

V

1843—1851

Journey to Europe—Grand Review in Hyde Park—Visit to Philiphaugh—Journey to Michigan and Illinois (1844)—Death of Arthur Bronson—Explosion of monster gun near Washington—Appointed to Board of Visitors at West Point—Journey to Europe and subsequent death of Mrs. Murray.

QUITE unexpectedly, I was induced to accept a mission to England, and on March 16, 1843, accompanied by my daughter Maria, took passage in the steamer *Great Western* (Captain Hoskins) for Liverpool. Among our fellow-passengers were Major Denny and Captain Gordon Cummings of the British Army, Mr. and Mrs. John Tappan, of Boston, and a few others. On the way to Sandy Hook we struck on the reef at Governor's Island, and that night encountered the most terrific storm of that season. The next morning found us a good deal damaged, 4 feet of water in the hold, life boat stove in, first officer, Matthews, confined to his berth by a serious

fall during the gale, &c. ; but, nevertheless, our persevering—or rather obstinate—captain determined to “go ahead,” and we finally crossed the Atlantic with the steam pump going all the time to keep the ship free, and reached Liverpool on the 1st of April. The next morning we proceeded to London and took up our quarters in Regent Street.

My daughter formed some pleasant acquaintances among my former friends, and a few days after our arrival we received an invitation to assist at a Grand Review in Hyde Park. We were here introduced into the privileged circle, where we found the Kings of Belgium and Hanover, Prince Albert, the Dukes of Wellington and Cambridge, with many English and Continental officers of rank. Our namesake the Hon. Charles Augustus Murray, recognising us, was very civil and useful in giving us the names and titles of those by whom we were surrounded, and very soon we were recognised by Lord Morpeth, who had seen us from his sister's, Lady Dover's, balcony, which looked upon the Park. He brought us an invitation from her ladyship to partake of a *déjeuner* after the review, and we accordingly went to the house, where we met a large and distinguished party, among whom were her sister, the Duchess of Sutherland, and family.

On the following day the Duchess and her daughter called on Maria, as did Lady Dover and

another sister, Lady Howard, and my daughter was made the recipient of numerous civilities, especially on the part of the Duchess of Sutherland, who invited us to a dinner, where music was given by a genuine Scotch piper in the ancient costume of the Highlands. The Duchess also invited us to the Caledonian ball, of which she was lady patroness, and took Maria on to the daïs, introducing her to the "Iron Duke" and other noted people. The next Sunday she took us to the Temple Church, then recently repaired and embellished. While at a dinner party in London I was seated next to Mr. John Gladstone (father of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone), then in his eightieth year and full of vigour, who on discovering my name and identity told me that he had dined at my father's house in Broad Street, New York, in 1793, just fifty years before, and he even identified the locality of the house—a wonderful evidence of memory. The next day he called on us with his daughter and arranged with us to dine with him at his residence in Carlton Gardens, where we met his son, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other interesting persons. Thus after the lapse of half a century and at a distance of 3,000 miles returning to the son the civility he had received from the father. He also urged us to make them a visit in Scotland, where he had a splendid establishment, an invitation which our

prospect of returning to the United States obliged us to decline.

From London we proceeded to Paris, where we passed a few weeks very agreeably, and then made an excursion through the North of England into Scotland. From Edinburgh we passed to Selkirk, which, being in the vicinity of the original home of our ancestors (Philiphaugh), I took my daughter Maria who had a great desire to view the ancient residence of her family. In passing the stone wall of a park we observed a gentleman on the inner side, and as we were in a chaise without any guide we stopped to inquire our way. The stranger expressed some surprise at any person having a curiosity to visit Philiphaugh, upon which we explained our motives as being Americans descended from that house. He sprang immediately over the wall and told us he was John Nesbit Murray, the eldest son of the family, and that we were now on the estate. He insisted on taking us to the mansion, where he ordered luncheon and endeavoured to prevail upon us to make a lengthened visit, apologising for the absence of his family, who were at the seashore. We declined his hospitable request, but accepted the luncheon and his offer to conduct us to Bowhill, the birthplace of the ancestor of our branch of the family, now the splendid residence of the Duke of Buccleuch—thence to Newark Castle, where our

sturdy forefather, the outlaw Murray, set King James IV. of Scotland at defiance when he undertook to curtail his domains and hunting-ground. It was on this occasion he replied to the King "Hinc usque superna venabor!" ("From hence unto the heavens will I hunt!") which was adopted and is now borne as the motto of the family. The Ettrick and Yarrow rivers meet on this estate, and at their intersection was fought the Battle of Philiphaugh, between the Royal and Parliamentary forces, under Leslie and Montrose, which is chronicled in the Border minstrelsy of Scotland. We returned to Selkirk, where we visited the grave of the Outlaw and thence took our departure for London.

