Transcribed Letter from first cousin Alice Perry (c. 1845)\(^1\) to John Morgan Avery\(^2\) (1847-1873)
Written at Tecumseh Michigan, April 5, 1863

(envelope missing)

Tecumseh. Sabbath Eve, April 5\(^{th}\) 1863

Dear Cousin.

I am now going to find out whatever I have forgotten how to write a letter, or not as it has been three weeks since I wrote one – what a shame, I am sure I do not know what my correspondents will think of me. I will try and explain to you why I have not written before. About the time that I received your letter I was selected with five other girls to prepare Essays for an Exhibition at the close of the term and this with numerous other things, together with being out evening until twelve kept me so busy that I wrote but one letter in that time. It is now two weeks since school was out, but I have been away or else had company nearly all the time. I will admit that there has been a few times where I might have written had I felt the inclination, but laziness here is my only excuse. Tonight I mustered up courage enough to open my Portfolio and counted my unanswered letters and have selected yours out of the number to be answered first and after reading it over once I have put on my “wrapper” and settled myself down in a rocking chair by the table, in my room at home. I made a mistake when I said that school closed two weeks ago for come to think it was only a week ago last Thursday, on the 26\(^{th}\) of March. We had a very good Exhibition and our large hall which will seat eight hundred was filled to overflow and a great many could not get in at all. It consisted of Declarations, Essays, Dialogues and interspersed with music by the Orchestra and I accompanied them with the Melodian. The last Essay read in the evening, was one by your “humble servant” a powerful production with the powerful subject of “Lands of Creation”, in which I did not fail to tell them of their faults. If you had heard it, I have no doubt but you would have thought it sublime – what a pity that you missed such a treat. I shall not attend school anymore in Tecumseh, but shall stay at home this summer until next fall, when perhaps I shall go away from home to school, but I do not know where. I have now been just two years steady in Tecumseh and I think that is long enough for me please. Last week Thursday I went down to Tecumseh and the next day four of us went in a carriage to Manchester a place about 16 miles from here to attend a Concert. We had just one big time as you might suppose. The Concert was very good indeed and paid us for going. One piece they sang was entitled “Johnnie Imolene” and represented the different kinds of musical instruments which he played upon: four gentlemen acted it out all of whom were very good singers and indeed it was [ ] . I presume you have heard it. Another piece the Particular Paper sung by Prof. Foot\(^4\) and Pease\(^5\) and Miss Fay\(^6\) from Ypsilanti was first rate. It was got up by Foot and Pease. This Miss Fay is a splendid singer, in one solo which she sang, she went up to high C but it was so clear and so little exertion on her part that you would not have [ ] it was so high. About twelve o’clock we started for home and arrived in Tecumseh at 3 o’clock in the morning. It was a beautiful moonlight evening, it being full moon and made it nearly as light as day and all together we had a gay ride. I spent yesterday in Tecumseh and did not get up until ten o’clock and directly after we had eaten our breakfast, three of us went out to walk as it was so very pleasant and did not return until noon. If we were not a little tired, then I am very much mistaken. I came home last evening about nine o’clock and have not yet got over the effects of my ride and besides I have a bad cold so that I can hardly speak loud and upon the whole I do not feel very bright and I should not be surprised if you should find this another dull letter, but I hope I shall feel better next time I write, and will try and be more punctual than I have been this time. Anna Osborn\(^{6}\) will not teach in Tec any more, but is going to stay at home this summer. My
brother Tommie\textsuperscript{7} will commence school tomorrow again in Tec. He is preparing for College and is very much enjoyed in his studies and in fact that and making machines is all that he cares for. He is a [ ] [ ] just as odd as “Dicks hot band” and with all him full of fun. My eyes feel as if there are beams in them and I can hardly write; so I will bid you good night and hope I shall feel better in the morning. Your Cous. Allie

P.S. Enclosed you will please find Photographs of Pa\textsuperscript{8} and Ma\textsuperscript{9}. They are not very good I think but are all they had. We should like very much to have Uncle\textsuperscript{10} and Aunties\textsuperscript{11} and cousin Freddie’s\textsuperscript{12} photographs if they have any taken. I wish you would tell them so when you can and oblige your aff. cousin Allie Perry

Footnotes:

1. [Alice Perry (c. 1845), first cousin of John Morgan Avery]
2. [John Morgan Avery (1847-1873)]
3. [unknown / researching]
4. [unknown / researching]
5. [unknown / researching]
6. [possibly Anna Hex Osborn Hagerman (1843-1937)]
7. [Thomas Osborn Perry (1847-1927)]
8. [Gideon Perry (1811-1895)]
9. [Margaret Osborn Perry (1816-1896)]
10. [possibly Noyes Latham Avery (1815-1901)]
11. [possibly Elizabeth Dougherty (1820-1875)]
12. [possibly Noyes Frederick Avery (1855-1925)]