sake of the persecuted Afrikin. [Wendell was growing bald.]²⁶

The wedding took place in Philadelphia on December 6. For their wedding trip, Lucy and Wendell went to Boston to attend Fanny Garrison's wedding to Henry Villard in January. Soon after they began to search for a house in New Jersey when they and the McKims could live together, while Wendell commuted to New York. The house finally chosen was in Llewellynn Park, West Orange. Sarah McKim wrote her son, Charles, studying to enter Harvard that fall:

The house is rather fanciful to my taste. It was built by an artist; it has a funny pitched roof and clustered chimneys and bull's eyes windows, and niches for statuettes, and all sorts of artistic arrangements that don't quite suit my plain taste. Still, I don't doubt I shall soon be able to accustom myself to them and be quite comfortable.²⁷

Once settled in New Jersey, with her mother doing the housekeeping for the two couples, Lucy began to help Wendell with the *Nation*, reviewing books for children and all books about music. Her reviews were not signed, but family correspondence refers to them. She also continued her lively letters to Ellen Wright Garrison, who was expecting her first child in June. "Don't be scared, I've heard tell it wasn't anything once it was over," she urged Ellen, revealing more of her own feelings than she knew.²⁸

True to its mission the *Nation* devoted considerable space in its early issues to the situation of the freedmen. In August of 1865 there appeared the first of a series of letters, "State of Things in South Carolina," by William Francis Allen, a Harvard trained historian, who signed himself "Marcel." Allen was a talented amateur musician, and began to collect the slave songs. Correspondence between him and the Garrisons reawakened Lucy's earlier ambition to see more of the songs she had collected, published. A book was agreed upon and Allen and his cousins, Charles and Harriet Ware, stationed at Port Royal, collected more songs and sent them to Lucy and Wendell.

In June of 1867, Laura Towne of St. Helena wrote Lucy that

Ellen Murray had copied out a group of songs from a book they were assembling, and were sending them on for the project. "There are so many more that the people sing now, for they are constantly either reviving the old ones or inventing new ones, I don't know which, but I have neither the words nor the tunes," she wrote.²⁹

After a spring and summer of collecting songs, Lucy and Charles Ware read page proof in the fall, and the book was published in November, 1867. Wendell played a considerable role in getting the book into final shape, but as a loving husband and early feminist he insisted that Lucy's name appear as author, along with William Francis Allen and Charles Pickard Ware.

Published by A. Simpson and Company in New York *Slave Songs of the United States*, was virtually unnoticed. Sales were slow and reviews few. Lucy was fortunately too busy at the time to feel the full weight of this second disappointment. She was nursing her first baby, Lloyd McKim, born on May 4, 1867. Lucy wrote Ellen with her customary flippancy that the baby was born with his forehead jammed down over his eyes, but "it soon rose to comfort his anxious parents." She had plenty of milk for him, and evidently enjoyed her first year of parenthood. At thirteen months, Lloyd was learning to whistle, and "accomplishes a note once every dozen blows or so."³⁰

Lloyd was followed by Philip McKim, born September 28, 1869. A baby was evidently lost by miscarriage in 1871, and Katherine McKim joined the family on May 10, 1873. Lucy's letters to Ellen suggest that there were other miscarriages. Although she lived with her efficient and devoted mother, and often had a nursemaid for the children, motherhood seems to have overwhelmed Lucy. Her long ago remark that "housework was the worst result of Eve's offense," seems to have been prophetic. In her letters during the childbearing period an underlying note of depression and even desperation slowly began to take the place of the old vivacity and wit. In July of 1869 she wrote to thank Ellen for a wrapper for the new baby she was expecting that fall, and to express her admiration of her friend's ability to cope:

You are a remarkable woman and deserve to go into the next edition of Sarah Jane Hale with portrait, to be cited in the *Revolution*, in the New England Woman's Club, and to be a sister-in-law of a niece of Mrs. Stanton's. I suppose half a dozen miscarriages thrown in wouldn't make any difference to you. They'd rather give you more time to knit for your friend's unborn families.³¹

In November, after Philip was born, she wrote to Ellen in the same vein: "My dear sister-in-law, where do you find the time? I am only a wife and mother & yet my leisure and strength are both pretty well occupied, but if I were a housekeeper besides as you are, I don't know exactly what I would do."³²

Wendell tried hard to support Lucy's flagging spirits, and encourage her outside interests, but he was far too committed to the *Nation* to have much time at home. Lucy mentioned in one of her letters having to return orchestra seats, because Wendell could not go with her, and turning down social invitations that did not fit Wendell's schedule. She said that all her days were beginning to seem like Mondays.

While Lucy's world was narrowing to the still tightly proscribed role of wife and mother in the middle of the nineteenth century, her brother Charlie's was expanding gloriously. In September of 1867, after a year at Harvard, he went to France to study at the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. Following a year of work at an atelier he began to travel, supporting himself partially by serving as special Paris correspondent for the *Auburn Daily News*.

