

Ms. Daniel, Lady,,
" Rome, Oneida, County,,
" New York,,

Amsterdam July 31st 1863

My dear Sister

I have been looking for a leisure hour, every day since we received, the sad intelligence of Rush's death, to write you a few lines, but the time seems to run along so rapidly, and I find so many things to do that the day is gone before I am aware of it. I have thought a great deal about you and we have talked so much about this great first inroad in your family and ~~how~~ how you would be able to bear it. I suppose that the same kind Father that has, & does, sustain the multitudes of mourning fathers and mothers all over the land, will be your helper, but there is so much of selfishness in all of our hearts that I can hardly disist myself of the feeling that your affliction is greater than those of mourners that we have been hearing and reading about so long

I am too apt to pass over the large aggregate
number of killed and wounded without
remembering that each one has friends to be
pierced by the blow

We learned from the Utica Herald that Rush
was severely wounded, but we were hoping
that he would recover as we heard nothing
more about him, till intelligence of his death
came. Mr Bell watched the morning trains on
Monday thinking perhaps he might see you, we
heard of you ^{at noon} from the express man, he said
you were in Albany and would go up on the
express train at 2 o'clock I thought of you Sunday
what a day it must be to you, staying in New York
waiting with your precious charge and such a
load of grief upon you and Daniel and the
children & your mother waiting at home, it was
such a Sabbath as none of you ever experienced
before, and I hope never will again It is hard
to think of the poor boy dying so far from home
but it is a comfort that you were with him
and that he lived a little while and that
you could take him home and bury him

with his kindred

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Twenty-one years your family circle has remained unbroken. how few households are kept entire so long. try to be thankful for this mercy, even now in the first bitterness of his great sorrow, this giving up your first born, to an unnatural death. it is the hardest place you have ever come to in your life history and one that experience alone can teach us what it is. our children are parts of ourselves, and it is almost like separating soul and body to see them die, so young and full of hope

I wish that I could say something to comfort you something to relieve the great grief that is weighing you down, but I feel that words can do so little for you that all the sympathy of friends is so powerless to relieve you and that I can only hope that you may all of you be comforted and sustained by a higher than human sympathy, that while you mourn your loss you may rejoice in his great gain, that for him, all war, and strife have ceased, and that he is resting with the Saviour

Our family are all in their usual health
we should be glad to hear from you, when
you feel as though you could write
remember me to Eliza and your mother
and believe me your affectionate sister
M. S. Bell