On our return to London the civilities which we had already experienced were renewed, including invitations to Almack's and a very magnificent ball at Holford House. My daughter Maria was induced to accept several invitations to the country, which took her away from me for some weeks, as I was very much confined to the City by matters of business.

We found time, however, to see all that was remarkable in London, and in the month of July took passage in the steamer *Great Western*, from Bristol to New York, where we arrived about the 1st August, 1843. I passed a great portion of that winter at Washington, following up the French

claims in regard to Florida and Mississippi bonds.

In the early part of the summer of 1844 I made a journey, in company with my friend John T. Sullivan, of Washington City, into the Western States, including Michigan and Illinois. A most animated canvass for the Presidency between James K. Polk and Henry Clay was proceeding, and we witnessed many amusing scenes at the assemblages in different parts of our route.

We passed some pleasant days with my son Bronson on his farm near Ottawa, in Illinois—from whence Mr. Sullivan returned direct to Chicago, while I extended my journey to Savanna, on the Mississippi River, a little below Galena. On reaching Chicago I found that Mr. Sullivan had become tired of waiting for me and had proceeded on his route homeward.

I then crossed into Michigan, where I had business in and near Kalamazoo, and where I received an express informing me of the alarming illness of my brother-in-law, Arthur Bronson, at Detroit. It was nearly night, and I found it extremely difficult to procure a conveyance to Jackson, from whence I should be able to get to Detroit by my way, and as the train left at 4 a.m., I had no time to lose. I finally prevailed on a young shopkeeper to take me in his private wagon, and we had proceeded but a short distance on the miry road before a terrific

storm overtook us, accompanied by thunder and lightning, and with such pitchy darkness that the flashes of lightning afforded us the only means of light. Most fortunately, however, our horse had been raised at Jackson, and seemed to be quite familiar with the road. Arriving at Battle Creek, we undertook to ford the river, but could not discover the descent to the ford. We concluded, therefore, to go some distance farther and cross the bridge, and on arriving at the tavern, where we stopped to bait, the people could hardly believe we had crossed the bridge, as they said the planking had all been taken up that day to be renewed.

It turned out that we had actually crossed on the string-pieces, our horse making his path on the one, while our wheel tracks happened to fit two others—another most providential intervention, and we were quite ignorant of the extent of our danger. We arrived, however, in time to enable me to take the cars for Detroit, and on reaching the hotel I met General Scott just leaving Mr. Bronson's room, and poor Arthur was overjoyed to meet me, although utterly prostrated by frequent hæmorrhages, with which he had been seized at Chicago. He had been brought round by water, under the care of Dr. Clark, who had consented to accompany him to his home.

We took the first good steamer for Buffalo, and there he was most kindly received by his friend

Mr. George R. Babcock. We remained there several days, to enable him to gain a little strength, and then, by easy stages, on a mattress in the cars, he was conveyed to Albany. Here we took the boat and landed at Hudson, where his brother, Doctor Bronson, awaited his arrival and took him to his house, where he remained a few weeks, and thence to his own home, where he lingered until November, when he was relieved from his sufferings by death.

I passed the winter of 1844-1845 mostly in Washington, accompanied by my wife and daughter, surrounded by very agreeable society. Mr. Tyler was the acting President, though shortly to be succeeded by Mr. Polk, and, of course, a good deal of excitement prevailed, and not a little dissipation.

In February, 1845, we accepted an invitation from Commodore Stockton to form part of a large circle of distinguished persons whom he had invited to accompany him on an excursion in the steamship *Princeton* down the Potomac, to witness experiments to be made with a monster gun, which he called the Peacemaker. Among our party was President Tyler, the heads of departments, and a large number of naval and military officers, Mrs. Maddison, and scores of other ladies, old and young.

When off Alexandria, after several previous discharges, this great gun exploded, and killed instantly

the Secretary of State Upshur, the Secretary of the Navy Gilmer, Commodore Kennon, and Messrs. Virgil Marcy, David Gardiner (father of Mr. Tyler's second wife), and one or two others, and wounding several of the seamen. The utmost grief and consternation prevailed, and arrangements were made to transfer the passengers to other boats to be conveyed to Washington; while a Committee, appointed by the President, composed of Commodore Shubrick, Adjutant-General Jones, and myself, to take charge of the deceased, remained on board until the next day, when the bodies were conveyed to the Executive Mansion, and lay in the East Room for a couple of days, when they were removed to the Congressional burying-ground, accompanied by a numerous cortège. I was one of the pall-bearers, being selected to represent the State of New York, and specially assigned to attend on the remains of Mr. David Gardiner, whose daughter afterwards became the wife of President Tyler.

