



correspondence schedule, a study of his incoming and outgoing letters provides a remarkable and fuller view of his world, concerns, and insights. In many of his letters, he goes well beyond most of his journal entries on specific subjects.

MARTHA ANN’S LETTERS

Although not as voluminous as Joseph F.’s letter collection,¹⁰¹ Martha Ann’s collection is remarkable because it spans the time from when she was a teenager in the 1850s to when she approached the end of her life in the early 1920s.¹⁰² The hundreds of extant letters provide a window into her life and experiences as a member of a complex, multigenerational family network throughout her life.

An examination of the letters she received and retained reveals Martha Ann’s participation in extended conversations with family, friends, and associates.¹⁰³ For example, in early 1923 E. Wesley Smith (1886–1970), who was serving as president of the Hawaiian Mission, wrote:

Our Beloved Aunt Martha: How happy and extremely delighted we were to received your excellent letter, so full of good cheer and encouragement. We highly appreciate this letter, coming from you, in your own handwriting, an own sister to our beloved father. . . . Your big generous heart is manifest in this letter. Oh, what a wonderful spirit you have; always thinking about other people, sympathizing with them; praying for them and wishing blessings upon their heads, always desiring to be helpful and striving to aid. All these expressions of love from you have more than repaid us for any little thing we may have done in your behalf in the past.¹⁰⁴

Unfortunately, most of the letters Martha Ann wrote were not retained or did not survive. As already mentioned, we know of at least eighty letters she wrote to Joseph F. that are not extant.

Toward the end of her life, Martha Ann wrote what would become her last surviving letter. At the time, Martha Ann’s grandson John Clifford Harris (1900–49) was serving in the Southern States Mission. In a ten-page letter addressed to John’s friend Francis Joanna Sherrell Spears (1880–1956) of Cookeville, Tennessee, she shared her testimony of the restored gospel, her reminiscences of the Prophet Joseph Smith and her father, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, and thanked Joanna for showing kindness to her grandson.¹⁰⁵

Given the realities of nineteenth-century pioneer life, Martha Ann’s reluctance to write (owing to her poor penmanship and spelling),¹⁰⁶ the loss of her earliest letters to fire, and the vagaries of preserving family letters through succeeding generations, it is remarkable that we have as many of her letters as we do—more than seventy in all and as many as three hundred letters she received from friends and family members, including her brother Joseph F.¹⁰⁷

101. Like Joseph F.’s letter collection, Martha Ann’s letters are mostly found in the Church History Library, with a few others scattered among family members.

102. See Martha Ann to Joseph F., 31 January 1856, herein; and Martha Ann to Joanna Spears, [Fall] 1920.

103. Martha Ann also engaged in a lifetime correspondence with many of her extended family members, in particular her sisters-in-law, the wives of Joseph F. See, for example, Martha Ann to Julina Smith, 21 December 1889.

104. E. Wesley Smith to Martha Ann, 27 January 1923; original spelling preserved.

105. Martha Ann to Joanna Spears, 1920.

106. See, for example, Martha Ann to Joseph F., 2 March 1856, herein; and Joseph F. to Martha Ann, 12 November 1883, herein.

107. In Martha Ann’s letter collection are a number of letters written to her that mention additional letters she had written that are not extant. As noted, Joseph F. mentioned as many as eighty letters he had received from Martha Ann that have not survived.

