

Hillsborough Dec 5, 1829

My Dear George— Your letter of the 9th ult<sup>o</sup> is before me; it would have received an earlier answer but having arrived at a moment, when I was preparing my papers for Court I concluded to lay it by, to be taken up at a moment of more leisure when I should feel somewhat of that freedom from care, which attended our reckless days at Northampton— I was highly gratified in its perusal and my vanity not a little roused in finding, that altho' our correspondence had been intercepted, I had lost neither your friendship or your confidence— It is very surprising what could have become of the letter you directed to Concord. fingured I expect by some of these reformed postmasters— but let that pass— its loss was the more deeply regretted as it appears to have contained advice, which in my new situation would undoubtedly have been of service to me, tho' I believe the course I pursued satisfied my friends then

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Contributed to Maine Memory Network by an individual through  
Maine Historical Society  
Date: Dec. 5, 1829  
Description: Franklin Pierce letter to George W. Pierce.

and what is of more importance just at this time  
is also satisfactory to my constituents, be assured advice  
from you can never be received amiss. it could  
under no circumstances be construed into "impertinence  
or dictation" You ask me to write particularly as to  
my views and prospects. I would do so, if I could,  
but my views of the future are still unsettled—  
There were circumstances, which seemed to render it  
expedient for me to spend a few years in this place  
tho' I have never looked upon this as my residence for  
life. at one time I have thought of trying my  
fortunes in one of the Western States at another  
at another there appeared to be considerations of  
no trifling weight to induce me to remain in New  
Hampshire, so that my intentions as to the future  
are quite as wavering as they were two years since  
still I manage matters here precisely as tho' I had  
no idea of leaving. I shall strive to make the most of  
the present and very calmly leave the rest to—  
"Time the corrector when our judgments err"  
My prospects are, Heaven knows what; they appear  
tolerably fair and promising at present; but I dare  
not look upon them with much confidence. Since  
it has been with me thus far pretty much as with  
the polished philosopher, who declared that he had  
never met with but two things that equalled his  
anticipation. sunrise from a mountain and a  
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venture to hope for is, that I may rise somewhat above  
the groveling herd that "eat and drink and die and  
make no sign" I am not very desirous of political pre-  
ferment even if it were within my reach, if I have  
any ambition it is to acquire some reputation as a  
professional man. for this I shall struggle manfully  
and perseveringly - Had I known that you and  
Fessenden were in Boston I should have soon removed  
the space which separated us. I was glad to learn  
that you were at the trouble of calling on Mrs M<sup>c</sup>Neil  
because I know with what pleasure she would take  
you by the hand - John Wilson told some wrong  
stories about me, which I learn from Portsmouth  
you were disposed to believe. How the report of  
my being engaged could have gained credit  
or circulation I cannot imagine. it has no found-  
ation in truth so far from it indeed. between the  
young Lady in question and myself there has never  
been anything like intimacy. No. No. in this affair  
George fortune, which has been so peculiarly kind  
in leading you forward, has not yet deigned to  
smile upon my path. When I conclude to give up  
that careless independence which almost necessarily  
attends us while we are pushing our fortunes alone,  
when if evil betide, there are none but ourselves to suffer  
none to lean upon us and none in particular to whom

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we would appeal for sympathy, I shall certainly let  
you know it - When I sat down I intended to have said something  
of politicks. but of that subject in my next: Every thing looks well  
at present - The Democratick Party is certainly sufficiently  
powerful, and nothing is to be feared but a division - I have  
just returned from a frolick, from the wedding of one  
of our young farmers, and had put my hand upon this  
letter to fold it when my Friday brought in your  
chapter of reminiscence's, over every line of which I have  
laughed till I am really weary - I am devlish  
glad you have taken it into your head to wake  
the recollection of old Peters and Hastings, they ought  
certainly never to be forgotten by us and they must  
always be remembered in connexion with our ride with  
Whiting and Hence to Mount Holyoke - I have a  
hundred times when looking over Story or Chitty or  
some other dry book involuntarily recured to that scene  
and never without indulging in a hearty roar of  
laughter - That scene between you and Wing and  
myself out at the boling Alley two miles from Town  
did not partake very slightly of the ludicrous -  
Nor was your quissing litle Kimball and his appearance  
as Daniel Webster by any means calculated to make  
a man weep - but above all I have laughed at the  
"Moral dignity of the Missionary Enterprise" I hope  
they'll print it and let the children read it"

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What has become of your old Camtit, that  
we bivouac'd upon on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> July  
before we went over to see old Peters. I think it  
ought to be preserved, it was often found very  
convenient, but I remember it served Walker  
and myself a capital turn one night, when  
we had been at Champaign - Oh, those sprees take  
them all in all were too much for a Roman -  
If you call to mind that 4<sup>th</sup> July with  
all the freshness that attends my recollection  
the effect produced upon your visibles  
is by no means a matter of surprise - I have  
forgotten the name of the Innkeeper on the  
other side of the river, tho' I am sure I shall  
never cease to remember his essence of peppermint.  
It seems you spent four days at Masons with  
Jane Appleton and two others. Great God! I would  
give as you say for the enjoyment of such  
society or a part of it, for the space you  
mention all the gold I have in my  
pocket - That same Jane comes a little nearer  
to my ideas of what a woman should be than  
almost any one it has been my fortune to meet -  
it has now been something like a year