During that year I was appointed by Governor Marcy (Secretary of War under Mr. Polk) one of the Board of Visitors at West Point. Our President was General Scott, and among the members were Generals Jessup, Gibson, Wool, Worth, Townsend, Abert, Totten, Talcott, Tallmadge, &c., composing for our service a remarkable array of military talent.

We were then on the eve of war with Mexico

and perhaps greater attention was, in consequence, paid to the formation of the Board. Among the pupils of the Senior Class of Cadets were many who have since made their mark in history, among them McClellan, Burnside, Stonewall Jackson, and others—but decidedly in the front rank stood McClellan.

In the following year they were all called into the field of actual service, and the Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, won by General Taylor, were quickly followed by the invasion and conquest of Mexico by General Scott.

In 1847 my wife, accompanied by our daughter Caroline, accepted an invitation from Mr. J. Horsley Palmer to visit his family at Hurlingham, near London, and they sailed in the ship *Victoria* (Captain Pratt), escorted by my son Washington, who returned immediately from London to resume his studies at Yale College.

During this season an alarming famine occurred in Ireland, which greatly distressed humane people of both hemispheres, and large supplies of breadstuffs and other provisions were sent from the United States as a donation to the poor of Ireland, for the transportation of which the United States Government gave the gratuitous use of the frigates *Macedonia* and *Jamestown*. In the month of November my wife and daughter returned in the steamer *Caledonia* (Captain Lott), accompanied by

Mr. James G. King and family, and landed at Boston.

In the following year (1848) the Revolution in France occurred, by which King Louis Philippe was deposed and Louis Napoleon was elected President of the short-lived Republic.

In the month of June, 1850, I went to the West, accompanied by my daughter Caroline, to visit her brother Bronson, then living near Ottawa in Illinois. After passing a week with him we took his horses and light carriage and made a tour through the State as far as Rock Island, and made a trip across the Mississippi River to Davenport in Iowa and thence back to Ottawa. We here took the canal boat on the Illinois and Michigan Canal to Chicago, whence we passed by steamboat to Green Bay and Detroit. There we heard of the death of my mother-in-law, Mrs. Bronson, which induced us to hurry homeward, and on arriving at Greenfield Hill we found my wife in great sorrow at the loss of her beloved mother, although her very advanced age of eighty-six could hardly have encouraged the hope of her remaining much longer among us.

During this year we moved from 101, St. Mark's Place, to 13, Washington Place, which considerably diminished the size of our home and proportionately reduced the cares of housekeeping, which, in my wife's state of health, was an important consideration.

In the month of July, 1851, I embarked for Europe in the ship *Asia* (Captain Judkins), accompanied by my wife (whose health was very feeble) and my daughter Anna. Our voyage to Liverpool was very tranquil, and after finishing my business in London I went over to Paris and remained there a few weeks. The change of air greatly benefited my wife, but it was fully counteracted by the fatigue and anxiety of the shopping, mostly on account of others who had inconsiderately charged her with the execution of what ladies call "commissions," involving generally not only fatigue but the advance of money, the labour and expense of transportation, and finally the smuggling of the articles purchased into the United States. I have protested against it (although vainly) in every instance. If people cannot afford to pay the duties, they cannot afford to use the articles.

We left Liverpool on October 1, 1851, in the steamer *Atlantic* (Captain West). On our way from London to Liverpool we paid a visit to the home of our ancestors at Philiphaugh, where we were most hospitably entertained by our kinsman John Nesbit Murray and his family, and after passing a few days there went to Edinburgh and thence to Liverpool. Among our fellow-passengers were Bishop Otey, of Tennessee, the Rev. James A. Alexander, and others.

Our passage homeward was very boisterous, and

the conduct of Captain West towards my invalid wife was anything but humane, so that, in fact, she lost by the discomfort of this voyage more than she had previously gained. After encountering much danger, we finally arrived in New York on the 15th of October, after which my wife was principally confined to the house. On the 27th of November (Thanksgiving Day in the State) she left New York under the advice of Dr. Paine, hoping that change of scene and climate might revive her. We started in our own carriage, accompanied by our daughter Caroline, and I left them at Rahway, where they deemed it best to take the cars for Philadelphia.

Her debility prevented her proceeding farther than Philadelphia, and here she was kindly attended to by Dr. Jackson and her friend Mrs. McMurtrie, in addition to her daughter, but finally sinking under the immediate effect of a hæmorrhage of the lungs, she calmly expired at six o'clock on the morning of December 21, 1851, surrounded by all her children, except her eldest son, and with a sweet, benevolent smile entered into her heavenly rest.