In her letters to him, Lucy begged hungrily for more news of the world of culture:

O we want to hear a great deal more about thy visit to the Chateau Neuf! How you lived there, more about the people, who is "Joubert"? Are there desmoiselles; how is thee received? Is the fat old Mme. the only one in the family? What kind of bedroom thee has, what sort of servants there are, what thee and Jourdain do all day; what 'hifalutin civilities' are, etc. etc. ad infin.³³

Charlie's letters evidently grew no more specific, and in January of 1870 she lost all patience:

Thee speaks of operas, skating ponds, calling & dining & at work—so far the first paragraph & we all set our hearts to hear something to enliven our rather dull & shut up country winter life. But not a word further! The seven pages that followed were as scrupulously devoted to architectural prospects as if they were the only prospects from our windows. Not the name of one opera. Not a syllable about skating gaieties. . . . I believe I shall never bother again, but make up my mind quickly that the masculine mind is incapable of a certain kind of productiveness unassisted by pumping in detail & vive voce. If there were anything to tell now I would

for all I said I wouldn't but when one hasn't been anywhere for 5 months, further than Orange one doesn't acquire much.³⁴

Her brother-in-law, Henry Villard, began to travel to Europe frequently in the 1870s as his business increased, and he brought Lucy presents, including gloves and cologne, "both welcome to a young woman with luxurious tastes," she wrote to her sister-in-law, Fanny. (2-1-1871) Many of her old Eagleswood friends and members of the Mott-Wright-Davis circle from Philadelphia were enjoying the Gilded Age by traveling abroad. Even her sister, Annie Dennis, made a trip overseas. Lucy only got as far as Watch Hill, Rhode Island where family and friends thought the salt air might prove a cure for the rheumatism she was developing.

Occasionally she rebelled, noting that "a ball and chains are not more effective than three brats," in keeping one from having a loose foot. She read *Middlemarch* by George Eliot avidly for its feminist theme, and tried to keep up with the woman's rights movement, asking Ellie her opinion on dress reform. She predicted that her sons would all go to Harvard, but her daughters to Vassar, newly opened.

But her spirits continued to droop. She was lame and crippled with rheumatism (possibly a form of arthritis) and plagued with sore throats and colds. After the death of her father in 1874 her health declined still further. In one of her last letters she wrote of "the unvarying torturousness of life." In the late spring of 1877 she developed a fever which led to paralysis, and died on May 11, leaving three young children and a husband, mother, brother, and best friend to grieve her untimely departure and the quenching of a bright spirit which had once lit up their lives.

She did not know of course that many years after her death the interest in black spirituals would be revived by the Fisk Jubilee singers, and her book, *Slave Songs*, would become a classic, reprinted in 1929 and again in 1951. One wonders if the story might have ended differently, had the ideas of equality for women, which permeated Lucy's childhood and caused her to dream of a career of her own that did not end with marriage, had been further developed in the period of her early motherhood. Would access to information on birth control and day care have freed her at a crucial stage in her development? If she and Wendell had remained equal partners, as they first intended, might her achievements in music have rivaled those of her brother's in architecture? Lucy may well have been born before her time, before the changes

which make it possible today for the young women of similar bent to combine motherhood with to a career in social concerns and the arts.

NOTES

1. "Lucy McKim Garrison" in *Notable American Women*, (Cambridge, 1971). See also Dena J. Epstein, *Lucy McKim Garrison, American Musician*, reprinted from the *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, vol 67, No 8, (October, 1963).
2. Ira V. Brown, "Miller McKim and Pennsylvania Abolitionism," *Pennsylvania History*, vol. 30. No. 1 (January, 1963). Charles Moore, *Life and Times of Charles Follen McKim*, (Boston & New York, 1929).
3. Gerder Lerner, *The Grimke Sisters of North Carolina*, (New York, 1967).
4. Lucy McKim to Ellen Garrison, November 12, 1858. Garrison Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.
5. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, March 3, 1859; July 9 1859. Garrison Papers.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 8-3-1860. Garrison Papers.
8. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, February 18, 1860. Garrison Papers.
9. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 11-1-1861. Garrison Papers.
10. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 6-1-1862. Garrison Papers.
11. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 7-3-1862. Garrison Papers.
12. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 8-3-1862. Garrison Papers.
13. Laura Towne, *Letters and Diary*, edited by Rupert Holland. (New York: 1912).
14. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 7-3-1862. Garrison Papers.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Lucretia Mott to Martha Coffin Wright. 8-17-1862. Mott Mss. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa.
17. *The Freedmen of South Carolina*, an address by Miller McKim, in Sanson Hall, July 9th 1862 (Philadelphia: 1862) page 4.
18. Lucretia Mott to Martha Wright, 11-20-1862. Mott Mss.
19. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright 7-4-1863. Garrison Papers.
20. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 2-1-1863. Garrison Papers.
21. Charles Moore, *The Life and Times of Charles Follen McKim* (Boston and New York, 1929) pp. 9-10.
22. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 8-31-1863. Garrison Papers.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright 2-24-1864. Garrison Papers.
25. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright, 6-26-1864. Garrison Papers.
26. Lucy McKim to Ellen Wright Garrison, 7-18-1865. Garrison Papers.
27. Moore, *McKim*, p. 15.
28. Lucy Garrison to Ellen Garrison, 6-13-1866. Garrison Papers.
29. Laura Towne to Lucy Garrison, 8-8-1867. Cornell University Library.

30. Lucy Garrison to Ellen Garrison, 6-22-1868. Garrison Papers.
31. Lucy Garrison to Ellen Garrison, 7-9-1869. Garrison Papers.
32. Lucy Garrison to Ellen Garrison 11-7-1869. Garrison Papers.
33. Lucy Garrison to Charles Follen McKim. Moore, *McKim* page 32.
34. Lucy Garrison to Charles Follen McKim. January, 1870. New York Public Library. Miller McKim Papers, Rare manuscripts.