Editorial Method

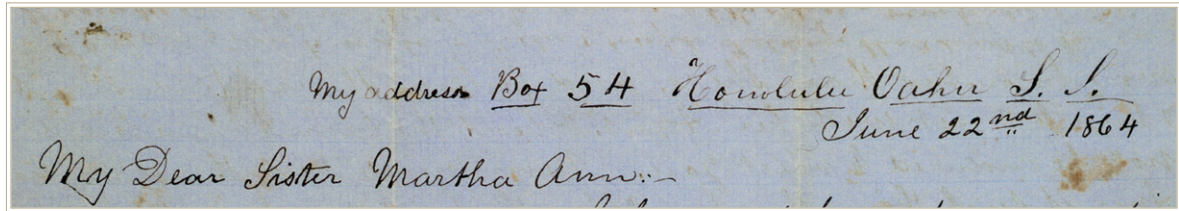
We had several audiences in mind as we prepared this volume. First there are the descendants of Joseph F. and Martha Ann. Another audience is those who are interested in the Latter-day Saint past but who are not trained historians. We have also kept in mind our academic colleagues. For family members and armchair historians, we have provided a general overview and historical introductions for the six decades. Our university colleagues will not find much new in these general overviews. However, we have provided accurate transcriptions of the letters and annotations for professional historians who may want to draw on this important letter collection to produce interpretive works.¹

All letters between Joseph F. and his sister Martha Ann were carefully transcribed following a systematized process to ensure reliability and accuracy of transcription. The letters retain the original spelling, superscripts, underlines, and strike-throughs. Some punctuation has been added for clarity. In most cases, when an individual is first mentioned in the letter collection, the reader is provided with a short summary of the person and his or her connection to Joseph F. and Martha Ann. For additional information, the reader is referred to the biographical register, appendix D. Wherever necessary, footnotes have been added to clarify potentially confusing references to individuals mentioned in the letters. This is especially true when only a first or last name is mentioned in a letter that could refer to more than one person. For example, twenty-one people mentioned in the letters have the first name of John. Whenever this happens, a footnote clarifies which John is referred to, if known. In most instances, to save space in the footnotes, biographical details including birth dates, marriage dates, and death dates are found in appendix D. Entries in the biographical register are organized by surname given at the time of birth. Women are listed by maiden name as given in the footnotes.

1. Reid L. Neilson, ed., *In the Whirlpool: The Pre-Manifesto Letters of President Wilford Woodruff to the William Atkin Family, 1885–1890* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2011), 21–22.

TOP MARGINS

The salutation, date, and other information appear in various positions in the original letters. In the transcription, all introductory information has been placed flush left at the top of the page. All line endings above the greetings have been honored. One such example can be seen in Joseph F’s letter dated 22 June 1864:

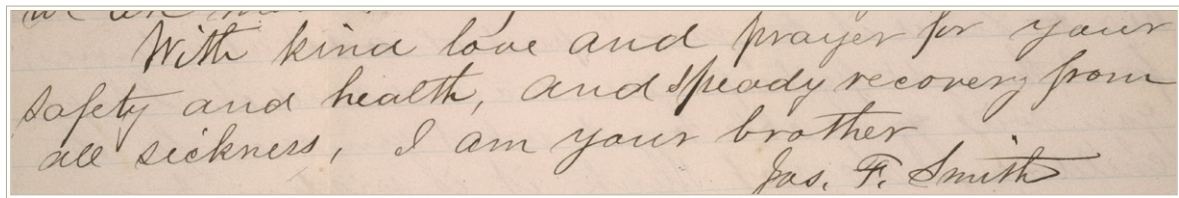


My address Box 54 Honolulu Oahu I.I.
June 22nd 1864

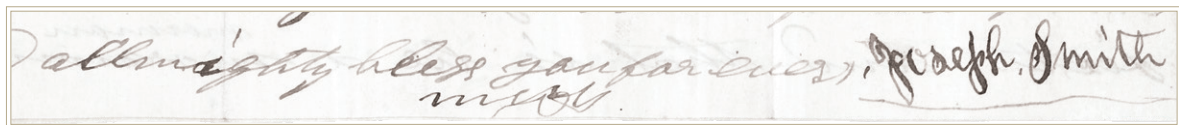
My Dear Sister Martha Ann:—
I have not heard from you since I left, only that Hyrum was sick, but mending. And that William

SIGNATURES

Signatures in the original letters are found in different positions: centered, adjusted right, along the margin, and so on. In the transcribed letters, the signatures have most often been placed flush left. Exceptions were made for letters in which Joseph F. signed his name on the final line of the body of the letter. For example, in his 9 June 1855 letter, Joseph F.’s signature appears below the paragraph, as seen in the first example below. The second example comes from a letter dated 21 June 1869, in which Joseph F. signed his name on the same line as his concluding sentence.