We removed her remains the same evening to New York, and two days afterwards deposited them by the side of her father and mother in the family vault at Greenfield Hill.

Although we had reason for some time previously to look forward to this as an inevitable event

shortly to be consummated, yet the departure of one so lovely and so universally beloved could only be submitted to with many tears and lamentations, and her memory is still cherished as that of one of the just made perfect.

VI

1852—1855

Opening of the Indiana and Michigan Railroad—Journey to Europe and residence in Paris (1853)—Carriage trip through France, Italy, &c.—Arrival of Mrs. Livingstone and second journey through Italy—Return to America and residence at Greenfield Hill.

OUR life for the following year was one of great retirement, for the sad event had caused bodily as well as mental suffering to many members of the family, and finally it was decided to rent our town house and make a journey of some duration to Europe.

During the summer of 1852 I went, on the invitation of the directors of the Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan Railroad, to witness the opening of that road. On our way from Buffalo to Munroe, in the steamer *Northern Indiana*, we had the misfortune to sink a schooner loaded with grain, but without loss of life, although it happened in the middle of the night. Our own boat was so much

injured as to render it difficult to reach Cleveland, where we repaired the damage sufficiently to proceed to Munroe, and there we took the cars for Chicago. From thence I paid a visit to my son near Ottawa, and returned by the Erie Railroad to New York.

In 1853 we completed our preparations for a European journey, and in October embarked in the steamship *Humboldt* (Captain Lines) for Havre, accompanied by my three daughters—Caroline, Agnes, and Anna. We had several very agreeable passengers, among them Mr. and Mrs. John J. Astor (jun.), Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Livingston, Mr. and Mrs. Maturin Livingston, Louis Cass (jun.), Edward C. Center, &c. From Havre we proceeded to Paris, where we took up our quarters in the first instance at the Hôtel Meurice, and thence to an apartment in the Rue Caumartin, No. 27, where we remained until the 10th of January, when we left for Italy. While in Paris we were presented by our *Chargé d'affairs*, Mr. H. S. Sanford, to the Emperor Louis Napoleon and the Empress.

On January 10, 1854, we took our departure from Paris, in our own carriage, by way of the railroad, and on the first day reached Chalons sur Saone. On the following day we embarked with our carriage in a steamer, on the Saone, and arrived at Lyons in the evening, where we passed the night

and the following day at the Hôtel de l'Europe. We again took the steamer for Avignon and thence to Marseilles, where we put up at an indifferent house called the Hôtel Beauveau. We passed several days at Marseilles, and were much indebted to the civilities of Mr. Hodge, of Philadelphia, our consul in that city. Hence we took our carriage on the Corniche route, but were stopped two nights at Toulon to repair a damage to our wheels. This gave us an opportunity to visit the prison, hospital, arsenal, Navy yard, and to see the unfortunate criminals condemned to the galleys.

Our next stopping-place was Nice, where we passed a couple of days, and thence we proceeded over the loveliest imaginable route to Genoa, where we passed several days at the Hôtel d'Italie, making excursions to sundry objects of curiosity in the neighbourhood and also being present at a magnificent ball given by the Intendente. We found here our man-of-war, the *Cumberland*, commanded by Commodore Stringham, and had much pleasure in visiting the ship and having visits from the officers. From hence we travelled by way of Spezzia, Carrara, and Pisa. Departing hence we went by way of Sienna, Viterbo, &c., to Rome, and put up at the Hôtel de l'Europe, in the Piazza Spagna.

We remained there during the Holy Week and witnessed the processions in the Corso, with their

showers of confetti and bouquets of flowers. We were also presented by Mr. Case, our Minister, to his Holiness Pope Pius IX., through the intervention of Monsignor Talbot as Master of Ceremonies. The Pope conversed very affably on the subject of the United States compared with other nations, and gave the testimony of Monsignor Bedini as to the hospitality of the *native* Americans over the rough treatment which he experienced from the *foreign* population of the country.

After leaving Rome we proceeded to Naples, from which place we made various excursions to Pompeii, Herculaneum, Castlemare, &c. Having exhausted Naples in a residence of several weeks, we turned towards Venice, and passing through Capua, Bologna, Ferrara, and Padua, reached Venice, where we found much to interest us. On the 10th of May we proceeded to Verona and thence to Milan. After passing a few days there we resumed our carriage for Geneva *viâ* Arona, Yselle, Evian, Domo d'Ossola, &c.