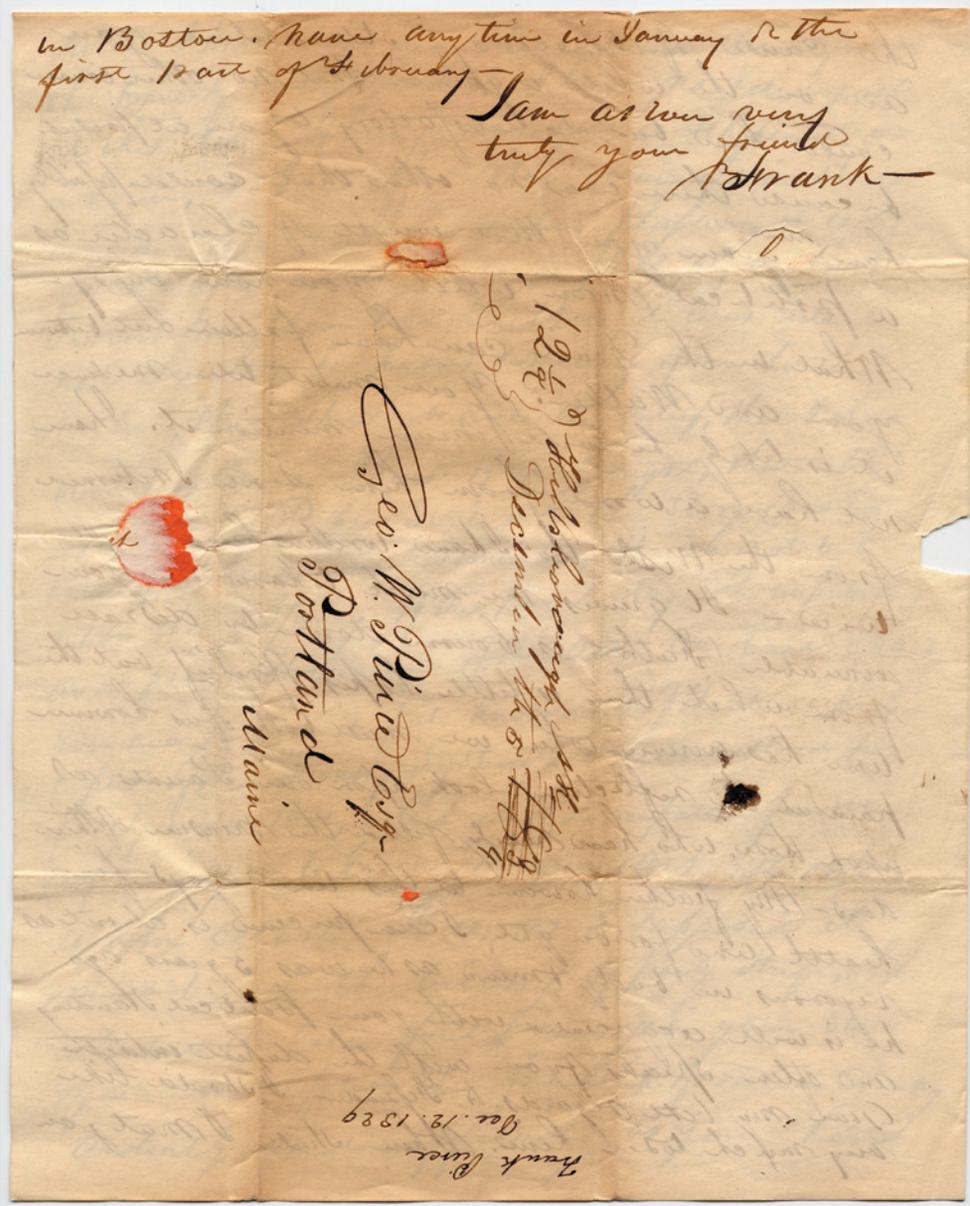
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since I have seen her. She was then beautiful —  
oh heavenly beautiful — but I have no idea just  
at this time of being considered a Rhapsodist or  
a Lover, so I am off. — Why, Mary Jane should  
consider ambition my ruling passion, it is dif-  
ficult for me to conceive. Probably her brother  
Robert may have told her, that it was certainly  
not averice, he knows something of me tho' surely  
nothing, that should induce the belief, that I was  
over ambitious. I have often thought, that the  
example of Pope Sixtus 5 the story of whose  
triumph you will remember, should not be lost  
upon the aspiring of the present day. The unpretending  
and pious demeanour of the old Cardinal certainly  
evinced a wonderful knowledge of the true prin-  
ciples of the "Funny System". He understood per-  
fectly well that, which it is so important for every  
aspiring man to know — "Maxima ars est omnium  
artium celare" It is, as I supposed it  
must be, in the bitterness of party strife, which  
attended the late spirited canvass in your State  
you sacrificed the friendship of some in espousing  
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the cause of democracy. Still I believe you  
are on the whole a gainer - that no other course  
could have been so satisfactory to you at present  
because there was no other that could possibly  
have given you that weight of character as  
a political man, which you now enjoy -  
What in the Devil can have fallen out between  
you and Walker? You must tell me since  
it is likely he will never mention it. I have  
not had a word from him since I returned  
from the West - tho' I have written him once or  
twice - It grieves me much to know that your  
venerable Father is borne down by disease  
from which there is little hopes of relief. but the  
time has arrived when we must both of us however  
painful the reflection. look upon our Parents as  
upon those, who have nearly filled the measure of their  
days - My father however at this time enjoys fine  
health and for our part I can perceive is about as  
vigorous in body & mind as he was 5 years ago  
he is well acquainted with your political standing  
and often speaks of you with the deepest interest  
Give my best regards to Fessenden I should like  
very much to see him. When shall I meet you

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in Boston. name any time in January or the first part of February —

I am as ever very truly your friend  
Frank —

[Sideways]

12 1/2 Hillsborough NH  
December th 5 18/34

Geo. W. Pierce Esq  
Portland  
Maine

[Upside down at bottom]

Frank Pierce  
Dec. 12. 1829