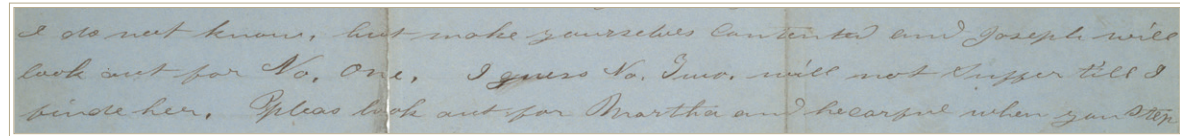
With kind love and prayer for your safety and health, and speedy recovery from all sickness. I am your brother
Jos. F. Smith



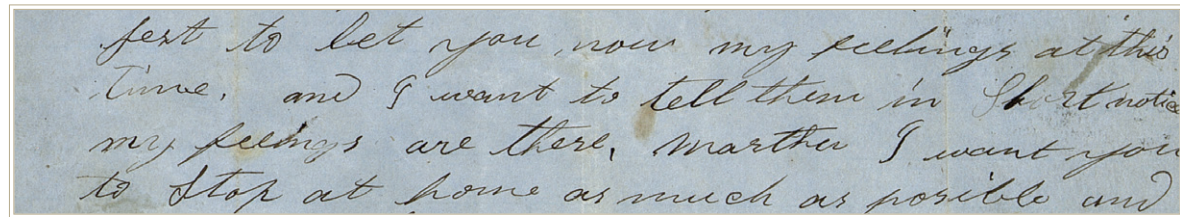
allmighty bless you for everr. Joseph Smith

PERIODS AND COMMAS

It is often difficult to distinguish between commas and periods in the original letters. In cases where it was impossible to clearly distinguish the two (a frequent occurrence throughout Joseph F.’s letters) and either form of punctuation would be appropriate, the transcribers have made a decision based on modern grammatical rules in keeping with the context of the letter. Two examples are listed below using the letters dated 14 July 1856 and 1 November 1854, respectively.



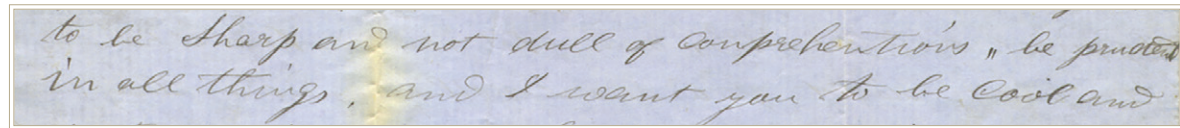
I do not know, but make yourselves contented and Joseph will look out for No. One. I guess No. Two, will not suffer till I finde her. <P>please look out for Martha and be carful when you step



jest to let you now my feelings at this time, and I want to tell them in short notice my feelings are there. Martha I want you to stop at home as much as possible and

CAPITALIZATION

Both Joseph F. and particularly Martha Ann used upper- and lowercase letters arbitrarily throughout their letters, with no clear pattern or rule in mind. In order to minimize reader distraction, capital letters within a sentence have been transcribed as lowercase. Martha Ann inconsistently used the capital letters D, F, J, L, M, and S, while Joseph F. inconsistently used the capital letters A, J, L, M, and S. For example, in his letter dated 18 October 1855, Joseph F. writes the word sharp with a capital S. In transcription, the letter is lowercased as shown below.



to be sharp and not dull of comprehentions, be prudent in all things, and I want you to be cool and



PAGINATION

A standard format of [p. x] is used to distinguish new pages of the letter (where x represents the page number at the top of a new page). The page number is placed within the transcribed text precisely where the page break occurs in the letter. For example, in the letter of 21 June 1869, the page ends after the word *closed*.

clean. and breath plenty of fresh air both night and day, do not sleep in closed [p. 2] rooms, but breath pleantifully and freely of the fresh, pure air.