On the 23rd of May we took our departure for Paris *viâ* Dijon and the intermediate towns, and reached Paris on the 25th of May, when we had the pleasure of finding our friend Mrs. McMurtrie, of Philadelphia, who, with her son Francis, had come out to join us and had already provided accommodation for us at the Hôtel Westminster, Rue de la Paix. On the 7th of June we took pos-

session of furnished apartments with Madame Gex at 22, Place de la Madeleine.

The days passed pleasantly in visiting, shopping, theatres, jaunts to Versailles, and on one occasion to the Château of Napoleon I. at Fontainebleau, where we were joined by our friends and connection, Professor Henry Reed and Ann Bronson, who afterwards perished in the memorable shipwreck of the *Arctic* on September 27, 1854.

Having decided to make an excursion in company with Mrs. McMurtrie and her son, we took our departure from Paris by the Northern Railway for Strasbourg on the evening of the 27th of July, and on the evening of the 26th proceeded to Baden-Baden where we visited the gambling tables, authorised by the Grand Duke of Nassau, in this celebrated resort for idle people. We then made an extensive tour through Switzerland and the Tyrol, and early in September reached Dresden, where we passed a short time, visiting the several battle-fields and especially the spot on which General Moreau received his death wound.

While at Dresden we were enabled, through the politeness of our Minister, Governor Vroom, to be present at a grand review of the troops by the King, after which was a sham battle conducted by the Prince Royal. We then proceeded *via* Cassel to Frankfort-on-the-Main, where we passed a few days, and continued our trip down the Rhine

and through Holland and Belgium. From Brussels we visited the field of Waterloo, and were conducted by Major Cotta to all the points of interest in that memorable battle. On the 10th of October we took our departure for Paris, taking up our abode with Madame Gex at our old quarters.

As Mrs. McMurtrie had decided to return to the United States, we changed our quarters to No. 7, Rue de Luxembourg, as better adapted for the size of our party. On November 25th I left for Liverpool to meet my daughter Maria (Livingstone) with her son Robbie, who were passengers in the ship *Arabia* (Captain Judkins) from New York. I received them in good health and spirits, and after passing a day or two in London we crossed over to Boulogne and thence to Paris, where their sisters and aunts were delighted to welcome them.

After putting Robbie to school in the Faubourg St. Honoré, I planned a journey for my dear daughter Maria into Italy. Accordingly we left our quarters at No. 18, Rue d'Aumale, and proceeded by rail to Marseilles, and thence by steamer to Naples, where we arrived after a pleasant journey of two days.

While at Naples we visited Pompeii and Herculaneum, and were treated with great civility by our Minister, Mr. Robert D. Owen, and also by the Baroness Salesi, who was the widow of Sir Richard Strachan, and took a great fancy to my

daughter and planned several excursions for her, among the most pleasant of which was one to her villa and grotto on the Bay of Naples, near Bahia, which is one of the curiosities of the place.

On leaving Naples we visited Cività Vecchia, and proceeded thence to Rome, Florence, and Leghorn, where we embarked for Marseilles, and after an unusually boisterous passage arrived at that place and took up our pleasant quarters at the Hôtel d'Orient.

After a couple of days at Marseilles we returned to join our circle at Rue d'Aumale in Paris, and found all well, while I had the satisfaction of knowing that my dear daughter Maria was essentially benefited by our trip.

We remained in Paris for some time and then travelled for London, and took lodgings at the Queen's Hotel, Cork Street, kept by Mrs. King, a comfortable but very expensive establishment. While here we received invitations from the Earl of Ellesmere and also from Lord Valencia to pass a short time at their respective country seats. We were considerate enough not to inflict a visit of our whole party on either, and I was accompanied on each occasion by two of the lady members of the party. Our reception at both places was marked by the most cordial hospitality. As Lord Valencia's seat is in the immediate vicinity of Oxford, several of the fellows of that ancient city of

colleges were invited to meet us, and in return we visited the several halls and partook of their collations and other marks of kindness.

While in London most of our time was passed in the society of our numerous relations, and we finally took our departure for Liverpool on the 18th day of June, 1855. We embarked in the steamer *Baltic* (Captain Comstock) for New York, where we arrived after a passage of twelve days. Among the passengers in whom we felt most interest was the family of James S. Wadsworth, of Geneseo, and a young friend, the Rev. William McVickar.

On our arrival home we immediately took up our abode at Greenfield Hill, where we passed a quiet summer, resting after an active and interesting European tour of some twenty months.

On December 27, 1855, the anniversary of my marriage, my daughter Anna was united to William P. W. Dana, of Boston, who had been for some years engaged in his studies as an artist in Paris, to which place they returned in January, 1856.