Tuesday night

Dear Mary,

I found that I had forgotten about the gig: if it is painted dark as before I would leave it so – I don’t think that light colour we used to have is good [ ? ] now, there is a lighter brown that I have seen – the wicker is stained a darkish [wine ?? written over as] wood colour and varnished evidently, but it isn’t worthwhile to bother. —

I opened your letter in a hurry this afternoon late when I got back but you had not got mine and so I heard no more from a naughty

[Embossed Stationery] Pride’s Crossing

I saw Mrs. Fields a minute and she said that she hoped things would blow over from what you said in a letter today but I shall be in a hurry to hear tomorrow. I went to Boston and had scant time for what I wanted to do – but I managed to get my train, and to finish the affairs at 4 Park St. One of Mr. Woodbury’s drawings had come and I liked it – it was a very old fashioned little Ranger plunging in a sea!46 I went to the wig place but tonight my hair is all dry and flying as it hasn’t been before. Mrs. Gillespie was not present. I have had five times they said, and so there is only one more. rested myself a while – and had luncheon, and then went down to S.W.s and we made our calls finding only one house at home, so that we had a great talking over of things. Coming down in the train at 12:40 beside! It was quite a visitation but we needed it to make up for arrears! — I found

the top lilies and they are lovely. – thank you and John so much. Now a poor sister is so sleepy she must go to bed. I send Emily Tyson’s nice note. It will be so good to have her at home again. I shall send some others, they seem to be coming fast this week. We have had a good evening. Mrs. Cabot took a nap after tea and then we had a sprightly game of backgammon. I am lent Stubby’s present of the White Murder Trial. She has had a Turkey morocco cover made!!! to slip the pamphlets

45 Tosey or Tosy – a dog in the South Berwick household that must have bitten a child. See also Letters E-1 and F-5.

46 An illustration for The Tory Lover (1901) by George Woodbury.

47 The reference here and in the next few sentences is to the highly publicized 1830 brutal murder of the prominent 82 year old Salem MA citizen, Captain Joseph White. There was much speculation as to who had committed the deed and why over the next several weeks – and the event gathered national interest. Captain White’s widespread name, Mary Bickford, had been his housekeeper for years – but she was away visiting her daughter, Mrs. Joseph Knapp, on the night of the murder. It became known that Mary Bickford was designated to inherit only $15,000 of the half million-dollar estate – while another nephew, Captain Stephen White, was to have the rest. Suspicion fell on Stephen White – but eventually a couple of petty thieves were caught (one in New Bedford, MA and the other in Belfast, ME) who, much to the shock, dismay (and delight) of readers around the country, implicated two brothers of the prominent Crowninshield Family of Salem – as well as Joseph Knapp and his brother Frank. Richard Crowninshield (hired by Joseph Knapp to commit the murder in a futile attempt to alter the will) hung himself in prison – thereby prompting prosecutor Daniel Webster’s famous quip: “There is no refuge from confession but suicide; and suicide is confession.” Joseph and Frank Knapp went to trial, were found guilty and hanged. George Crowninshield, however, was acquitted. The murder, the arrests, and the trial were headline news around the country for several weeks. For a complete account of the event – and especially Nathaniel Hawthorne’s interest in it – see Vernon Luggins, The Hawthornes (1951) pp.242-254.