It was not uncommon, however, for Joseph F. and Martha Ann to end a page midword, as demonstrated in the 25 July 1857 letter, in which the word *remember* is split between two pages. In such cases, the page number has been inserted midword.

ous. You will certainly leave off Girl-ism now. I hope you will remem[p. 2]ber your possession, and let your actions and conduct in all things, and at

LINE ENDINGS AND PARAGRAPHS

Broken words that begin on one line and finish on the next, or words that end a line with a portion of the word written above or below it, have been joined to read as a single word. For example, in the letter of 25 July 1857, a portion of the word *possible* ends on one line and continues on the next, as shown below.

recieved no answers—just emulate her hand write, Martha—as neer as possible—she writes first rate. devote as much time as possible in learning to write.



Paragraphs in the original manuscript have been indented in the transcription for clarity, regardless of the page justification on the original letter. Actual line endings are not included in the transcribed letters.

DASH

Joseph F. used dashes abundantly, often in place of a comma or a period. To simplify the transcription process and to avoid trying to determine whether his dashes represent commas or periods, the transcribers used modern grammar conventions to distinguish actual dashes from the other use. A dash followed by a space represents a comma or a period, while a dash with no space represents an actual dash. Three examples are provided below. In the first, the dash seems to function more like a period, and in the second, the dash seems to function more like a comma. The third example shows a dash that appears to function more like an actual dash. The following examples are respectively taken from the 7 December 1870, 1 March 1862, and 17 August 1869 letters.

thing about a house for you? Let me know. I must close— God bless you all

you Martha for your kinde offer to Levira. I am sorry to hear of her Illness— But that does not express my feeling, but I have weighed the matter up and

call “Brighamites,” but what is—in reallity—the work of God, for which the Martyrs bleed, and

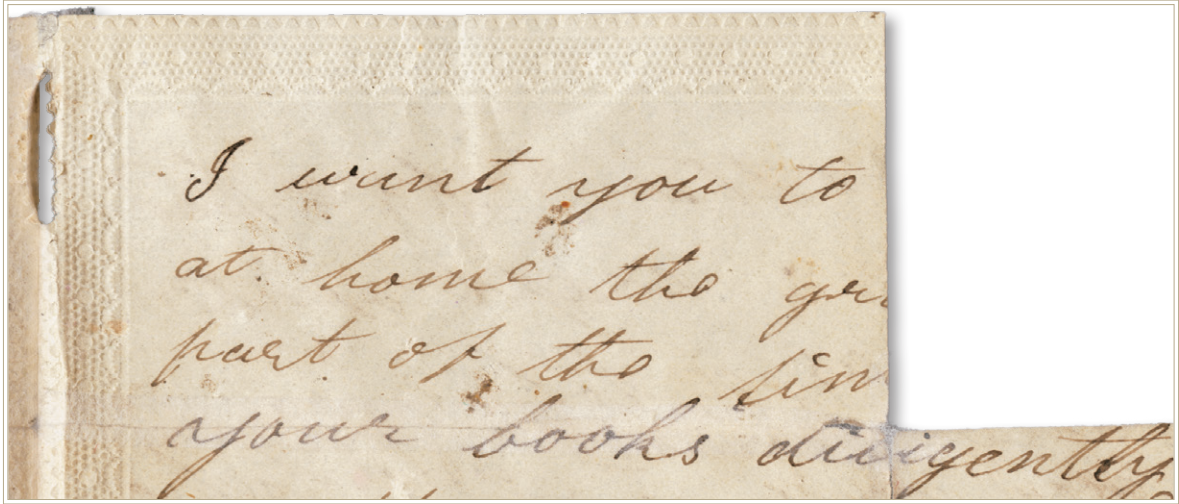
SYMBOLS

The following table lists the symbols used to represent elements of the letters that could not be transcribed. Examples from various letters follow.

symbol	description	
[<i>italics</i>]	italics within brackets	used to describe missing words, partially missing words, or missing letters due to holes, tears, or cuts in the paper; also used to describe illegible portions from strike-through or erasure.
[◇]	diamond within brackets	single illegible letter in a word
[◇]	diamond with strike-through within brackets	single illegible letter stricken out in a word
[◇◇]	two diamonds within brackets	two or more illegible letters within a word
< >	angle brackets	readable strike-through, insertion, or correction

[*Italics*]*—Missing Words and Letters*

Missing words, partially missing words, or missing letters owing to holes, tears, or cuts in the paper are represented with the dimensions of the missing portion italicized within brackets. One example is found in Joseph F’s first letter in the collection, dated 17 October 1854, where the upper right-hand corner has been cut.



I want you to [2.9 × 3.2 cm cut at top right corner] at home the gr[2.9 × 3.2 cm cut at top right corner] part of the tim[2.9 × 3.2 cm cut at top right corner] your books diligently

[◇]*—Single Illegible Letter*

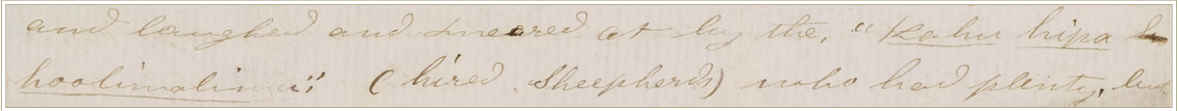
A single illegible letter in a word is represented by a diamond with brackets. For example, in the 18 October 1855 letter, enough uncertainty existed in identifying the middle letter following the date that we used this notation in transcription.



Wailuku Maui, Sand, Isles, Oct. 18th 1855. a.[◇].d.

[◇]*—Single Illegible Letter with Strike-Through*

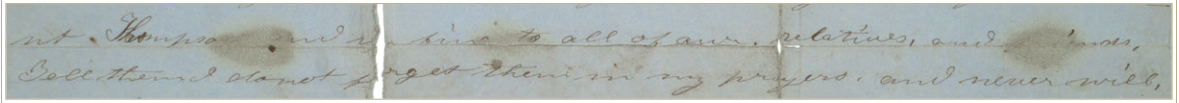
Annotation similar to that mentioned above but with strike-through included is used for a single illegible letter that has been stricken out. An example can be seen in the 25 May 1856 letter.



and laughed and sneared at by the, “Kahu hipa h[◇] hoolimalima,” (hired shepherds) who had plenty

[◇◇]*—Multiple Illegible Letters in a Word*

Two diamonds within brackets represent two or more illegible letters within a single word. For example, in the 14 July 1856 letter, a large smudge obscures the first letters of a word. The bracketed diamonds allow readers to draw their own conclusions regarding the original meaning of the word.

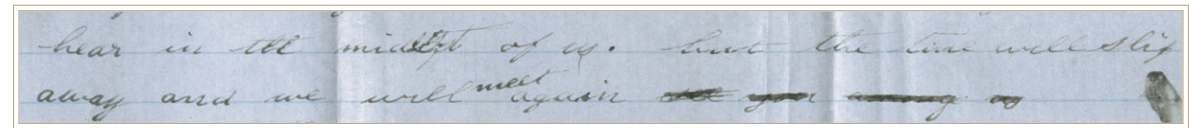


nt Thompson and [◇◇] fine to all of our relatives, and [◇◇]nds. Tell them I donot forget them in my prayers, and never will.



[Italics]—Illegible Strike-Throughs and Erasures

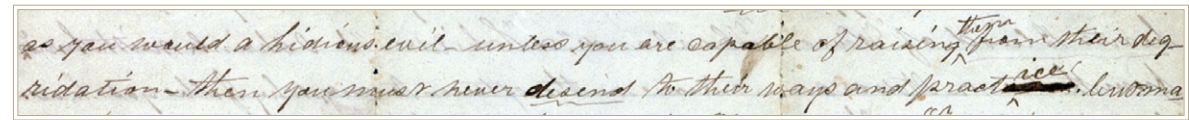
One or more illegible words from a strike-through or an erasure are represented by an italicized description of the strike-through or erasure within brackets, as found in the transcription of the 20 December 1860 letter seen below.



hear in the midst of us. but the time will slip away and we will <meet> again [illegible strike-through]

Insertions, Corrections, and Strike-Throughs

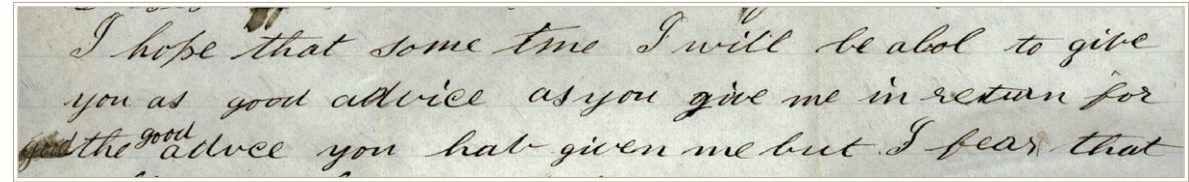
Angle brackets are used to represent all insertions and corrections. Words that were corrected by strike-through are transcribed as such, if the words are legible. Where Joseph F. used two lines to strike out a word, a single-line strike-through is used in the transcription. Insertions to letters are transcribed within angle brackets. An example of insertions and corrections can be found in the letter dated 25 July 1857.



as you would a hideous evil—unless you are capable of raising <them> from their degradation—then you must never desend to their ways and pract<ice>.but ma

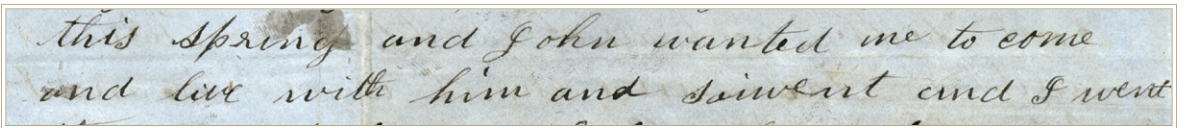
Transcription Guidelines Specific to Martha Ann Smith Harris’s Letters

The Martha Ann letter collection presents some unique problems in transcription, primarily in Martha Ann’s grammar and spelling. It was common to find the same words spelled differently several times, sometimes in the same letter. The following 31 January 1856 letter provides an example of her challenging writing.



I hope that some tme I will be abol to give you as good advice as you give me in return for good the <good> advce you hav given me but I fear that

Martha Ann at times connected multiple words as a single word. To maintain readability and to accurately reflect the content and meaning, these words were separated, as seen in the letter from 29 July 1856 (“so i went”).



this spring and John wanted me to come and live with him and so i went and I went

Instances where Martha Ann put spaces within a single word have been corrected for readability. For example, notice the word *cas tis e ments* in the letter dated 3 May 1857.



I would be be a fool [illegible strikeout] and would need castisements for it I am thankful to my

Directions on how to transcribe handwritten letters from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries vary considerably. By using the guidelines provided above, the editors have chosen to transcribe the letters in a way that helps the reader capture the personality and writing style of Joseph F. and Martha Ann without the distractions of other transcription systems. The guidelines are quite general and are easily understood, with limited changes to formatting, grammar, and punctuation.